

University Heights Church of Christ

BULLETIN

December 23, 2007

THE FOLLY OF KEEPING THE RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS OF MEN

At this season of the year religious people all over the world engage in all manner of religious activities in which they call attention to and honor the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, to a virgin mother 2000 years ago in the city of Bethlehem. Religious organizations have all manners of special services, displays and events having to do with making this a much-honored time of special notice. A greater tribute to the memory of Jesus would be to **obey His word that is contained in the New Testament**. The Bible authorizes none of these birth honoring religious activities. The only thing that the New Testament teaches should be done is the weekly memory of the death of Jesus by eating the ceremonial feast that He instituted on the night before He was crucified at Jerusalem. Not a word is said in the entire Bible, about commemorating the birth of Jesus. All who do commemorate the birth of Jesus do so **absolutely without Bible authority**. It would be a far greater tribute to Jesus for us to **obey His teachings by doing what He stated that he wanted done** rather than doing things that **Jesus did not authorize**. The date of the birth of Jesus is not recorded and is unknown. No New Testament writer ever indicated that the birth of Jesus was to be celebrated. It is hard to see honor of Jesus in the behavior of those who ignore what Jesus commanded but **do what He did not command**. Jesus commanded all to become repentant, baptized believers. Jesus commanded that all be taught to observe what Jesus commanded His apostles in the first century, (**Matthew 28:19,20**), but Jesus never did command anybody to observe His birthday as a day of religious celebration or worship. **True love for Jesus Christ is, according to Jesus, shown by doing what Jesus Christ said to do.** John 14: 15 ***"If you love me, keep my commandments."*** John 15: 10 ***"If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."*** Luke 6: 46 ***"And why call you me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"*** Matthew 15: 8 ***"This people draws near to me with their mouth, and honors me with [their] lips; but their heart is far from me."*** 9 ***But in vain they do worship me, teaching [for] doctrines the commandments of men"***. Mark 7: 6 ***"He answered and said to them, Well has Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honors me with [their] lips, but their heart is far from me."*** 7 ***Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching [for] doctrines the commandments of men."*** 8 ***For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men, [as] the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things you do."*** 9 ***And he said to them, Full well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition"***. The extent to which religious people are willing to show a lack of respect for what Jesus taught is starkly demonstrated by the almost universal world wide acceptance of the doctrines of men concerning the celebration of this season as the birth of Jesus Christ in **the absolute absence of any New Testament teaching to support any of it**. If Jesus wanted His birth celebrated that would be taught in the New Testament just as eating the Lord's supper is taught in the New Testament. Jesus told His disciples that the Holy Spirit would guide them into **all truth** and would **glorify Jesus**. John 16: 12 ***"I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, [that] shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show [it] to you."*** This was the work of the Holy Spirit yet **the Holy Spirit did not guide the apostles to observe the birthday of Jesus**. There is no indication in the New Testament that the disciples ever made any observance whatsoever of the birthday of Jesus Christ. That leads to the inescapable conclusion that observing a birthday of Jesus is not part of the **"all truth"** that the Holy Spirit was to guide the disciples into, nor was it part of **glorifying Jesus**. Celebration of this season by Christians would not be absent from the New Testament record if it were a way to glorify Jesus Christ that had **the approval of God**. Whatever you personally do with this season is up to you but you certainly do not have any Bible support to claim for it **any religious significance** because the Bible does not teach it. The inspired scriptures furnish us with instructions for **all good works**. 1Timothy 3: 16 ***"All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works"***. The fact that the inspired scriptures do not have any instructions for observing a birthday of Jesus, while at the same time claiming to guide the godly into **all good works** indicates that **in the estimation of God observing a birthday of Jesus is not a good work**. The New Testament emphasizes the life, the teachings and the atoning death of Jesus. 1Corinthians 1: 23 ***"But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumblingblock, and to the Greeks foolishness; 24 But to them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."*** 1Corinthians 2: 2 ***"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."*** Galatians 6: 14 ***"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world."*** During this season the emphasis for most religious people is on creating scenes with donkeys, sheep and costumes in churchyards and parking lots. Churches are having ceremonies, decorations, blessings of this and that and parades through church buildings, all of which are **the doctrines and customs of men** that are not taught in the New Testament and are not part of faithful worship of God. Since the Christians in the New Testament under the guidance of the inspired apostles of Jesus Christ **pleased God by not celebrating a birthday of Jesus** Christians today cannot celebrate a birthday of Jesus without **failing to abide in the teachings of the Jesus Christ**. The scripture condemns going beyond what Jesus Christ taught. 2John 1: 9 ***"Whosoever transgresses and abides not in the teaching of Christ, has not God: he that abides in the teaching, the same has both the Father and the Son."*** If Jesus taught that His followers should make a religious observance of His birthday, **where did Jesus teach it?** There is no record in the New Testament of Jesus ever teaching that. The followers of Jesus can all be one, but they can only be one if they **all abide in the teachings of the New Testament only**.

Remember to Pray For

Donnie & Tracy Oliver and their newborn baby. They are from Hazard. Mother and child had to be in the hospital here for a little while.

