

Christmas – My Response

Written by K B Napier

Monday, 11 December 2017 16:49

Every Christmas, without fail, a plethora of articles are sent out, usually by internet, to Christians who still celebrate Christmas. And, I must say, some of the articles can be very abusive, if not hateful. Some even insinuate that *“No true Christian would celebrate Christmas”!* This is not the way one Christian should treat another Christian, even if the other one is genuinely wrong. We are to entreat fellow believers with love, not with anger or hate. Christmas is NOT a test of salvic orthodoxy and certainly does not make a person an unbeliever. This article will give examples of how to think about it all, because many errors of judgment are resorted to by well-meaning brethren who hate Christmas. In all matters we must be careful of the arguments we use.

In my ministry I do not send the same arguments out time and again to fellow believers who appear not to ‘get it’ the first time. It is why we have a publications’ list... it contains our doctrinal and other arguments for all to see. If Christians or others wish to check them out, that’s fine. Our belief is simple – no man, including a Christian, will believe what others rightfully tell him until he is prompted to believe it by the Holy Spirit. This also applies to doctrinal issues, no matter how plain the biblical text and argument might be. We should not keep hammering the truth into people, but encouraging them to think biblically. Continuous anger on a single subject simply turns people off, so after the first abusive article they just ignore all the others that inevitably follow every year like clockwork.

It is true that Christians SHOULD simply believe, though they might not yet ‘get it’. Yelling at them on paper will only serve to stiffen their necks, and the more they receive anti-Christmas materials the less they are likely to listen, because they feel they are being attacked. This is very simple relational dynamics. It is also against the tenor of teaching our fellows the truth.

So, the one sending warnings might indeed be correct, but, by making their approach confrontational, the opposite effect comes into being. It is fact that we must be confrontational at times. But, frankly, I find the continuous presentation of angry articles about the subject off-putting and lacking in love for the brethren. The basic argument (concerning Roman Catholic celebrations) are sound, but there is a tendency to mix-up doctrinal issues with behavioural issues, with several false routes used to get to the main points.

As a researcher I hope always to be truthful, direct and useful. I look at a problem, or one that claims to be a problem, to see if I can unpick the various elements. This is how any theology researcher MUST work. Many times this is easy, but in the case of Christmas, the arguments are hampered by a wrong approach to the topic, and an unfortunate resort to generalities which

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present a cloud of information, some of which is unrelated to theology itself, and even unrelated, at times, to scripture. It must be very confusing, therefore, to untaught Christians, as they come across layer upon layer of sub-arguments, which can appear as personal vendettas rather than a presentation of clear biblical truths.

The Doctrinal Issues

From what I can see there is only one doctrinal issue. That is, the use of the *word* 'Christmas' in worship. (I am here being very tight in my argument, because it is needed). It is my belief that the liberal use of 'Holiday' is closer to what is needed (though it is used by socialists to denigrate Christians, it is more accurate).

The word 'Christmas' itself holds no religious connotation for the majority of people, including those who are saved. To them it is just a word. We can say the same about days of the week and months of the year: all have the names of pagan gods – yet even the most ardent of Christians continue to use them. Try NOT using them, and life becomes very difficult. The Jews had a good way of dealing with this – the days were simply numbered 1 to 7, and the months were given Hebrew titles linked to the seasons. But, most Jews now use the same pagan names as we do. This is because no man uses the names as tributes to the pagan gods. They are just names. Likewise, try referring to the December season without calling it 'Christmas'! Thus, the name itself is meaningless to non-Catholics.

We should also be far more strict if we denigrate others for being 'Christmasy'. For example, those who argue against Christmas nevertheless celebrate their birthdays every year – yet it, too, is pagan... early Christians never celebrated birthdays for this very reason. Same goes for wearing wedding rings – this comes from Egyptians wore them over what they thought was a special vein that ran to the heart. Engagement rings, too, originated from the custom of Roman women wearing them to signify that their husbands owned them; the ring was connected to a set of keys. We could mention many more things like this innocently copied by modern believers. Yet, as they do not follow the original meanings, are they culpable?

No Romish Device Intended

For the majority, then, 'Christmas' is just a seasonal holiday, meaningless in religious or biblical terms. All this is simple fact. Yet, we CAN separate-out the doctrinal issue. IF a Christian uses 'Christmas' as a worship term, then there is a problem, because the word is Roman Catholic and therefore pagan and heretical. Christmas is really 'Christ-Mass' Or, more pertinently, it refers to three masses said over the late December period in Roman Catholic 'churches' by priests. So, the word itself is a problem, but the intention is even worse – to follow Romish

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heresy.

