

Why Do People Like Christmas?

Roger M. Hendricks

Like it or not, Christmas time shows up once every year! And, along with all the hustle and bustle, goes the declaration that December 25th is the birthday of Jesus Christ! It's possible that most people who claim to be Christians ... actually believe that Jesus was born on this date. But the belief is not founded on biblical evidence! In fact, what biblical evidence there is ... argues against it! (But that's another story.)

The plain truth is ... "Christmas" (with its good cheer, good deeds, gift giving, etc.) is celebrated by countless thousands of people who make no profession of being Christians. (Many of whom are even avowed enemies of Christ and Christianity.) Yet, they enjoy Christmas!

I went online to see who all makes use of this popular day! And wasn't at all surprised by what I discovered! Surveys indicate that **81% of non-Christians in the USA** participate in activities that have become a part of Christmas! Obviously they don't view it as any kind of religious holy day. And I believe — rightly so!

It was stated that **75% of Buddhists; 73% of Hindus; 32% of Jews; some Muslims; some Agnostics** and numerous **non-religious people** (which would include **atheist**) ... **all celebrate Christmas!** Perhaps these view Christmas more as a cultural — rather than a religious — celebration!

In point of fact: Many people (including many, if not most, brethren) recognize that Christmas is NOT the birthday of Jesus Christ! On the other hand, (at least in the USA) Christmas Day is a **Federal Holiday!** One of ten established by our government.

Now, as I consider the millions of people who — in various ways — become involved in Christmas, even though not believing that it's the Lord's birthday, and not recognizing what they do as being religious activity — the question I'm posing for our consideration is ...

Why Do People Like Christmas?

What is there about it that attracts millions from, it would appear, every walk of life? Even those who make no profession of being Christians and who may feel that Christianity is a violation of their religious principles!

How does this one holiday lead thousands — every year — to travel long distances? (In the USA, some 20,000,000 people were expected to travel during the 2015 Christmas season!)

Why does this day (which generally goads even misers to spend money) gain the attention of the world? Was Scrooge right when he exclaimed: "Bah, Humbug" to the entire affair? Well ... it seems that much (if not most) of the world DOES NOT think he was!

Thus, I ask again ...

Why Do People Like Christmas?

If we were considering just children, the answer to this question might simply be — **for the gifts!** But I doubt that this is the answer ... when applied to most adults who are involved!

Now, I certainly don't claim to be an expert on human thinking, but I believe our question has to do with the frame of mind that — for however brief a time-period — **seeks a change!** But not **just** a change! A change to something **better!**

What kind of world do we live in? I'm not talking just about ones individual life ... but ... **The world over!** What are some of the ... **not-so-good** ... prevailing attitudes and activities within the world? (Think of the **bad things** you constantly read about in newspapers or online! Those things you hear about on radio and TV!)

Once you've thought of those BAD things ... in your mind, flip-flop your answer! I mean by that: Consider the opposite view! A change from the consideration of **bad** things ... to **good** ones!

I believe that's one thing the "**Christmas Season**" does — on an individual's personal stage of life! It brings one a **better, more enjoyable world!**

What are some of those specific changes in a person's outlook ... that Christmas Day can produce? Well ... let's see! How about helping one see a world characterized by ... "**Giving**," rather than "**Taking**!" Our world is "Dog eat Dog!" We **all** want! But **too many** want ... no matter how they get!

Then ... into this selfishness ... along comes the "Christmas" season! And it's a season of **giving and helping**. That, friends and brethren, is the kind of thing that brings a **ray of light & hope** into our hearts.

Of course, Christmas time shouldn't be the **ONLY** time we think of these noble attributes. But in a world that thinks primarily of "**get**"; it is refreshing to think of "**give**"!

It's refreshing to see the spirit of giving **put into action** — and then, hopefully, to have it incorporated into one's personal life. If Christmas time helps us do that ... well ... that's a plus!

For those of us who are Christians ... we learned the truest meaning of giving from Our Father and His Son. That's found, of course, in the **Bible! It's** clothes in **these words**..

*"For God **so loved** the world, **that he gave** his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)*

And in these words: Jesus "... **gave himself** for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world ..." (i.e. from the corruption and destruction that comes from living in sin.) *Gal. 1:4*

"Love": Rather Than **"Hate!"** **"Good"**: Rather than **"Evil!"** And one thing that will always be true of love ... is that it will be demonstrated by good and noble deeds!

But let's not forget ... a good portion of the world ... perhaps **most** of the world ... has little interest in "love thy neighbor, as thyself." The world's philosophy is: "Do unto others ... **before they do unto you**."

The apostle John wrote much about "love." As additional examples: He said (*1 John 4:7f*): "*Beloved, let us **love one another**: for **love is of God** ... "* 9 *In this was **manifested the love of God** toward us,*

*because that God **sent his only begotten** Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, **we ought also to love one another**."*

One other statement from this beloved apostle: "... *whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*" (*1 John 3:17-18*)

The world knows this time of year as "Christmas time"! And people seem to be more prone to turn their hearts to a consideration of ... Kindness and Companionship; rather than of Meanness or Isolation! And when one is out in the crowds ... what he, she is likely to see and hear ... are encouraging words ... smiles ... handshakes ... pats on the back ... even hugs. But isn't it sad ... that such is not seen throughout the year? And on a daily basis?

Now, finally Since I've said somewhat about giving ... just a word about receiving! Don't we **ALL** enjoy receiving gifts? For many of us ... it doesn't have to be much! We just appreciate the spirit of love that prompts it!

There's an old saying: "The gift, without the giver, is bare!" Perhaps, in our lives, the older one becomes, the more he or she realizes the truthfulness of this statement.

Every gift should be **offered** in a spirit of **LOVE!** Every gift should be **received** in a spirit of **GRATITUDE!** And that gratitude should be **expressed and shown**.

So ... I'm going to close! But I don't want to end our discussion without this admonition:

You can forget about Christmas being the birthday of Jesus! It isn't! But even if it were, God has given us absolutely **NO INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT OBSERVING IT AS SUCH** !

So ... enjoy this holiday season! But ... do not violate the will of God; and do not violate your own conscience in anything you choose to do! May God bless us all!