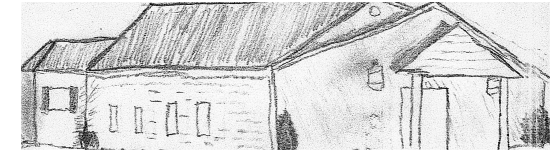


birth. **If God had wanted us to remember the birth of Jesus as a religious holiday he surely would have told us when He was born!**

Since we are not commanded to remember the birth of Christ, and we do not know when His birthday was, we should not and cannot celebrate the birth of Jesus. Yet, with this conclusion someone may exclaim, “ba-humbug you ole’ scrooge. You’re just trying to ruin Christmas!” This is not the case at all. **Christians can enjoy the holiday season as a time to give gifts, spend time with friends and family and take a break from the routine of life.** However, the Bible doesn’t authorize us to remember this time of year as Jesus’ birth, nor does it authorize us to cancel services because of the holidays, New Year’s, a football game or any other event that happens to fall on a Sunday. May each of us ask ourselves, “Are we really following the Scriptures when we celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday?” And may we remember the words of the wise sage, **“Do not add to His Word lest He rebuke you and you be found a liar” (Prov. 30:6).**

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Bulletin for December 05, 2010

Some of our men folk enjoyed a great day of bible study and fellowship yesterday at the Pennville congregation's Men's Day!



We will have lunch in the fellowship room immediately after services this morning and then meet back in the auditorium for our afternoon service at 1:00 PM. **There will be no evening service today.** Please take this opportunity to visit with our brethren at one of the area congregations.



Ladies: We are planning a **teacher training day for present and future teachers.** Please let Monda know what Saturday would be most convenient for you to attend. We will try to schedule it on the day that is convenient for the majority. It will be held on a Saturday morning from 9-12.

Upcoming Events

Challenge Youth Conference (CYC): February 25-27, Gatlinburg, TN. We plan to rent a cabin for the weekend for any youth who would like to attend. Please let Kevin or Monda know if you plan to attend.

Continue to remember our other family members who are confined to their home: Lillian Criswell and Cecil Hill and Callie Paige.

Continue to remember in prayer: The Lord's church worldwide, our missionaries, our nation and her leaders and our service men and women on foreign soil, Steve Weaver, Glenda Weaver, Eathel Currey, Betty Holt, Nelle Tipton, Gene Smith, Chovo Barrientos, Raymond Walker, George Stefanic, Curtis Love, Butch Jones, Jimmy Woods, Edna Dooley, Macario and Valbina Barrientos.

—IS JESUS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON?

by Ben Bailey

It's getting close to that time of year again—Christmas cookies, putting up the lights, buying gifts, and the constant reminder of how confused our society has become concerning the birth of Jesus. Should Christmas be observed as a religious holiday? Does the Bible authorize us to remember the birth of God's Son? Was Jesus even born on December 25? Should we ever cancel worship services because they conflict with our holidays? Let's look to the Bible to answer these questions.

First, we must determine from Scripture if we are to remember the birth of Jesus as a religious holiday. Does God authorize His people to remember His Son's birthday? If so, how and when are we to remember it? As a person takes his Bible and looks for words like Christmas & religious holiday he will very quickly notice they are not in the Bible. **Christmas is not mentioned one time in the entire Bible.** As one studies the birth of Christ, he will also notice that while it was a wonderful event of hope, we are never commanded to remember his birth (Luke 2:1ff). **Instead, Christians are commanded to remember the death of Christ every first day of the week by taking the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24-25; Acts 20:7).** As you are reading this you may be thinking to yourself, "It doesn't say we can't do it." To this objection we must ask, "Must the Christian have Bible authority for religious acts, like remembering the birth of Christ?" To answer this question we need only look at a few passages in the Bible that affirm this fact. For example, **Paul told Christians not to go beyond what is written in the Bible (1 Cor. 4:6). Must we go beyond the Word of God to celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday? Yes! Toward the close of the Bible we are told not to add to or take away from God's Word or divine condemnation will be pronounced upon us (Rev. 22:18-19). Do we have to add to the Word of God to observe the birth of Jesus as a religious holiday? Yes!** Paul told Christians, "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus..." (Col. 3:17). **Can we find one**

shred of evidence where Jesus authorized his birth to be remembered today? No! Friends, if God doesn't tell us to do something and we do it anyway, are we going to please God? No. **If you think it is possible to add to God's Word and still please Him, just turn in your Bible and read the example of Nadab & Abihu in Leviticus 10:1-2.** God did not authorize these men to offer a strange fire, and as a result they perished because of it. God has not authorized Christians to remember His Son's birth, and we must not add to His Word!

Secondly, we must consider the time of Jesus' birth. **Was Jesus born on December 25? Not likely.** There are two very strong evidences that suggest Jesus' birth was not in December. First, we know that shepherds were in the fields watching their flocks at the time of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:7-8). Shepherds were not in the fields during December. Concerning this evidence, commentator Albert Barnes notes, "It is probable from this that our Saviour was born before the 25th of December, or before what we call "Christmas." At that time it is cold, and especially in the high and mountainous regions about Bethlehem." (Barnes, Luke 2:8). Second, Jesus' parents came to Bethlehem to register in a Roman census (Luke 2:1-4). Such censuses were not taken in winter, when temperatures often dropped below freezing and roads were in poor condition. Taking a census under such conditions would have been self-defeating. No one really knows the exact time of Jesus'