

Nobody Does It Better

Well, it is that season again. The “holiday” season, even though it began right after the 4th of July. I am still trying to figure out how they can stretch a month of Black Fridays and overlap that on top of “Cyber-week” which is now in its third month... hey, but it is all for celebrating the birth of Jesus, right?!

Way back when I was a little kid, *no* there were not any dinosaurs then, my family celebrated all the holidays including Christmas. My parents did what they were taught by their parents as did most everyone in this room. It was not that they were intentionally bad people, they simply did not know God’s Word. They like most folks, went to church on a Sunday and listened to the guy behind the box, we believed that if we were good, we would all go to heaven when we died. You will have as much luck finding that truth in a Sears catalogue as you will in the Bible. Besides, what did Jesus Himself say on the subject of “good?”

Matthew 19:17- “And He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good except one—God. But if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments.”

Mark 10:18- “But Jesus answered him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except one; that is God.” (**Luke 18:19**)

Well, that kind of limits the “being good” going to heaven thing. The whole “going to heaven” thing is as factual as Santa and the Easter Bunny and there is plenty of scripture to support God’s plan for mankind. The sad thing is, it is in plain English print and all we have to do is seek Him and read it.

Romans 7:18- “Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly *being*—*any* good. For the desire to do good is present within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find.”

How many kids do you know when you were young that could have slid by on this scripture? None of the ones I hung around with.

However, as a kid, Christmastime was an enjoyable and it was not as commercialized as it is nowadays. Of course, there were only 3 channels on the TV and no remote control. Things went downhill fast with the rapidly developing technology and any Christmas meaning however false, went by the wayside. Once

the truth was known about the whole Santa façade, my math questions about Good Friday and Easter made more sense about who was lying to who.

But even after having a family and children of our own, we did the same thing. For the sake of being traditional and warm and fuzzy, we intentionally lie to our kids. By lying, “just a little white lie,” we are breaking the 9th Commandment (**Exodus 20:16**). And if we break one, we break them all.

James 2:10- “For *if* anyone keeps the whole law, but sins in one aspect, he becomes guilty of all.”

We slap a Jesus label on stuff and make it “acceptable” because “we are not hurting anyone” or “it is for the children.” Here is a shocker, God does not care.

Romans 2:11- “Because there is no respect of persons with God.”

Acts 10:34- “Then Peter opened his mouth and said, “Of a truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons,”

God is very explicit in His Word and in His instructions. We cannot take something He institutes and make it bigger, better, more beneficial, improve it, impress Him, honor Him, or make it holy by doing it our way and putting a Jesus label on it, no matter how pure we think our intentions.

Matthew 15:8-9- ““These people have drawn near to Me with their mouths, and with their lips they honor Me; but their hearts are far away from Me. For they worship Me in vain, teaching *for* doctrine *the* commandments of men.””

Mark 7:6-9 “And He answered *and* said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘This people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for* doctrine the commandments of men.’ For leaving the commandment of God, you hold fast the tradition of men, *such as* the washing of pots and cups; and you practice many other things like *this*.” Then He said to them, “Full well do you reject the commandment of God, so that you may observe your *own* tradition.”

This may sound a little harsh but God is Sovereign. He does not need our approval. He is more than qualified to judge us. Would you give the life of your child to save a group of people on the condition they obey a set of laws you establish and

promise them an inheritance only to have them spit in your face and tell you, “We will do it our way.” Just stop and think for a moment what He sent His Son to do for us...nuf said.

We would rather stick to our traditions than honor God and obey His Commandments.

Amos 5:1- “Hear this word which I take up against you, even a lamentation, O house of Israel.”

Amos 5:21- “I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies.”

Verse 21 certainly applies to God’s Holy Days outlined in Leviticus 23. But the people of modern-day Israel (not the country in the middle-east) have all but done away with them and have primarily dismissed the Old Testament as being “Jewish.” The phrase, “your feast days,” can certainly apply to the numerous man-made holidays that have taken over and replaced God’s Holy Days.

Deuteronomy 4:2- “You shall not add to the word which I command you; neither shall you take away from it, so that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”

Deuteronomy 12:32- “Whatever thing that I command you, be careful to do it. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it.”

Revelation 22:18- “For I jointly testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, *that* if anyone adds to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book.”

Chopping up God’s Word is common place these days. If we do not agree with it, we can make it better, all we need is good intentions and a warm feeling. Jesus will understand. I am sure the scourging and nails did not hurt that bad...besides that was 2000 years ago. It is too easy for people to ignore God and His Word to do things their own way.

Jeremiah 17:9- “The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?”

Romans 8:7- “Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can it *be*.”

After all the years of dreading the holiday season, all the commercialized crap associated with it, and Andrea’s incessant pressuring me to dangle by my feet to hang “Christmas lights” from the roof lines... thank God He had mercy and gave us a wake-up call. (Whoever invented icicle lights should be imprisoned).

1 Peter 2:9- “But you are a chosen stock, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for a possession *of God*, that you might proclaim His *excellent* virtues, Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;”

God wants us to be holy.

1 Peter 1:16- “For it is written, “You be holy because I am holy.”

Holy is defined as, sanctified, set apart, for a sacred purpose. God has called us out from the world for His purpose. We no longer have to be a part of this annual

madness. Unfortunately, we are still stuck with the traffic which will put your “holiness” to the test.

1 Peter 1:15-16- “But according as He Who has called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all your conduct; For it is written, “You be holy because I am holy.”

1 Corinthians 11:1- “Be imitators of me, exactly as I also *am* of Christ.”

As I mentioned, God’s Word is explicit. His plan of salvation for mankind is outlined in His Sabbaths and Holy Days. Reading and studying His Word is a start.

Matthew 7:7-8- “Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and you shall find.

Knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it shall be opened.” (**Luke 11:9-10**)

But reading is *just a start*. As we just read in the essay, from James.

James 1:21-24- “Therefore, having rid yourselves of all filthiness and all *the* abounding of wickedness around you, then in meekness accept for yourselves the implanted Word, which is able to save your lives. Then be doers of *the* Word, and

not only hearers, deceiving your own selves Because if anyone is a hearer of *the* Word and not a doer, this one is like a man considering his natural face in a mirror Who, after looking at himself, went away and immediately forgot what he was like.”

These verses include steps towards holiness and stresses the importance of being a “doer” of God’s Word. We can hear and listen to instructions but if we did not follow them and put them into action, we will not get to the destination.

Psalm 33:4-5- “For the Word of the LORD is upright; and all His works are *done* in faithfulness. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the lovingkindness of the LORD.”

There is NO holiday, occasion, or event, or anything made on Earth that we can change or make better than God already has. Period. No matter how hard we may try and justify it or reason it out for our own peace of mind, a price was paid for our salvation that we could never cover.

Job 33:12- “Behold, *in* this you are not right; I will answer you, for God is greater than man.”

Isaiah 55:8-9- “For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways,” says the LORD. “For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

It really is fairly simple. If Jesus would have wanted us to celebrate His birthday, He would have told us. It would have been in the Bible. Keeping Christ in Christmas makes as much sense as keeping your goldfish in a birdcage. But if traditions are all that important and eating candy out of a sock in front of a dead tree in your living room makes one happy, maybe the 1000-year nap will be worth it. God’s way is best, NOBODY does it better. Amen.

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