

Cromwell, Christmas And Christ - Luke 2

John 14:15 If ye love Me, keep My commandments.

1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Intro - Winter Festivals etc. & so-called Christian Christmas

1 John 5:21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

Mark 16:15-18 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My Name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Acts 19 Referred to the 7 Sons of Sceva incident. V19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

Mark 16:20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following. Amen.

Exodus 8:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

1 Corinthians 6:19,20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

1 Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

- where in Bible are all these modern practices?
- as new English Bible was being printed and made available to the masses, God's people, like Josiah, were seeing that many things that they had believed and practice were not Godly. A group, the Puritans, wanted to get back into a righteous Godly relationship. Where they had conformed to the

world, they renounced completely, even Christmas.

Revelation 18:4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

Leviticus 11 God warns "do not touch any unclean thing"

Deuteronomy 18:9 When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

Summarized of Jesus Crucified & Ressurected to Heaven.

Habakkuk 2:4 Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

The Cromwell Association: Misconceptions on Christmas

It is a common myth that Cromwell personally 'banned' Christmas during the mid seventeenth century. Instead, it was the broader Godly or parliamentary party, working through and within the elected parliament, which in the 1640s clamped down on the celebration of Christmas and other saints' and holy days, a prohibition which remained in force on paper and more fitfully in practice until the Restoration of 1660. There is no sign that Cromwell personally played a particularly large or prominent role in formulating or advancing the various pieces of legislation and other documents which restricted the celebration of Christmas, though from what we know of his faith and beliefs it is likely that he was sympathetic towards and supported such measures, and as Lord Protector from December 1653 until his death in September 1658 he supported the enforcement of the existing measures.

The celebration of Christmas in 17th century England had many similarities with our own celebrations today. Christmas Day itself, December 25, was marked as a holy day, celebrating and commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, but it also formed the first day of an extended period of celebration and merriment, lasting until early January, or known as the Twelve Days of Christmas. Although the English calendar was not formally brought into line with the Continental calendar until the mid eighteenth century, in the seventeenth century many people in this country already saw January 1 (rather than March 25) as marking the turning point at which the old year gave way to the new, and New Year's day formed another high point of the 12 Days of Christmas. Twelfth Night, which closed the period of celebration, was often marked by a renewed bout of feasting & carnivals.

Christmas Day itself was a public holiday, with shops, offices and other places of work all closed, and people went to church to attend special services; over the following eleven days there were further special church services, with shops and businesses open only intermittently or for shorter hours than normal. The celebration of all Twelve Days of Christmas

contained other familiar elements, though the degree to which individuals and families participated probably varied, depending upon whether they were living in London, a large provincial town or deep in the countryside, upon whether they were rich or poor and thus upon how much time and money they could afford to expend on celebrations. Churches, public buildings and private houses were often decorated with holly and ivy, rosemary and bays. People visited family, friends and colleagues, eating and drinking and exchanging presents, and the more affluent distributed 'boxes' containing money to servants, tradesmen and the poor. Special food and drink was available and was consumed in larger quantities than normal, including turkey and beef, mince pies, plum porridge and specially-brewed Christmas ale; taverns and taphouses did a roaring trade. Occasionally there were fireworks (though then as now they were more associated with the celebration of the failure of the Gunpowder Treason plot on November 5 Guy Fox Day), and there was also the concept of a 'Father Christmas', more as a figure that oversaw the community celebrations than as someone who gave presents to children. More generally, it was a period of leisure, of eating and drinking to excess, of dancing and singing, gambling, gaming and stage plays (though modern-style pantomimes did not emerge until the eighteenth century), of drunkenness and sexual immorality, a period when normal rules and self-control did not apply, a period of deliberate inversion and 'misrule'.

Increasingly in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, many people, especially the more Godly, came to frown upon this celebration of Christmas, for two reasons. Firstly, they disliked all the waste, extravagance, disorder, sin and immorality of the Christmas celebrations. Secondly, they saw Christmas (that is, Christ's mass) as an unwelcome survival of the Roman Catholic faith, as a ceremony particularly encouraged by the Catholic church and by the recusant community in England and Wales, a popish festival with no biblical justification – nowhere had God called upon mankind to celebrate Christ's nativity in this way, they said. What this group wanted was a much stricter observance of the Lord's day (Sundays), but the abolition of the popish and often sinful celebration of Christmas, as well as of Easter, Whitsun (spring equinox) and assorted other festivals and saints' days.

