

Christmas Holiday Observance

Part 2

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- 1. Holiday Ornaments** NKJV Isaiah 60:13 *“The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the pine, the fir and the cypress together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of My feet, glorious.”*
- The Christmas tree tradition originated in Central Europe during the Renaissance, and tradition says that evergreens symbolized life and the promise of sunlight.
- Christians in Germany brought trees into their homes around the 16th century and decorated them with wafers to symbolize *Communion* and with candles to signify the *light of Christ*.
- The first to have a Christmas tree may have been Martin Luther who started the Protestant church.
- Luther protested against the Catholic church—saying we are justified only by faith in Christ, not by confessing to a priest.
- AV Romans 5:18 *“By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.”*
- One of Luther's contributions to the Protestant movement was his translation of the Bible into German. His translation is still used in Germany today—and is a translation that is similar to the English King James Bible.

- The consensus of Christians is that such ancient traditions have been completely separated from any connection to their original use.
- A pine tree today, says an article, is a symbol that encourages a spirit of peace and reconciliation that honors the Lord. Such trees are simply a decoration and nothing more.
- Evergreens are grown as a crop today and harvested at the end of the calendar year. They are later turned into mulch or used for other purposes.
- The high price for trees has us think that the money could be used for better purposes—like giving anonymous donations to individuals or groups who may lack the necessities like food, clothing, and shelter.
- Christmas Cards**—The first commercial Christmas cards were sold in England, and Christians did not, at first, accept the practice. It was twenty-five years later that such cards were sold, bought, and sent. Seasonal cards have now become a major industry.
- Recent statistics say that Americans spend nearly one billion dollars on Christmas cards.
- The practice of sending cards seems unnecessary and the money used in better ways. The giving and sending of family photos seems a much better practice.
- Profit from the Holiday**—One right way to observe the holiday and not be part of the commercial aspect of it, is not to profit personally from the observance.
- It seems best to give foods and baked goods to families as gifts. That is the *right reason for the season*.
- A good way to remember Jesus' birth and to follow the example of the Wise Men, is to give gifts as they did.
- If we are able to make things and cook, this holiday is the opportunity to show Christian love by giving such home-baked treats to others.

- The recipient will surely appreciate such acts of kindness.
- Giving of our time, our skills, and our energy so that others may enjoy something they would not otherwise be able to have, is absolutely the right spirit of the season.
 - Christmas Music**—There many beautiful hymns and seasonal songs heard at this time. The head of each household should make the decision what songs and music are played in their home on a regular basis.
 - We should not condone music with objectionable words or lyrics. We would do well to have hymns and spiritual songs played or heard in the home.
 - NIV Romans 15:11 *“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and sing praises to him, all you peoples.”*
 - NIV Ephesians 5:19 *“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,*
 - 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
 - Songs of the Advent season are inspiring and bring honor and glory to God the Father as well as to Jesus Christ His Son.
 - Songs like **Hark! The Herald Angels Sing** #125 v3 *Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of Righteousness! Light and life to all He brings; Risen with healing in His wings.*
 - We Three Kings of Orient Are** #134 v2 *Born a King on Bethlehem's plain; Gold I bring to crown Him again; King forever, ceasing never Over us all to reign.*
 - Chorus Star with royal beauty bright; Westward leading, still proceeding; Guide us to Thy perfect light.*
 - O Little Town of Bethlehem** #128 v4 *O Holy Child of Bethlehem! Descend to us, we pray; Cast out our sin, and enter in; Be born in us to-*

day. *We hear the Christmas angels; The great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us; Our Lord Emmanuel!*

30. Such meaningful words! They all express the thanks and appreciation we should have because of the Savior's arrival to earth to save our soul from the lake of fire. We should meditate upon them often.

31. With God's help, we can all take a right attitude toward every aspect and every person during this season—praying every day for a right scriptural attitude toward friends, family, and fellow believers.

32. Let us pray for the Holy Spirit to help us be more understanding toward those whose viewpoint differs from ours.

33. Let us not be judgmental, if someone wants to observe the holiday differently than we do. Let us respect the opinions of others as we want them to respect ours.

34. After placing the matter before God in prayer, and He shows us how to observe the holiday, then let us seize this opportunity to set a Christlike example for others; let us send a right message by singing songs that point to Jesus; and let us show a Christlike attitude toward everyone as we gather to eat dinner and open gifts.

35. With all the distractions of the holiday season, we need to be on-guard against being too busy to think about the greatest story ever *told*, of the greatest sacrifice ever *made*.

36. All too many today treat Christmas like they do any other day—thereby missing the significance of this momentous event!

37. Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration, and on the way back home realized that the boy Jesus was not with either of them—men and women traveled separately in those days.

38. They returned to Jerusalem and after three days, found Jesus speaking with the elders in the Temple. Jesus said NKJV **Luke 2:49** “*Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?*”

39. We can be so busy with other things that we never get to the Lord's business—we miss the meaning of the holiday!

40. Rushing around to do a thousand and one things is more evident at Christmas than other times. If we are not careful, we can lose Jesus like Mary and Joseph did.

41. How often we have heard: *I'd like to make time for the Lord, but I'm just so busy. I don't seem to have any time for myself. I'd like to read the Bible and I shouldn't miss church, but I just can't fit them in.*

42. But we always find time for what is important to us!

43. It seems the only place there was room for Jesus *was on a cross*—where He gave His life for the sins of the world.

44. Ironically, Jesus said there was *more* than enough room for *us* in His house. AV **John 14:2** “*In my Father's house are many mansions*—and I'm preparing “*a place for you.*”

45. So often we don't have room for *Him*, but He has many rooms for *us*. Jesus took His place in a *manger*, so we could have a home in *Heaven*.

46. It is time to change and a time to make room in our heart for the Lord. It's not about Christmas *presents*; it is about His *presence* in our life.

47. Satan makes it easy to forget what Jesus did for us—especially during the holidays when we are preoccupied with things we need to do, food we must prepare, and places we plan to attend.

48. It is so easy to be *distracted*, that we forget the *profound message* of *Emmanuel, God with us!*

49. When the angels appeared in the night sky to the shepherds over two thousand years ago, they declared, AV **Luke 2:14** “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*”

50. It was a celebration—a time to be *joyful*; and a time to sing *praise* to God—it was a day when God visited our planet—it was a story *like no other!*

51. Let us take advantage of this season to let our “*light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven*” **Matthew 5:16**.

52. Let every home that observes the birth of Christ, place much emphasis on *meaning* of the holiday—to remember the birthday of our Savior, and which marked the beginning of *His journey to the Cross* to pay the sin debt we owed.

53. And if we give gifts to others, let us do so because He gave the *greatest gift of all*—His *life* on the Cross of Calvary—

54. So that we might be converted in *heart*; changed in *attitude*; and redirected toward the mansion He has ready for us *to live with Him forever!*



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