



# *The* **War** *on* **Christmas**

Battles in Faith, Tradition,  
and Religious Expression

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General Editor

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## INTRODUCTION



Christmas. Who would attack Christmas? Hard to believe, isn't it? But Christmas is under attack. I would like to give some background as to why this beautiful holiday has caused such controversy.

Many years ago, much of the Western World was heavily Christianized and many people believed in God's Word as the authority. Then there was a subtle attack. It was so subtle that most Christians missed it. It was this idea that man could determine truth about origins apart from the Bible. When the Bible is left out, God is left out. So man, by default, becomes that authority. This is known as the religion of humanism, when man is elevated to a position of authority above God.

Since then, we have seen God and His Word attacked in every area as humanists demand the removal of God and His Word from every area of life. They do this to favor their own religion, which treats man as supreme

above God. We have seen:

1. Christian-based public schools and universities (Harvard, Yale, Princeton, etc.) become humanistic;
2. The Bible removed from schools;
3. Prayer removed from schools;
4. Creation removed from schools;
5. The Pledge of Allegiance removed from use;
6. Attacks on the U.S. motto "In God We Trust";
7. Removal of 10 Commandments from public places;
8. Attempts to force acceptance of the sin of homosexual behavior upon Christian institutions and churches.

With these types of attacks, did we really believe that Christmas would be left alone? We now see conflicts surrounding Christmas in the form of refus-

als to say "Merry Christmas" but instead "Happy Holidays," the forced removal of Nativity scenes in public (and even some private) places, writing *X-mas* instead of *Christmas*, and even claims that Christmas was originally pagan!

Yes, there is a war on Christmas, and Christians need to know about this holiday and how to defend it, if they choose to celebrate it. This book is intended to provide some answers concerning a host of issues and misconceptions surrounding Christmas, and will look extensively at the very first Christmas. We want to proclaim the authority of the Bible from the very first verse of Scripture. God is the authority and this false religion of humanism needs to go.

If we as Christians do not know what we are celebrating, how can we share this good news of Christ with unbelievers? I pray this book is informative, equipping, and a blessing to you and your family all year long.



**What**

---

**About**



**Christmas?**





## CHAPTER 1



# Christmas *and a* Humble Christ

Black Friday! What do you think of when you hear those words? Spectacular deals for Christmas? The (un)official beginning of the Christmas season? The worst day ever for anyone in retail or food service? Regardless of what pops into your head when you hear those words, the phrase bears a special meaning — at least in the Western World. It reminds us we need to start buying gifts for our family and friends.


The Christmas season is wrought with traveling, family get-togethers, office parties, breaks from school, and insane deals on flat-screen televisions. And let's not forget Santa Claus, hanging the stockings, decorating the tree, eating copious amounts of delicious food, and

opening presents. Does this describe your Christmas?

Unfortunately, this probably describes the majority of people in America (and around the world). But what's the real reason for Christmas? Most people could probably answer this question by stating "the birth of Christ." But are we truly celebrating the birth of Christ? Sure, the wise men brought Him gifts, but they also worshipped Him. While we give gifts to each other, ask yourself what gift you are bringing to Him. The wise men knew the

significance of Christ, so they brought Him gifts and worshipped Him.

But the true gift of Christmas is Christ — the Son of God, who became a man and willingly sacrificed Himself for the atonement of our sins to save us from a justly deserved eternal punishment. We are blessed exceedingly by this gift but only seem to celebrate it once a year, although we should be celebrating year-round. Do we truly understand who Jesus is and what He did? We'll be taking a closer look at this. In the meantime, forget about all the secular Christmas hype, focus on what you are giving to Christ, and worship Him.

The image is a composite. The upper portion features a close-up of a newborn baby's face and torso, being gently held by a hand. The baby has its mouth slightly open and eyes closed. The lower portion shows a large crowd of people standing in a line, possibly at a church or public event, with a stone wall in the background. The entire image is overlaid with a pattern of white, star-like speckles.

*And she brought forth her  
firstborn Son, and wrapped  
Him in swaddling cloths,  
and laid Him in a man-  
ger, because there was no  
room for them in the inn.*

*— Luke 2:7*



Nativity scene on the 2001 Christkindlmarket in downtown Chicago. Christkindlmarket is a Christmas market held annually at Daley Plaza in Chicago, Illinois, United States. The festival is part of the Magnificent Mile Lights Festival and attracts more than 1 million visitors each year.

