

L1: The Son of the Highest- Exalting the Christ of Christmas: Christmas Fact or Fiction - Luke 1:26-33

Series Introduction

- Depending whom you ask the opinions and thoughts of Christmas vary far and wide. Secular ignorance of the holiday runs rampant and is an opportunity for commercialization, advertisement, and lucre whether greedy or not God can judge.
- Depending which religious person you ask the thoughts and opinion of Christmas still vary far and wide. A lack of distinction from the world remains and a blend of religiousness and secular holiday celebration prevails.
- Going deeper further - ask the thorough Bible student about Christmas and a proper knowledge may be given about Christmas' origin and pagan roots and origins. A separation is made from the secular and religiosity ties that bind to Christmas, but all too often to extreme that is unsound; that is, when it comes to the practical application of operating within a season such as Christmas they operate solely upon the truth of Christmas to their disadvantage and neglect or are altogether ignorant of the doctrine that teaches them how to operate in such a time as this.
- Then there is the man and woman of God who profit from the doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness and are spiritual mature furnished unto all good works even how to work within the time of the Christmas season.
- Therefore, this series is going to challenge most of you, yet if you allow it the word of God will yield within you a perfection; that is, a maturity that only the word of God can produce - a peculiarness to the world that God's Word effectually works.
 - If you are a secularist you will be convicted of the vanity the world offers at Christmas - a eat, drink, and be merry philosophy.
 - If you are the religious your thoughts of Christmas will be found wanting bringing your traditions once founded upon truth to come crashing down by an awareness of where Christmas really came from and what it is not more than what it is.
 - If you are the Berean and understand what Christmas is not you will be challenged on a whole other level, a level resembled in the birth of Christ which provides practical insight into how to operate during this Christmas season and holiday.
- In this four part series we will cover Christmas facts proven and disproven by scripture and history. We will examine the birth of Christ, what it meant for the present time, and what it means for us today. We will study the events surrounding the birth of Christ to better understand the significance of God's narrative. Lastly, in light of all the facts, the fiction, and a study of Christ's birth we will look at sound doctrine how we can exalt Christ this Christmas.

Sermon Intro:

- Today, I want to talk about the origin of many of traditions of Christmas such as Santa Claus and the Christmas tree leading us to how the birth of Christ and Christmas connect in

history and how they don't.

- Santa Claus
- Christmas Tree
- Christmas - Christ's Birth

The arguments are the same every year: Jesus wasn't born on December 25th, Jeremiah 10 condemns Christmas trees; Christmas is a Catholic mass created to reconcile to a Roman pagan feast; and every thing else the Yuletide Log, the Mistletoe, stockings, Santa Claus all have pagan origins.

Santa Claus

- You may be wondering why I would start with Santa Claus, because Santa is a blend of pagan idolatry and religious kindness that has been elevated to a status of awe and wonder that is contrary to the exaltation of Christ.
- Beyond the notions of the rearranging of Santa's name to spell Satan, his slogan of "ho, ho, ho" resembling "holy, holy, holy", his making a list, checking it twice to find out whether you have been naughty or nice by some omniscience and implications of his hidden north pole living quarters and his implied omnipresence in his ability to be everywhere at once, or everywhere really quickly, or with help with his angels (cough...cough) I mean elves the identification of Santa's origin is of greater significance.
 - In other words, is there any truth to Santa or is he merely a mystical character having godlike qualities. The truth of Santa can help you probably provide you the knowledge of discussions about him to your children.
- Santa Claus Origin's
 - Secular History
 - New Yorkers: Clement Clark Moore & Thomas Nass
 - Clement Clark Moore in 1822 wrote "A Visit form Saint Nicholas" now known as "The Night Before Christmas"
 - Saint Nicholas (4th Century Bishop) reknown for gift giving - leaving presents in stockings and shoes.
 - Yet the Roman Catholic Church has actually confessed that no Roman Catholic bishop by the name of Nicholas had ever existed.
 - Blended with
 - Sinter Claus - Dutch Version of Saint Nicholas blended qith the Pagan God Odin who rode through the sky on a 8 legged horse.
 - Thomas Nass in 1862 almost in comic book form began to shape Santa Claus into how we know him today with his elves, north pole, and naughty and nice list.
 - Mythical Pagan History
 - Some say that Santa Claus is not so much attached to the 4th Century Bishop

but the old Norse legend that believed that the goddess Hertha appeared in the fireplace and brought good luck to the home.

- Other say the original "Nicholas" was Nimrod for Nicholas means mighty one.
- Traditions of a "god" who gave gifts under an evergreen tree antecede the Asian Minor bishop by thousands of years. Odin left special gifts under the evergreen tree, his sacred tree. (Scandinavian tradition)

Christmas Tree

- Some have say it has pagan origins. Some believe Boniface, English missionary to Germany in the 8th century instituted the first Christmas tree. He supposedly replaced sacrifices to the god Odin's sacred oak with a fir tree adorned in tribute to Christ. But certain other accounts claim that Martin Luther introduced the Christmas tree lighted with candles.
- So some say Odin's tree or Thor's tree was the evergreen, some say it was the oak.
- Some refer to Jeremiah 10:1-8 - this has everything to do with idol worship, not with a Christmas tree.

The Mass of Christmas

- Mass is a sacrament of the Roman Catholic Church. It is a blend of the Lord's table and pagan thought.
- Mass with its' cakes were offerings to the queen of heaven. The round disk symbolized the sun-god of ancient Egypt. So some say therefore it is nothing more than the celebration of the birth of the "sun-god" himself.

The Celebration of Christmas - Christ's Birth

- December 25th was celebrated thousands of years before the birth of Christ as the birth day of an ancient pagan god - the Sun God.
- Also recognized as the "feast of Saturn" still finding its origin in Nimrod which Saturn is another name for him.
- The Romans had feasting on December 25th as it was the darkest day of the year, and if you lived in a world where the days are dark by 5pm, the thoughts of Spring on the horizon was reason enough to party. Think of it was a Roman 4th of July. The Romans did sacrifice to the gods on this day, but they did that as often as they could. It was the winter solstice where they built bonfires to give the sun god strength and the shortest days were behind them.
- The Emperor Justinian in 529 AD made it a civic holiday.
- The fact is we don't know the date of the birth of Christ and what we do know is it wasn't in December.

The Birth Day of Christ

- The Shepherds

- Luke 2:7-8
 - Shepherds only watch there flock by night
- Zacharias - Luke 1:1:5 - the course of Abia (a-be-yah)
 - The temple priesthood was organized into 24 divisions, with each division serving twice a year for one week; Abijah's was the 8th division. After his division (June/July) Luke 1:23-24.
 - Luke 1:24-25 - Elizabeth 6 month pregnant around July-August some say early as June
 - We know therefore the Christ would be conceived around 6 months after John the Baptist (Luke 1:26, 42)
 - Mary with Elizabeth for 3 months (possible while John was born)
 - (Luke 1:56)
 - John the Baptist therefore was born in April-May meaning Christ was born sometime around September-October
- Wait what about the wise men?
 - Matthew 2:1-15
 - "young child" vs. "babe"
 - Compare with Luke's account: Luke 2:12, 16
 - Luke 2:21 - 8 days
 - Luke 2:22-23 - month +
 - Luke 39-40 - returned to Galilee, Nazareth
 - Child grew
 - "inn, stable" vs. "house"
 - Matt. 2:11
 - Matthew 2:7, 16
 - The Star and the Timing
 - Number 24:14, 17 - advertise
 - Num. 23:7 - mountains of the east
 - Daniel visions published in Babylon
 - Timeline and their astrologers made up their wise men