

Holidays

holiday: A consecrated day, a religious festival. Now usually written Holy-day.

- I. The keeping of religious holidays is virtually universal among the religions of this world.
 - A. Certain calendar days are deemed sacred or exalted above others and are deemed vital aspects of the belief system. The deity is honored by their observance and dishonored by their omission.
 - B. Mind that the kingdom of Jesus Christ is "...not of this world" (**JOH 18:36**).
 - 1. The religion of Jesus Christ is at odds with this world. **JOH 15:19; 1JO 3:13.**
 - 2. Men love darkness rather than light. **JOH 3:19.**
 - 3. Religion that is loved by an ungodly world is not of Jesus Christ. **LUK 16:15.**
- II. Under the O.T. law, God had ordained certain holy-days.
 - A. There was a weekly sabbath (**EXO 20:8**), and special sabbaths. **LEV 23:24; JOH 19:31.**
 - B. There were numerous feast and celebratory days to be kept. **LEV 23:4; DEU 16:16.**
 - C. The O.T. system was to endure only until the coming of the Messiah. **GAL 3:19-25 c/w HEB 9:9-10.**
 - D. The O.T. institutions were never intended to be the reality but rather only a hazy picture of something far greater. **HEB 9:22-23; 10:1.**
 - E. The O.T. was set aside in favor of a superior covenant established by the Lord Jesus Christ. **EPH 2:14-17 c/w COL 2:14-17.**
 - 1. The N.T. admits of no ordained holydays to be observed by Christians.
 - 2. One of the tricks of Satan is to bring N.T. believers into bondage through holyday observances. **GAL 4:9-10.**
- III. Man-made traditions and rituals are the favorite tools of carnal man to carve out his own model of righteousness.
 - A. The scribes and Pharisees were noted for voiding God's law to keep their own traditions. **MAR 7:1-13.**
 - B. God wants obedience to His word more than man's tradition or ceremony. **1SAM 15:17-23; PRO 21:3.**
 - C. We ought to covet the things which God esteems highly, not man. **LUK 16:15.**
- IV. God has specific requirements for His worship and service and deviations are unacceptable. **JOH 4:23-24; 1CO 11:1-2.**
 - A. The first recorded sin after the fall was a worship sin. **GEN 4:3-8.**
 - 1. Abel's worship was by faith (**HEB 11:4**), according to God's word. **ROM 10:17.**
 - 2. Cain's unscriptural tradition-oriented worship was evil. **1JO 3:12.**
 - B. God will be approached on His terms only. **LEV 10:1-3; 17:3-7; 1CH 13:6-10; 15:2, 13.**
 - C. Be not deceived! God still highly regards His ordinances. They are not to be disregarded, trifled with, exploited or altered. **MAT 23:23; 1CO 11:29-30.**
 - D. Departure from God's revelation devolves to creature-worship, not Creator-worship (**ROM 1:25**) and is service to devils. **1CO 10:20.**
- V. God particularly forbids the admixture of pagan customs with His service. **DEU 12:29-32; MAT 6:7-8; 2CO 6:14-18.**
 - A. Here are some examples of mixing pagan customs with the religion of God:

1. **2KI 17:28-33.** Pagans blending the fear of God with service to devils.
 2. **JER 7:2, 8-10; EZE 23:38-39.** Jews doing the same as the pagans.
 3. **EZE 8:13-18.** Jews adopting the Babylonian mysteries.
 4. **JER 7:17-18; 44:15-19.** Jews incorporating the pagan concept of a “queen of heaven.”
- B. Professing Christians today have commonly adopted pagan customs on the premise that they are not using them to worship pagan gods, but the true God.
1. For example, the birth of Jesus Christ is supposedly being honored by the setting up and decorating of a tree, a custom of heathen worship of their idol. **JER 10:1-4.**
 2. The consecration of elements of idolatry unto the true God is still idolatry. **EXO 32:5-6 c/w 1CO 10:5-7.**
 3. Idolatry is something to abominate and flee, not incorporate. **DEU 7:25-26; 1CO 10:14.**
- VI. An examination of modern Christian holidays easily reveals that they are nothing more than superstitious pagan customs which have been altered and given Christian names. For example:
- A. *Christmas* is nothing more than the old Feast of Sol, Saturnalia, Nativity of the Sun, or Mithraism which were all celebrated at the winter solstice.
1. These pagan holidays generally commemorated the cycle of the death and rebirth of their god (the sun) at the winter solstice (in the northern hemisphere).
 2. The Catholic church, in order to pacify the heathen and encourage them to embrace Christianity simply incorporated their customs as did Aaron (**EXO 32:5-6**).
- B. The same thing was done with *Easter*, which was the old pagan festival of the goddess of fertility, the *queen of heaven*. She was, depending on the culture, known as Astarte, Ishtar, Eostre or Diana, etc. And just what do colored eggs and rabbits have to do with the resurrection of Jesus Christ?
- C. Likewise, *Halloween*, the old Druidic festival honoring Saman, lord of the dead, was “conquered” by Catholic Christianity and assimilated to gain the allegiance of the pagan Celts & Picts. The Catholic monks and missionaries were fascinated by the mystical powers with which the Druid priests were endowed.
- D. So obvious is this faulty consecration of pagan religion that modern-day pagans and witches decry the Christian hi-jacking of their religious high days and customs.
- E. Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? “Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God...” (**DEU 12:31**).
- F. Pagan religious customs are ritual pictures of their gods.
1. Christians are married to God in Christ. **2CO 11:2.**
 2. Using pagan customs in service to God is akin to a wife loving her husband with pictures of her old flames.
 3. (**1CO 10:22**) Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?
- VII. Here are some additional considerations regarding holidays:
- A. Bible Christians celebrate Christ's birth, death, and resurrection by joyfully receiving the gospel, praising God, and observing baptism and the Lord's Supper.
1. This is celebrating Christ's coming according to God's appointed manner.
 2. This is not a celebration with pagan traditions, but it is a celebration.
 3. However, people crave a celebration that caters to their carnal appetites.
- B. Christians are responsible for the constructions that others place upon their actions. **1CO 10:27-30.**

1. The world in general views Christmas as a religious celebration of Christ's birth and Easter as a religious celebration of His resurrection.
 2. Christians must avoid being identified with these celebrations lest they embolden others in their wrongdoings. **1CO 8:10.**
 3. Christians must avoid a celebration that makes light of Satanism (Halloween).
- C. Avoid the extreme of thinking that all traditions are evil.
1. Scripture allows feasts, birthdays, and exchanging gifts. **1CO 10:27; JOH 2:1-2; JOB 1:4 c/w 3:1-3; EST 9:22.**
 2. It is the religious tradition of which one must beware.
 3. Liberty to *esteem one day above another* (**ROM 14:5**) must be regulated by precept.
 - a. Is it an occasion for the flesh? An excuse for a carnal celebration in God's name? **GAL 5:13.**
 - b. Does it have the appearance of evil? **1TH 5:22.**
 - c. Is it a man-made tradition that substitutes for or voids a law of God? **MAR 7:13.**
 - d. Is it will-worship (**COL 2:23**) that is so much “strange fire” (**LEV 10:1-2**)?
 4. The objections of family and friends must be borne for Christ's sake. **MAT 10:34-38.**