Helen Stephens

Rick Estes

Brayden Grushon, the newborn baby boy, of Wes and Jessica Grushon

Morgan Farmer

The mother of Lori Dailey

Ron Hollinger

Chris Handshoe

John Brown

Anilinn Estill

Chris and Jen Dooley

Jeffrey Howerton

Ruel Baker

Addison Pervine

Carl Stripplehoff

Sybil Jamison

Blanch Thompson

Karen Handshoe

Tom Kemp

Freda Blakey

James Stauffer, should finish with his cancer treatments in the next few days

We all need to pray that the influence of **the word of God** will continue to grow in every heart, in every family, in every nation and in every church across the face of this globe. There is no other influence that will do this world as much good, as the influence of the word of God.

It is not so much what God said that divides the religious, as it is what men said which God did not say.

The church that Jesus Christ died to save is subject to Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5: 23 *"For the husband is the head of the wife, and **Christ also is the head of the church**, [being] himself the savior of the body. 24 But **as the church is subject to Christ**, so [let] the wives also [be] to their husbands in everything".* **A church may be subject to Jesus Christ only by obeying the New Testament only.**

The minute a church stops obeying the New Testament only that church stops being subject to Jesus Christ. How can any claim to be subject to a person whose will they do not obey? The New Testament is the only will of Jesus Christ that we have. If we do not obey the New Testament we are not subject to Jesus Christ.

Why is the University Heights Church of Christ what it is? Is the University Heights Church of Christ what it is because of following what the New Testament says? "Of Christ" means that.

Thoughts

Tis the season of religious folly and the Bible does not teach a word of it. The following are **only part** of one day of church advertisements in the newspaper:

"Holiday Worship"

"Candlelight Holy Communion"

"Bows of Holly" a children's play"

"Lessons and Carols"

"Worship and Wonder" (designed for children under nine and their families)"

"Candlelight Communion Service"

"Candlelight Carols and Communion"

"Children's Service"

"Living Nativity"

"Christmas Organ Concert"

"Join Us As We Celebrate Our Savior's Birth"

"Christmas Eve Communion" (This event is scheduled for 11:00PM on **Monday** evening)

"Join in Observing Winter Solstice- The Longest Night- With A Special Non-Denominational Service 'Blue Christmas...Sanctuary for the Soul'"

"You're invited to be Surprised by Christmas, Worship Experience Times Saturdays...Sundays..."

"Magnificat" the virgin Mary's song of praise...come and celebrate the third Sunday of Advent with this exuberant, festive Musical presentation."

"Family Eucharist"

"Festival Choral Eucharist Carols and Instrumental Music"

"Getting Ready For Christmas Advent 2007"

"What are You Expecting?" With Children's Christmas Pageant"

"Come Experience a New Tradition"

"A Choir, A Soprano Soloist, Eight Brass Players and Three Percussionist"

"Fellowship Time"

"Special Worship Service"

"Singers, Soloists, and Orchestra"

"Handel's Messiah: Part One"

"On This Very Night: The Living Christmas Tree Will Be Performed"

"Twenty-five Hour Ring-a-Thon"

"Christmas Program, "Miracle on Main"

"Church will present "One Small Child of God" The performance will include music, sacred songs and dance."

"Bethlehem Christmas Concert"

"A Grammy and Dove Award Winner Will Perform"

"Choir and harp Performance of "Ceremony of Carols" and other anthems of the season"

"Service will include the lighting of the Christ candle and musical entertainment"

"Church will hold a New Year's Eve Party. Bring a dish for the potluck. There will be games and movies"

WHERE DOES THE BIBLE TEACH IT?

Notes

THERE WILL BE A BUSINESS MEETING FOR THE MEN AT 3:00PM ON JANUARY 13, 2008
THERE WILL BE A MEETING FOR THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION AT 4:00PM JANUARY 27, 2008

The purpose of our faith is the salvation of our souls. **1Peter 1: 9** *"Receiving the end of your faith, [even] the salvation of [your] souls."*

How good our life is depends to a large degree upon how determined we are to avoid evil. **1Peter 3: 10** *"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: 11 Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. 12 For the eyes of the Lord [are] over the righteous and his ears [are open] to their prayers: but the face of the Lord [is] against them that do evil."*

Jesus Christ defined proper marriage by saying, **Matthew 19: 4** *"Have you not read, that he which made [them] at the beginning made them male and female?"* God did not make them males and female or male and females or male and male or female and female. God made them male and female. That still defines a marriage that is pleasing to God.

How may Jesus be Head of a church that does not follow the teachings of Jesus?

Jesus is not the head of any church that does not follow the teachings of Jesus

Schedule of Services

Sunday Morning

Bible Classes 9:45am

Worship Service 10:45am

Sunday Evening

Worship Service 6:00pm

Wednesday Evening

Bible Studies for all ages 7:30pm

Monthly Song Service

First Friday 7:30pm

University Heights

Church of Christ

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**COME STUDY THE BIBLE
AND WORSHIP WITH US**