

View

A Publication of the Folsom Point church of Christ, 900 E. Natoma, Folsom, CA

December 23, 2007

Jesus is the Reason for Every Season

Do you remember that illustration about the camel that wants to get into the tent. First, he pokes his nose under it, and you say, "OK..." You know the rest: first one hump, then the other hump, then the whole camel and you're outside, wondering what happened.

That seems to illustrate what has happened to churches of Christ over the years with regard to the observance of Christmas as a religious holiday. There used to be almost unanimous agreement that we would have no part in giving anyone the idea that Christmas was the actual date of Christ's birth. Well, that turned into a kind of acquiescence, where we didn't mention it at all (with the noble ideal of not wishing to alienate visitors).

But today, some churches have completely morphed into whole-hearted "reason-for-the-season" celebrants and are going all out to show it. A look in your mailbox or in ads in newspapers or on the web and you may be surprised about how some of these churches are handling "Christmas" these days. For example, one church in the area is advertising all kinds of holiday activities, including a Christmas cookie contest, sweater contest and "ugliest ornament" contest under the title, "Christmas fun and fellowship."

There is now an inclination to go along with the denominations and celebrate it as a day to honor Christ's birth. There are articles in journals published by our brethren that celebrate the season. There are sermons planned for today that will emphasize Jesus' birth, with only the slightest reference, if any, to the fact that the date of Jesus' birth is unknown to us and never mentioned in the Bible. There will be no reference to the fact that most Protestant churches in the 1600s banned any observance of Christmas.

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The reality is that you can set foot in some local churches of Christ today and will assume that the church and the preacher fully endorse the setting aside of a special day to observe the birth of our Lord.

Why would they do that? There are two possible reasons for this. First, the preacher and the church may indeed endorse the celebration of Christ's birthday as a religious holiday and feel that December 25th is as good a time as any. Or, they may feel that a "hands-off, no comment" policy is best, because to tell the truth may alienate those who are visiting for the first time. It is true that we have sometimes made the error of scolding visitors for coming to services for just one or two times a

year, on "Christmas" and "Easter." Instead, we should make them feel welcome and use these as opportunities to teach them about Jesus. I'm happy when visitors come, no matter what motivates them to come. But we must studiously avoid allowing folks to believe that we endorse "Christmas" as a valid "holy day," to be observed religiously. It is a sin to confirm error and celebrating

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about setting aside any day as holy except the first day of the week, are we not presumptuous to set up such a special day? Some say, "But the birth of Jesus is recorded in Scripture!" Yes it is, and we should study it and teach it. But the fact that the story is told in the Bible strengthens the argument against setting aside a special day to celebrate it. God felt that it was fitting to record the event, but gave no instructions about the date of Christ's birth or about honoring it. So upon what basis would we claim to do so? If we are authorized to set up that day as a special day, then we are authorized to take any event recorded in the New Testament and set up a special day for that, too (how about the day of Jesus' baptism or death? Or a "Pentecost Sunday" or a day to honor the miracles of Jesus, or even "Ethiopian Eunuch Sunday"?)

Most mainline denominations have done just that — they have a complete "liturgical" calendar that they follow. The calendar is so full, I foresee a time when each and every Sunday will be a "special day" with a special name. Yet Scripture makes every first day of the week special (see Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10). Scripture also urges us to make a daily commitment (Mt. 16:24) and to glorify God and Christ in our everyday life. God knew that setting up one or two "extra-special" days a year would have the effect of leading people to think that if they serve God on those days, that should be sufficient. But Christ is 24/7, 365 and He'll accept nothing less.

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Christmas as Christ's birth is error. It is not "speaking as the oracles of God," as we are required to do (1 Pet. 4:11). If the Bible is silent (a) about the date of Jesus birth and (b)

The church of Christ

Meeting at 900 E. Natoma
PO Box 492
Folsom, CA 95630
916/608-4866

Elders

Forrest Brown: 530/295-9230
Randy Clark: 916/939-5066
Rich Ladd: 916/774-9048
David Posey: 530/676-9514

Deacons

Brent Agee: 916/786-0436
Bryan Byrd: 916/351-9320
David Byrd: 916/985-6564
Michael Caisse: 530/672-2902
Jeff Clark: 916/985-8689
John Daniels: 916/985-3090
Jerry Deschler: 916/285-9115
Steve Dickey: 916/983-1071
Steven Doty: 916/933-5004
Eric Fields: 916/817-6495
David Main: 650/292-5417
Terry Raposa: 916/782-1140
Dane Scott: 916/631-7221
Russ Tarrant: 530/672-1748
Steve Thompson: 916/983-4170
Jeff Warshaw: 916/933-9399

Evangelist/Editor

David Posey: 530/676-9514
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Services

Sunday Morning Assembly
9:30 AM
Sunday Evening: 5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Study
7:30 PM

Classes for all ages.

Private classes arranged
at your convenience.

For more information,
visit our web site at:

www.folsomchurch.com

Webmaster: Richard Harvey

Agenda

The Lord's Day, December 23, 2007

9:30 AM: Worship: Singing, Lord's Supper, Preaching
Sermon: The Story, 2 Kings

☪ Preaching: David Posey

5:00 PM: Lord's Supper, Singing, Preaching

☪ Sermon: David Posey

5:30 PM: Bible Classes, All Ages

Adult Class Offerings

☪ Room 11-12, SeedSowers

☪ Auditorium, Deuteronomy (Jeff Clark)

Wednesday, December 26, 2007

7:30 PM, Bible classes for ages 18 mos. and up,
Auditorium: Deuteronomy (David Posey)

Notes

Most sermons are available in MP3 format on our website (www.folsomchurch.com) or on CD (see a deacon).

ADULT CLASSES NEXT QUARTER

WE ARE OFFERING SIX ADULT CLASSES NEXT QUARTER ON SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAYS. EACH CLASS, EXCEPT THE PARENTING AND SEED-SOWERS CLASSES, WILL FOCUS ON SOME ASPECT OF THE WORDS OF JESUS. HERE ARE YOUR CHOICES.

SUNDAY @ 5:30 PM, AUDITORIUM:

“WHAT JESUS WANTS TO KNOW: QUESTIONS JESUS ASKED”

COORDINATOR: DAVID POSEY, SR. / TEACHERS: VARIOUS

SUNDAY @ 5:30 PM, ROOM 11-12 OR 8:

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

TEACHER: DAVID BYRD. SIGN-UP SHEET IN FOYER.

SUNDAY @ 5:30 PM, ROOM 11-12 OR 8: SEED-SOWERS

TEACHERS: NATHANAEL MAY AND CAMERON CARROZZA

SIGN-UP SHEET IN FOYER.

WEDNESDAY MORNING @ 10 AM, (8 WEEKS, BEGINNING JAN. 16TH).

“JESUS ON RELATIONSHIPS”

TEACHER: DAVID POSEY, SR.

WEDNESDAY @ 7:30, AUDITORIUM:

THE SAYINGS OF JESUS

TEACHER: RICH MOWRER

WEDNESDAY @ 7:30 PM, ROOM 11-12:

“PARENTING BY THE BOOK”

TEACHERS: DAVID POSEY, SR. & DENNIS WADE