## WHY DID CHRIST COME IN SUCH A HUMBLE AND LOWLY WAY?

After a supernatural conception, Christ was born through natural means. He was carried in the womb and was born as a helpless, vulnerable, powerless, and dependent newborn (of course, God supervised everything so He was never at risk). He didn't come to earth as a conquering angel or a mighty emperor. His parents were poor and probably had little livestock of their own (Luke 2:24; Leviticus 12:8), not to mention they were from Nazareth, an area not held in high regard, even Nathanael

said, “*Can anything good come out of Nazareth?*” (John 1:46).

It's difficult to think of something more humble, vulnerable, and lowly than a newborn. God could have entered into this world as the Angel of the Lord, but He chose a much more humble way. Christ's incarnation was a reflection of God's character and heart. He was the utmost example to us of how to approach and present ourselves before the Father (Luke 18:17).

Proverbs 29:23 tells us that “*the humble in spirit will retain honor.*” We know that Christ was the most humble of all who have lived on earth, even though He

was and is also God, but for our sake He humbled Himself. And because of His humble state, He was given the highest honor:

*... who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name (Philippians 2:6–9; NASB).*

According to Isaiah 57:15, God dwells “*with the contrite and lowly of spirit in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to re-*



*...I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has  
a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the  
humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.  
—Isaiah 57:15*

*vive the heart of the contrite”*  
(NASB). God desires to lift us  
up from our lowly position,  
even if we suffer from a broken  
heart or a crushed spirit.

Christ’s lowly condition should  
always remind us how we are  
supposed to approach the Fa-  
ther. God also uses the weak  
to shame the strong (1 Corin-  
thians 1:26–29). God came in  
weakness so He could shame  
those who were looking for a  
strong political leader and were  
blind to their spiritual needs.

Such thoughts are but an in-  
troduction to what hope to  
have in this book. We hope to  
get into the meaning of Christ-  
mas, the origin of Christmas,  
misconceptions surrounding  
Christmas, and other aspects  
(including some of the debate

surrounding Christmas) that  
you may not have heard of. Our  
hope is that you grow in your  
spiritual life by learning about  
this popular holiday with your  
Bible in hand as you examine  
the popular topics surrounding  
Christmas.

The Church of the Nativity,  
in Bethlehem. The door was  
reduced in size as a defense  
against hostile forces.



## CHAPTER 2



# Where *did the name* Christmas Come From?

Christmas is actually a combination of *Christ* and *mas*. Some Christians do not like the name because they equate the suffix “*mas*” with “Mass.” However, this is not correct because “*mas*” actually means “celebration.” Therefore, Christmas simply means a “Christ Celebration;” we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior.

### CAN WE CELEBRATE IT?

Some don’t even like the name “Christmas” — namely those who do not profess a belief in the biblical God. Some non-believers are “offended” by the “religious” name. This is probably because the mention of the name “Christ” brings about conviction. But it is a Christian holiday that even non-

Christians often celebrate, without warrant. They often want the holiday, but they don’t want the reason for the holiday.

This is common with other Christian holidays and special days. For example, a weekend is a Christian thing. God created in six days (Genesis 1; Exodus 20:11) and rested on the seventh as a pattern for us. Hence, the seventh day or Sabbath day was to be a day of rest. When Christ resurrected on the first day of the week, the early church met on that day called the Lord’s Day (e.g., John 20:1,

19; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10). So the Christian concept of a weekend was born — having Saturdays and Sundays as special days. In an atheistic worldview, why have days off for rest and reflection of the Lord’s Resurrection?

Also, some non-Christians do what they can around Christmas to demote Christmas by refusing to say the common greeting “Merry Christmas” or “Happy Christmas” and replace it with “Happy Holidays.” Little do they realize that *holidays* means *holy days*. A day cannot be holy unless a Holy God exists and makes things holy. Perhaps when someone says “Happy Holidays,” an interesting reply would be to ask: “To which holy days from God do you refer?”







## WHEN DID CHRISTMAS BEGIN?

This may be hard to believe, but when Christ was born, there was a celebration and God made sure of it. Is this wrong? Angels celebrated this event perhaps like no other in history (Hebrews 1:6; Luke 2:11–14). People also came to worship Christ and praise God for this event (Matthew 2:2; Luke 2:20).