In the early 1640s, as power passed from Charles I (who largely supported the existing rituals and festivals) to the Long Parliament, parliament began the process of clamping down on the celebration of Christmas, pressing that 'Christ-tide' (as they preferred it called, thus doing away with the 'mass' element and its Catholic echoes) should be kept, if at all, merely as a day of fasting and seeking the Lord. In January 1642, shortly before civil war began, Charles I had agreed to parliament's request to order that the last

Wednesday in each month should be kept as a fast day; many hoped that Christ-tide, December 25, would come to be seen and kept as just an addition to these regular fast days. The Long Parliament, in fact, met and worked as usual on December 25 1643. In late 1644 it was noted that December 25 would fall on the last Wednesday of the month, the day of the regular monthly fast, and parliament stressed that December 25 was strictly to be kept as a time of fasting and humiliation, for remembering the sins of those who in the past had turned the day into a feast, sinfully and wrongfully 'giving liberty to carnal and sensual delights'. Both Houses of Parliament attended intense fast sermons on December 25 1644.

In January 1645 a group of ministers appointed by parliament produced a new Directory of Public Worship, which set out a new church organisation and new forms of worship to be adopted and followed in England and Wales. The Directory made clear that Sundays were to be strictly observed as holy days, for the worship of God, but that there were to be no other holy days – 'festival days, vulgarly called Holy Days, having no warrant in the Word of God, are not to be continued'. Parliamentary legislation adopting the Directory of Public Worship, initially as one of several forms which could be followed in England and Wales, but then as the only form which was legal and was to be allowed, abolishing and making illegal any other forms of worship and church services, therefore prohibited (on paper at least) the religious celebration of all other holy days, including Christmas. In June 1647 the Long Parliament reiterated this by passing an Ordinance confirming the abolition of the feasts of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun, though at the same time parliament said that the second Tuesday in each month was to be kept as a non-religious, secular holiday, providing a break for servants, apprentices and other employees.

During the 1650s parliamentary legislation was passed to reinforce the structure that had been put in place by the end of the 1640s. Specific penalties were to be imposed on anyone found holding or attending a special Christmas church service, it was ordered that shops and markets were to stay open on December 25, the Lord Mayor was repeatedly ordered to ensure that London stayed open for business on December 25, and when it met on December 25 1656 the second Protectorate Parliament discussed the virtues of passing further legislation clamping down on the celebration of Christmas (though no Bill was, in fact, produced). Legislation was passed to ensure that Sundays were even more strictly observed as the Lord's Day, but the holding of a regular monthly fast on the last Wednesday of the month, which had never proved popular or been widely followed, was quietly dropped.

Although in theory and on paper the celebration of Christmas had been abolished, in practice it seems that many people continued to mark

December 25 as a day of religious significance and as a secular holiday. Semi-clandestine religious services marking Christ's nativity continued to be held on December 25, and the secular elements of the day also continued to occur – on December 25 1656 MPs were unhappy because they had got little sleep the previous night through the noise of their neighbours' 'preparations for this foolish day's solemnity' and because as they walked in that morning they had seen 'not a shop open, nor a creature stirring' in London. During the late 1640s attempts to prevent public celebrations and to force shops and businesses to stay open had led to violent confrontations between supporters and opponents of Christmas in many towns, including London, Canterbury, Bury St Edmunds and Norwich. Many writers continued to argue in print (usually anonymously) that it was proper to mark Christ's birth on December 25 and that the secular government had no right to interfere, and it is likely that in practice many people in mid seventeenth century England and Wales continued to mark both the religious and the secular aspects of the Christmas holiday. At the Restoration not only the Directory of Public Worship but also all the other legislation of the period 1642-60 was declared null and void and swept away, and both the religious and the secular elements of the full Twelve Days of Christmas could once again be celebrated openly, in public and with renewed exuberance and wide popular support. The attack on Christmas had failed.

Biblical Christian Perspective - the Lord's Supper was started, not Christmas.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: 24 And when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me. 25 After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in My Blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come.

Explained Biblical Believers Baptism.

Mark 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Matthew 1:18-2:15 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with Child of the Holy Ghost. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a Son,

and thou shalt call His Name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins. 22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. 24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: 25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn Son: and he called His Name JESUS. 2:1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him. 3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. 5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule My people Israel. 7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young Child; and when ye have found Him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him also. 9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. 11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. 13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him. 14 When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night, and departed into Egypt: 15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called My Son.

Luke 2:1-20 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David,

which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with Child. 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. 8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. 15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. 17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this Child. 18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

1 Corinthians 6:19,20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, & ye are not your own?

Matthew 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Mark 16:15-18 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My Name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Matthew 11:28 28 Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.