

Not the Manger but the Cross

Introduction

1. **Today we want to talk about the day that is commonly known as Christmas, but from the standpoint of the Bible.**
 - A. **Many traditional things are done in the name of religion such as “plays, musicals, special services, etc.”**
 - B. **Our emphasis should not be on the manger, but the cross.**
 - 1) **We’re talking not only of the manger, but also the cross.**

John 12:44 Then Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me.

- 2) **In other words not believing in Christ “only” but also in the one who sent Him.**

Christians do not celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday event.

Errors of Christmas Tradition

1. **The Wise men came to a house, not a stable.**

Matt 2:11 And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

- A. **It was the shepherds that saw the manger, not the wise men. (Luk 2:8)**
2. **“3” Wise men bringing gifts (gold frankincense, and myrrh)**
 - A. **What if I received \$\$, shirt, tie) How many gave me those gifts?**

3. Time. Probably before November 1st.

Luke 2:8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

A. Historical scholars tell us that in that part of the country, the shepherds would not generally be in the fields at night after November 1st.

1) Farmers and Ranchers also have certain times that they do things.

4. Celebration of the Birth.

A. Was there ever any birthday party mentioned for Jesus?

B. Did the apostles ever celebrate His birth after the ascension?

Matt 28:20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you....

Matt 15:8-9 These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.

Col 3:17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus...

A. There is never any mention of a Christmas tradition in heaven.

B. The story and observance of Christ's birth is of tradition only. Some things are true while other things are made up or imagined.

We Are Not

1. Demeaning the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:10-20)

A. Emphasis should be placed on the cross not His birth.

2. Denying the Virgin Birth (Matt 1:18-25)

Luke 1:34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

3. Destroying Prophecy.

Micah 5:2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.

Isa 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

4. Demoting Mary (Luke 1:26-31, 46-49).

1) Mary was highly favored.

5. Defending "Our" Views

1) You're just upholding your view of things.

a) Friends, it is not our view, it is the Bible view - God's Word. We're only advocating God's view.

Isa 8:20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

1 Cor 4:6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in **us not to think beyond what is written**, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.

Jesus' Emphasis

1. Where did He emphasize His birth?

Matt 12:38-40 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, Teacher, we want to see a sign from You. But He answered and said to them, An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

A. What is the sign, the proof that Jesus was from God? (It would be through His death, burial, and resurrection)

2. Predicted His Death.

Matthew 16:21-23

A. The things of God was in the dying upon the cross of calvary for all man.

3. Purpose of His Coming.

A. We can read about the purpose of Christ's coming to this earth.

John 12:27 Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

4. Prophecy is fulfilled.

Luke 22:37 For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.' For the things concerning Me have an end.

Luke 24:25-27, 44-46

Apostles Emphasized

1. Peter

A. Do we read where they emphasized the manger, His birth? (Acts 2:22-36)

Acts 4:2 being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the **resurrection from the dead**.

2. Paul

A. Did Paul emphasize Christ's birth? (Acts 13:26-39)

1) Second Journey in Thessalonica (50 AD – 17 Yrs)

Acts 17:2-3 Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the **Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead**, and saying, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ."

3. The Epistles

A. Was the birth of Christ emphasized in any of the other books of the Bible?

1 Peter 1:3, 18-19

1 Pet 2:24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness-- by whose stripes you were healed.

1 Cor 2:2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

B. We do not place a particular day of the year on the death of our Lord — we remember the event every first day of each week.

C. We do not celebrate a particular day on the birth of Christ.

1) His whole life, death, resurrection is remembered every week.

What the Cross Shows Us

1. Enormity, Awfulness of Sin

A. The cross shows me that Christ died for my awful sins

2. The Love of God. (John 3:16)

I Jn 4:9-10 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

3. The Grace of God in Christ.

2 Cor 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

4. That Jesus was born.

Gal 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

A. We believe He was born but our emphasis is on His death, burial and resurrection. He lived and died so that we might have life forever!

How Do We Come to the Cross?

1. Through obedience to the blessed word of God!

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Romans 6:3-17

WORDS OF THE SONG (Attached)

2. Live for Christ **DAILY**, not just once a year!