So although there was celebration of Christ's birth when He became a man and stepped into history born of a virgin, it was likely some time later that Christians began re-celebrating His birth. Early church father Sextus Julius Africanus mentioned December 25 in *Chronographiai* in about A.D. 221. So Christians were surely celebrating this date by around this time.

According to famed chronologist Archbishop Ussher, Christ was born around 4 B.C. What day was Jesus born? We don't know, nor does Scripture reveal this date. So the date selected as Christmas (December 25 by the Gregorian calendar) was probably not the date Jesus was born (see chapter 5 for more). The issue, though, isn't about the actual date but about taking time to remember Christ's entrance into the world.

## SHOULD WE CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS?

Some people have even suggested to me that Christmas was evil and we should not partake in it. The Bible says: *The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein.*

(Psalm 24:1; NIV). So, if we give thanks and honor God in what we do (Ephesians 5:15–21), then how can it be evil?

Some have suggested that the day Christmas is celebrated was born out of a Roman pagan holiday (but it wasn't; see chapter 4 for more details). Then I remind them that we should honor and celebrate God on every day of the year. Why should we, as Christians, refuse to celebrate God on this day? We can serve God on any day and at any time. In fact the Bible encourages this: *I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever more* (Psalm 86:12). "Forever





*I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart,  
And I will glorify Your name forevermore.*

*—Psalm 86:12*

more” includes the day we celebrate Christmas.

Some have reminded me of the decorated trees in Jeremiah 10:1–6. Explain that it wasn’t the tree that was sin but the hearts of those who used them to honor false gods. If they had done it to honor God then the outcome would have been different. If someone honors God with a decorated tree (as opposed to false gods) then how can it be sinful?

Some have said to me that Christ never told people to honor His birth with a holiday. I remind them that Christ never forbade it, either. There is no reason to forbid anyone from honoring God on this day by remembering Jesus’ birth. For those honoring God in a special

way this holiday season, please remember that:

- Christmas should be a time when we remember that Jesus came to earth to save us from Adam’s sin, when we recall that God became lower than the angels to be born, live, suffer, and die for us.
- Christmas should be a time for us to remember that we as Christians have an obligation to leave the comforts of our everyday life to help those less fortunate, just as Jesus did for all of us.

It is a time for us to answer the questions that non-Christians are asking when they come to church this holiday season. It is a time for us to explain to people who don’t know God the

bad news in Genesis as well as the good news in the Gospels so that they, too, may enjoy the free gift of salvation in Jesus Christ. Also, God did not forbid the celebration of this event by the angels or by men, so it may not be wise to forbid others who want to worship Christ on this event.

Paul, in Colossians 2:16–17, says: *So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*

If one wishes to celebrate Christmas, arguably the most popular Christian festival in history, then no one should judge you for it. Sadly though, some do and without biblical warrant.



## CHAPTER 3



# What is Christmas About?

It is unfortunate that many have forgotten what Christmas is really about. We agree that many of the Christian holidays we celebrate seem to have their original intent muffled, even by many Christians. Unfortunately, the elements of this celebration have been watered down and, at times, forgotten. They have become secularized (e.g., Santa Claus, elves, etc.)

However, it is time Christians take back Christmas in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for everything belongs to the Lord (Psalm 24:1; 1 Corinthians 10:26).

It would be wrong to condemn someone for celebrating Christmas or Easter (Resurrection Sunday). The “substance,” the reasons for these holidays,

should come from Christ because they belong to Christ. The reason we celebrate these holidays is to remember Christ. However, if someone is fully convinced in their mind that they should not celebrate these holidays, that is fine as well (Romans 14:5) and they should not be criticized either.

Why not take the distorted pagan elements of Christmas and change them to biblical elements to honor Christ? Many question the Christmas tree and say that it represents the Asherah poles mentioned in

the OT. However, these poles are where false gods were worshiped, in honor of their false gods. However, Christians do not worship the Christmas tree or false gods. Let's give Christian meanings to all of these elements especially since everything is the Lord's: *The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein* (Psalm 24:1).

When we look at a Christmas tree let's remember that it was promised that salvation would spring up from the root of Jesse (Isaiah 11:10). The Christmas tree can be a symbol of Christ coming into the world and bringing of the kingdom of God (e.g., Revelation 1:6). The tree, often an evergreen tree, is used as the Christmas tree in many