The three masses or 'mass of Christ' have no place in the lives and worship of true Christians. Indeed, it is blasphemous, and is a 'death sacrifice'. Even so, MOST Christians are unaware of this. They SHOULD be aware, but they are not, thanks to weak pastors who do not tell them what the term really means.

Remember that a mass celebrates the death of Christ every day. The priest claims full power to make this mass possible, and stands between God and man, illicitly and sinfully. This mass for Christ is blasphemy writ-large and should never appear in the life of a true Christian. But, this is the problem, for few Christians understand the truth or the meaning of the words, because of bad education by lax pastors, who themselves decorate the local churches with Roman Catholic nonsense.

Thus, when dealing with this matter, Christians with the relevant knowledge should start on a lower step. If most Christians are unaware of the problem they need careful teaching, not an angry blast into their minds, which they see more as a diatribe than a gentle message of doctrinal truth.

What if they do not see it your way (if you are presenting the argument)? Well, that is not your problem – just say it once and ask God to change the mind and heart of the listener. Do not keep on and on – even Paul told the Corinthians he held back his potent arguments for fear of making them depressed and feeling unworthy! Once you have given your arguments, stand back. The outcome is in the hands of the Holy Spirit. If you do not allow this, you will become frustrated and angry and the recipient will become angry and defensive, rather than receptive.

Know how many times I feel like taking Christians by the scruff of their necks until they 'get it' (about ANY doctrinal issue)? MANY times! But, I know that my part is done, and the Holy Spirit will take over and illuminate the mind and heart at HIS pace, not mine.

Now – break-down the elements! The objection to the NAME of the period has no meaning to non-Catholics (because they are unaware of the Catholic meaning). So, the only basic doctrinal error is in worshipping God in Roman Catholic 'Christ-Mass', which is a blasphemy.

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We have, then, two issues. The first is that of using the 'Christ-Mass' idea in the Roman Catholic sense, *knowing* what it is. Such knowledge makes the Christian blameworthy. The second issue is what might be called 'weak doctrinal'. The second issue is to use the name without knowing what it refers to. This is down to sheer ignorance, not to deliberate personal sin. It may still be sin, but it is one that requires wisdom and careful teaching.

May We celebrate Christmas as a Season?

If the aim is to celebrate the season as Rome celebrates it, we would be in grave error and blasphemous. That would be a direct doctrinal heresy and denominations close to Romishness are guilty of this wicked error. But, the majority of churches have their midnight meetings on Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day (24th and 25th December). They sing hymns and maybe carols in a ritualistic way. They sit in a cold church dutifully. I used to do it until I realised it was unworthy.

Those who do not attend are often thought of as woeful. Yet, the main fact is that most attend because they feel pressured to do so... they would rather stay at home. However, some enjoy the experience and feel 'fuzzy' inside! Amongst these are a few who celebrate the birth of Jesus, but *not* anything to do with Roman error. ***Biblically, these are free to do so.*** That is, they have biblical warrant to celebrate the birth of Christ, even though it is not demanded in scripture. Erroneousness ONLY arises IF Christians celebrate on the 24

th

and 25

th

December, when Roman Catholics blasphemously and falsely celebrate Mass for Christ. Can you see the point?

How can Christians justify celebrating the birth of Christ? What is their warrant? ***It is found in God's word.***

For example:

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:" (Colossians 2:16)

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“Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

(Touch not; taste not; handle not;

Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?”
(Colossians 2:20-22)

This is quite clear – worship ‘Christmas’ and you are in error. So, pastors who insist you do so are in error. And condemning other believers for doing so is also an error! If we are indeed dead in Christ, then these things cannot do anything for or against us. Sadly, many Christians are *“subject to ordinances”* (“doctrines of men”). Either way, there is no place for threats and nastiness.

Conclusion

Some might not like the fact that this article is so short. But, I have kept to the strict topic to hand. If a Christian celebrates ‘Christmas’ AS Christmas (that is, as Romanists celebrate it), then they are sinning. If Christians praise God for the birth of His Son, but do NOT celebrate as Romanists do, **they are free to do so** (see above text). They can also enjoy the quietude of the period – indeed, many are forced to do so by businesses who make their employees stop work until after the New Year. My final years in work meant working over the period anyway – ALL holiday periods meant nothing to my wife and I.

I would ask fellow believers not to send off loaded missiles, pretending they are ‘articles sent in love’, when they are really expressions of ‘hobby-horse anger’!! It is true that Christians SHOULD know the origin of what they say and do. But, their ignorance should not be met by anger or hate. Once we have given information, it is up to the Lord to convince them.

There are allied considerations, but these are not doctrinal in nature, so they are not dealt with in this brief comment.

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