

# Pleasant View Proclaimer

**Pleasant View church of Christ**

## Jesus' Birth And Other Controversies, Pt. 1

**December 29, 2013**

**Issue 143**

Even though Christmas is as American as apple pie, it is a holiday that is still shrouded in mystery. Most people put up a Christmas tree, but cannot explain its origin. Many believe that Jesus was born on December 25, even though the Bible gives no specific date and early Christians did not consider Jesus' birthday to be a holy day. Gift exchange is common on Christmas, but most people never stop to ask why gift giving is so central to the Christmas experience.

For nearly 1500 years, Christians have struggled with the religious aspect of December 25. If the Bible does not command us to celebrate Jesus' birth, and if

the early Christians, who were under apostolic authority, did not celebrate the birth of Jesus, why should modern churches celebrate the day Jesus came into the world? If God wanted us to celebrate Jesus' birth in a special way on a special day, why didn't He tell us on which day Jesus was born? It is widely agreed that the religious aspect of Christmas originated in the Catholic Church. If the Catholic Church initiated a new religious holiday tomorrow, would all Protestant churches—even some churches of Christ—eagerly participate in it the same they participate in Christmas?

The churches that do not have Christmas pageants and plays and nativity scenes and such at Christmas time are not opposed to Jesus or His birth. They are not being different for the sake of being different. They are simply practicing what they believe. Since celebrating Christmas as a Christian "holy" day isn't commanded in the Bible, it isn't promoted in their church.

Churches that don't participate in Christmas celebrations do not have to explain themselves, although they often do. The burden of explanation is on those who choose to do things the Bible does not authorize.

### Items of Note:

- It is good to see Jessica Humston with us this week.
- Sympathy is extended to Canetha Walker on the loss of her sister-in-law.
- David Billingsley's stepdad's twin brother, Harry York, is in very bad condition.
- Continue to pray for Russell Wilson, Addie Farmer, Mildred Walker, John Hayes, Jay Newell, and those who are traveling during the holidays.

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## Building Fund Contribution Today

## New Year's Eve Get-Together Tuesday Night at 7:30 At The Building

THOSE WHO WILL SERVE THE CONGREGATION

Sunday School

Read: Gupton

Pray: J. Newell

Morning Worship

Wait on the Table: Rose

Serve: Demonbreum, Trent Walker, Donkin

Pray: Billingsley

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Pleasant View church of Christ  
2500 Highway 49 East  
P.O. Box 189  
Pleasant View, TN 37146

Sunday School: 9:30  
A.M. Worship: 10:30  
P.M. Worship: 6:00  
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 pm  
Phone: 924-9714

Proverbs 4:26-27

“Watch the path of your feet and all your ways will be established. Do not turn to the right nor to the left; turn your foot from evil.”

“No one is useless in the world who lightens the burdens of another.”

Charles Dickens

“You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.”

Amy Carmichael

“The excellence of a gift lies in its appropriateness rather than its value.”

Charles Dudley Warner

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## Jesus' Birth...And Other Controversies, Pt. 2

But the religious aspect of Christmas is only half of the issue. Santa Claus, Christmas cards, family dinners, etc. are all part of the Christmas experience from coast to coast. To participate in some aspects of Christmas while not endorsing the religious aspect is not inconsistent—it's logical and practical. I have known many faithful people who strongly oppose Christmas as a religious holiday—but nearly all of them put gifts under the tree and enjoy every day they have off from work.

Christmas isn't nearly as controversial as it used to be. But other controversies are red hot, and new controversies are sure to come. No matter what the issue might be, and no

matter what side you are on, remember these simple principles.

First, speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). Condescension, nitpicking, and name-calling should not be acceptable Christian behavior.

Second, never apologize for following God's word. Be prepared for someone to call you a hypocrite since (shock!) you are not perfect. Some think that only perfect people have the right to defend Scripture.

Third, be patient (II Tim. 4:2). It is easy to get caught up in emotion when there is controversy. There may be some things you have to learn, and others might be slow to understand your position. Either

way, allow time for yourself and others to grow up.

Fourth, you're not the Sheriff of Churches of Christ. God did not appoint you to be the sole arbiter in all disputes.

Fifth, be prayerful in all things. It is in the context of disputes, not church attendance, that Jesus said, “Wherever two or three are gathered in My name, I am there in their midst” (Matt. 18:20). If we want God's will to be done in all things, we should ask for His guidance when things are difficult...and acknowledge His presence.

James Hayes

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