

Xmas

By A. W. Pink (1886—1952)

“Thus saith the LORD, learn not the way of the heathen . . . For the CUSTOMS OF THE PEOPLE ARE VAIN” (Jeremiah 10:2-3)

Christmas is coming! Quite so; but what is “Christmas?” Does not the very term itself denote its source — “Christ-mass.” Thus it is of Romish (Roman Catholic) origin, brought over from Paganism. But, says someone, Christmas is the time when we commemorate the Savior’s birth. Is it? And who authorized such commemoration? Certainly God did not. The Redeemer bade his disciples “remember” him in his death, but there is not a word in Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, which tell us to celebrate His birth. Moreover, who knows when, in what month, He was born. The Bible is silent thereon.

Is it without reason that the only “birthday” commemorations mentioned in God’s Word are Pharaoh’s (Genesis 40:10) and Herod’s (Matthew 14:6)? Is this recorded “for our learning?” If so, have we prayerfully taken it to heart? And who is it that celebrates “Christmas?” The whole “Christmas?” The whole “civilized world.” Millions who make no profession of faith in the blood of the Lamb, who **“despise and reject Him,”** and millions more who while claiming to be His followers yet in works deny Him, join in merrymaking under the pretense of honoring the birth of the Lord Jesus. Putting it on its lowest ground, we would ask, Is it fitting that His friends should unite with His enemies in a worldly round of fleshly gratification?

Does any truly born-again soul really think that He whom the world cast out is either pleased or glorified by such participation in the world’s joys? Verily the customs of the people are vain; and it is written, **“Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.”** (Exodus 23:2).

Some will argue for the "keeping of Christmas" on the ground of "giving the kiddies a good time." But why do this under the cloak of honoring the Savior's birth? Why is it necessary to drag in His holy name in connection with what takes place at that season of carnal jollification? Is this taking the little ones with you out of Egypt (Exodus 10:9,10) a type of the world, or is it not plainly a mingling with present-day Egyptians in their "**pleasure of sin for a season?**" (Hebrews 11:25).

Scripture says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Scripture does command God's people to bring up their children "**in the nurture and admonition of the Lord**" (Ephesians 6:4), but where does it stipulate that it is our duty to give the little ones a "good time?" Do we ever give the children "a good time" when we engage in anything upon which we cannot fittingly ask the Lord's blessing?

There are those who do abstain from some of the grosser carnalities of the "festive season," yet are they nevertheless in cruel bondage to the prevailing custom of "Christmas" namely that of exchanging "gifts." We say "exchanging" for that is what it really amounts to in many cases. A list is kept, either on paper or in memory, of those from whom gifts were received last year, and that for the purpose of returning the compliment this year.

Nor is this all: great care has to be taken that the "gift" made to the friend is worth as much in dollars and cents as the one they expect to receive from him or her. Thus, with many who can ill afford it, a considerable sum has to be set aside each year with which to purchase things simply to send them out in return for others which are likely to be received. Thus a burden has been bound on them which not a few find hard to bear.

But what are we to do? If we fail to send out "gifts," our friends will think hard of us; probably deem us stingy and miserly. The honest course is to go to the trouble of notifying them – by letter if at a distance – that from

now on you do not propose to send out any more "Christmas gifts" as such. Give your reasons. State plainly that you have brought to see that "Christmas merry-making" is entirely a thing of the world, devoid of any Scriptural warrant; that it is a Romish institution, and now that you see this, you dare no longer have any fellowship with it (Ephesians 5:11); that you are the Lord's "free man" (1 Corinthians 7:22), and therefore you refuse to be in bondage to a costly custom imposed by the world.

What about sending out "Christmas cards" with a text of Scripture on them? That also is an abomination in the sight of God. Why? Because His Word expressly forbids all unholy mixtures; Deuteronomy 22:10, 11 typified this. What do we mean by an "unholy mixture?" This: the linking together of the pure word of God with the Romish "Christ-mass." By all means, send cards (preferably at some other time of the year) to your ungodly friends, and Christians too, with a verse of Scripture, but not with "Christmas" on it.

What would you think of a printed program of a vaudeville having Isaiah 53:5 at the foot of it? Why, that it was altogether out of place, highly incongruous. But in the sight of God the circus and the theater are far less obnoxious than the "Christmas celebration" of Romish and Protestant "churches." Why? Because the latter are done under the cover of the holy name of Christ; the former are not.

"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18).