



# The Good News

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***Merry Christmas! or Merry X-mas! or Happy Holidays!***

By Michael McCleary

There is nothing wrong with saying “Merry Christmas”. That is the name of the holiday that we are quickly approaching. However, some believers in God get all worked up every year over taking the “Christ” out of “Christmas”. You will see bumper stickers and pins that will say “Don’t put an “X” in “Christmas” and other such protests against the “X-mas” slogan. Beyond the slogans and political correctness battles are the folks who find a new sense of spiritual being during this time of year. Masses of people who slept in and watched TV every Sunday now find in themselves the need to attend church services, presumably out of some need for personal justification (such as, “Well I celebrated God’s Son’s birthday, so I’m good for next year!”). These individuals are focusing on the wrong priorities. They assume that God’s thoughts are like our thoughts when they assume that God wants us to celebrate His Son’s specific birth-day. Isaiah tells us that God does not see things the way we do (**Isa. 55:8**). Regardless of how you refer to this time of year, it is worth evaluating the legitimacy of celebrating what most “religious” people consider this most holy-day.

**Is it truly Jesus’ birthday?** Let’s deal with the most obvious question first. And the answer is “no”. It is not Jesus’ birthday. Only two of the four Gospel writers (Matthew and Luke) even record anything about Jesus’ birth. Of those two, neither specifies what time of year it was when Jesus was born, much less a month or day.

**Does the Bible suggest there is any significance in the day that Jesus was born?** No. The fact that only two of the Gospel writer’s even record details of Jesus’ birth show that there is no special significance in the day. One would think that if God wanted us to celebrate Jesus’ birth-day, He would have had one of the Gospel writers include the words “And it was the 25th day of the 12th month when the disciples celebrated the birth of the Lord” or whatever

the Jewish equivalent would be. This is not found. After the church is established, the only day we see the Christians celebrating is Sunday (**Acts 20:7**) in partaking of the Lord’s Supper which commemorates His death, not His birth.

**So does it even matter?** The actual day? No, it does not matter when Jesus was born. But it does matter that He was born, and why (and how) He was born. This is why we have the two recorded accounts. We can learn that Jesus’ birth, over which Jesus had no control Himself, fulfilled every prophecy regarding how the Messiah was to be born. This is important because we learn it was miraculous, with God in control of it. And the same can be said of Jesus’ entire life and His death. The “holidays” of Christmas and Easter were never actually centered around facts, but on the winter and spring solstices in an effort by the Catholic church to appeal to pagans. The first mention of the Catholic church in history doesn’t occur until around 300 A.D. and the first mention of Christmas or Easter doesn’t occur until 400 A.D.

**The bottom line is this:** Christmas for me and my family is a time that we have been afforded by society to enjoy each other’s company, share gifts (another pagan tradition, NOT a religious one), and relax. I do not celebrate it as Christ’s birthday, and those that do often miss the point: we have authority (and command) to commemorate His death...and every Sunday, not just one out of around fifty-three. Will you live and die as He lived and died, in service to God every day?