**BIBLE - CHRISTMAS**

***ACTS 17:11***

**INTRODUCTION** – We are already in December the last month of the year and we are not too far removed from Christmas. Christmas is an annual holiday celebrated by many millions of people who commemorate this day as the birthday of Jesus.

Most who observe Christmas as the day of the birth of Christ view it as a special holy day. Is this true? Surely if Christmas is a holy day which God would have us to recognize and observe it must be mentioned in the scriptures.

Are you aware that Christians in the first century and N.T. times did not celebrate the birth of Christ as an annual observance?

Did you know that during the reformation protestants condemned Christmas as the “trappings of popery”?

Did you know that Christmas literally means “the mass of Christ” or “mass on Christ’ day”?

Did you know that Protestant churches did not celebrate Christmas until the 19th century?

Did you know that Christmas did not become a federal holiday until 1870?

The point we want to make is that the annual observance of Christmas as the day of the birth of Christ has been adopted only after great controversy among both catholic and protestant churches.

The purpose of our lesson today is to ask the question “should Christmas be celebrated as the work of the church”?

***CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS:***

1. **BIRTH OF JESUS** – We want to look at what the bible says about the birth of Christ and just as important what it does not say. Does it give us any information about the birth of Jesus?
2. **ISA. 7:14** – Isaiah prophesied about 700 years prior to the birth of Christ and notice what God revealed to his prophet. Isaiah not only spoke of his birth he also spoke of his name. The significance of this prophecy is that God would live among men, not the year or day he was born.
3. **ISA. 9:6-7** – The importance of his birth is the establishment of his spiritual kingdom of God.
4. **MICAH 5:2-5** – The birth of the messiah would be in Bethlehem and he would give Israel a new ruler. His birth would not only bless Israel but the whole world.
5. **MATT. 1:18-24** – The things prophesied and promised happened just as God said they would.
6. **LUKE 2:1-7** – Luke gives a very detailed account of the birth of Jesus but he did not reveal the day, month or year Jesus was born.
7. **JN. 1:29** – John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, announces the purpose for which he was born.
8. **PROCLAMATIONS** – The birth of Jesus was not a well kept secret and that is why we do not know.
9. **LUKE 2:8-14** – His birth was proclaimed angelic beings. We need to remember that angels are God’s divine messengers of salvation.
10. **LUKE 2:21-32** – What did Simeon recognize as the important fact about the birth of Christ? Listen to his words as he tells us that his eyes have seen the salvation of the Lord and that his birth would result in giving light to the Gentiles and glory to Israel.
11. **LUKE 2:36-38** – Anna the prophetess gave thanks to the Lord and spoke how his birth was connected to the redemption of Jerusalem.
12. **COL. 3:17** – In our search of the scriptures we find statements about the birth of Christ, but there is no bible authority to observe a certain day as the day of his birth and then attach religious significance to it as a holy day to be observed by the church. In the bible we can find no command or example in reference to Christians celebrating the birth of Christ as an annual observance on December 25th.
13. **ACTS 20:7** – The only event of Jesus’ life that was celebrated regularly was his death.
14. **SHOULD CHRISTMAS** **BE A WORK** **OF THE CHURCH?**
15. **REV. 22:13** - Not if God did not give us authority to observe it! Why would God not think the observance of the birth of his Son was noteworthy for us to follow today? When we think about life in human terms we think of the day of one’s birth and the day of ones death because we are confined by time. Let me suggest to you that God does not want us to think of his Son in this way because he is eternal, he is deity, he is the Son of God.
16. **MARK 7:7-9** – Since the bible is silent regarding any observance of the birth of Christ can we presume to act on the silence of God. NO!!! God did not reveal an observance for the church because he did not deem it necessary for the church. An annual observance by the church would be wrong since we would be proceeding without authority from God and to do so would put us in the category of following the traditions of men.
17. **GAL. 4:8-11** – Paul expresses concern for the Christians in the churches of Galatia. Why? If in the observing of days, months, seasons, years they believed it was necessary to do so in order to be saved his labor among them would be in vain. In other words they would be binding the observance of these days as doctrine.
18. **ROM.14:5-6** – What about individually celebrating the day of   
    Christmas not as the day of the birth of Christ but a day to be spent with family and friends? Individually I can esteem one day above another if I choose to do so and that is between me and the Lord.

**CONCLUSION** –

As Christians we should celebrate the birth of Christ every day.

The birth of Christ made salvation possible!

Have you submitted to the rule of Christ? If not then his birth means nothing.

Behold the Lamb of God that is able to take away the sins of the world!