

## DECEMBER 25, 1988

The following piece was first written in 1977, when at that time “Christmas” fell on a Sunday. Since we have that same situation this year it seems suitable to reprint the article for your consideration. We have no desire to dictate practice to any, but simply offer food for thought.

The above date marks two important events this year. One affects the family of man to a large extent. The other event affects the family of God. Christmas, the first event to come to mind for most, will greatly and extensively effect its allurements to the family of man, and so affect the same. The first day of the week, or the believer's day of worship is the other event, and its importance is felt by the family of God.

Two events, both claimed as having religious importance to those who follow after them, and neither of them about to be abandoned by its followers. This year, 1977, however, these two events clash head-on and for many, one or the other must have the preeminence. Dear reader, which will it be for you? Are you thinking that you will enjoy them both and thus make the best of both worlds? Be not deceived. God is not mocked. You cannot serve God and mammon. (Galatians 6:7; Matthew 6:24)

While not wishing to force our practice or principle on anyone, let us consider several weighty matters before us and see how we weigh out in the balance of consistency. Surely none of us who claim the Name of our Lord wish to offend either our conscience or our God, yet in many things we must confess we do offend. First consideration: Christmas is of heathen origin. No Bible student would deny this. Not one word in all the sacred pages tell us when Christ was born. Never are we instructed to lay emphasis on His birth, but rather on His death. (I Cor. 11:25,26) Christmas has evolved from a Romish superstition in old times to the rankest form of paganism today. There is not even a remote connection between the structure of this *Holy Day* and the birth of Christ. Take, for example, trees, lights, candles, reindeers, garland, tinsel, and other similar ornamental junk sold for the supposed celebration of the birth of Christ. Is it not a foolish waste at best, and an abomination at worst? Read Luke 16:15, carefully. *And he said unto them, ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God..* Is not Christmas highly esteemed among the family of men? Then does it not follow that it is abomination with God? What of the poor working people who go in debt hundreds (even thousands) of dollars to give the kiddies Santa. All the while lying to them by saying Santa is the giver of good gifts (if you will be a good little Arminian,) when James 1:17 teaches the opposite.

Our sensible readers, however, have seen much of the folly and would admit that “commercialism” has taken over Christmas. To that we would say, “Let commercialism have it, we don't want any part of it.” Several years ago a professing church woman told us that she was making an effort to put Christ back in Christmas. To which we replied, “We never knew He was in it to begin with.” Needless to say, she cooled on us soon. More recently, in speaking with an acquaintance, the subject of Christmas came up and when we commented that our family had never celebrated the birth of Christ on December 25th as such, the man became incensed, and terrible upset, remarking, “You're a weird man. Everyone is entitled to a birthday, even Jesus.” Away he went, shaking his head. We tell this to set forth a point. The man was, and is, exceeding wicked and does not even profess to believe in Christ. To him Christmas is like New Year's day and Halloween - a time to make merry. Brethren, be not unequally yoked. (II Cor. 6:14-17) Abstain from all appearance of evil. (I Thes. 5:22) You think that because you do not enter into the grosser forms of this pagan festival that it will be alright? You may say that the spirit of Christmas to you is to get together with the family and exchange a few simple gifts and nothing more. Curious that you would select December 25th to do this. (We have no objection to gift giving, but why drag the name of Christ into the Christmas part of it?) However, let us move on.

Second consideration - the first day of the week is of Bible origin, whereas Christmas is not. Ample proof of this can be supplied, but let the following suffice, “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.” (Acts 20:7) No one can prove that the first day is the *only* day we may gather to worship. On the contrary, every day is the Lord's day, and we may and do call upon Him in Grace at anytime. Even though, in the Apostolic pattern, the disciples came together weekly, (more often in the first church in Jerusalem) *and the time was for the family of God to remember the Lord's death in the breaking of bread.* (This is very likely a reference to the Lord's Supper.) The elect family of God, chosen, called out, are not to follow the way of the world but to meet in a holy love feast - a true family reunion, unlike any that the family of man ever engaged in. What a blessed thought, that we have a spiritual family to meet with and to exchange our gifts with. Not worldly trinkets bought from a list of those who gave to you last year, but gifts such as love, joy, exhortation, prayer, helps, governments, teaching, and others which freely we have received by Grace, and freely we give to our spiritual family by that same Grace. (I Cor. 12:28-31) “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: *he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.*” (Romans 12:6-8)

Dearest family of the Lamb of God, this December 25th, how will it be with you? Will you want to, as many will, call off the church meeting so you can get together with the

family of man? Or, will you rather, under the sweet influence of God's Spirit, wish to meet with the bloodwashed family under the banner of love? To those, drawn under the sweet influence of a Saviour's love, there is no choice. Nor will there be any reluctance to tell our earthly families that we are to "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God" and be found in that Holy convocation when they meet to worship. Let Santa Claus have his admirers as Dagon and Ashdod did in Old Testament times. *To the believer, Christ must have the pre-eminence.* Saints of God have been taught by the Spirit of Holiness that they can not have respect to these so-called man made, money motivated, Satan directed, religious days, but rather do they say with the words of the Hymn:

Peace be within this sacred place,  
And joy a constant guest?  
With holy gifts and heavenly grace,  
Be her attendants blest!

My soul shall pray for Zion still,  
While life or breath remains;  
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,  
There God my Saviour reigns.

In conclusion, may you be stirred to ask yourself, "Where will I find my *best friends and kindred* on December 25, 1977?" With a desire to offend none of the House of Faith, but stir up their pure minds, we remain,

Your humble servant,  
J.F.P. (Elder James F. Poole)

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