

“What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

Acts 16:30

Learn The Gospel

John 6:45; Romans 10:17; James 1:22-25

Believe On GOD In CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16; James 2:14-26

Confess CHRIST

Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32-33; 7:21

Repent Of Sin

Acts 3:19; Matthew 3:8

Be Baptized

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6; 1st Peter 3:21

Be Steadfast

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

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Mountain”, “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”, or “O Come All Ye Faithful”.

Eliminate household decorations with a religious theme, like a star for a tree-topper (Matthew 2:2, 10), artistic depictions of angels (Luke 1:26-38; 2:9-15; Matthew 1:20-25; 2:12), and definitely nativity scenes.

Taking care to avoid these religious symbols may very well lead to fruitful conversations with the neighbors.

“Sound Doctrine”

Titus 2:1

“NOW THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST WAS AS FOLLOWS”

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Much attention is given this time of year to the birth of Christ Jesus our Lord. Sadly, though, a considerable portion of what is believed about this most glorious occasion is fiction. In order to expose such mythology, we must observe what the scriptures say. *“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows...”*(Matthew 1:18).

It is a **fact** that Mary was a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus. Centuries before the event, God spoke by the mouth of Isaiah the prophet saying, *“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel”* (Isaiah 7:14). When the angel Gabriel told Mary *“you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son”* (Luke 1:31) she was surprised by this, saying, *“How can this be since I do not know a man?”* (Luke 1:34). However, it is **fiction** to think that Mary remained a virgin forever. It is written that Joseph *“did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son”* (Matthew 1:25), indicating they eventually kept their marital obligations (1st Corinthians 7:2-5). The notion of Mary’s perpetual virginity is further disproved by the fact that Jesus had several brothers and sisters (Matthew 13:55-56).

It is a **fact** that wise men came from the east to worship Him. Of the lights in the firmament which He had made on the fourth day, God said, *“let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years”* (Genesis 1:14). Understanding the sign

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“The Assembling Of Ourselves Together”

Hebrews 10:24-25

Sunday

10:15 am.....Worship

Las Vegas Library

833 Las Vegas Boulevard North

Monday

7:00 pm.....Acts Study

On hiatus.

Tuesday

7:00 pm.....Ladies’ Study

Cory Barajas residence

Wednesday

7:00 pm.....Various Studies

Jerry & Beverly Dockens residence

“Give Attention To Reading”

1st Timothy 4:13

Your reading assignments for this week are as follows:

Sunday...2nd John; 3rd John; Jude

Monday.....Revelation 1-3

Tuesday.....Revelation 4-6

Wednesday.....Revelation 7-9

Thursday.....Revelation 10-12

Friday.....Revelation 13-15

Saturday.....Revelation 16-18

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God had given them, *"wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him'"* (Matthew 2:1-2). It is **fiction**, though, to think that the wise men visited Jesus in the stable where He was born. By the time they made their way to him from their own country, Jesus and His mother were in a *"house"* (Matthew 2:11). This visit occurred as much as two years after He was born (Matthew 2:16). Furthermore, it is **fiction** to believe that there were three wise men. They presented three treasures to the young Child: *"gold, frankincense, and myrrh"* (Matthew 2:11), but any number of men could have brought Him that many gifts. It is also **fiction** to think that the wise men were kings named Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar. Absolutely nothing in the sacred text indicates the names of these men or that they were any kind of royalty. Where the word of God is silent we also ought to remain silent (Proverbs 30:6).

It is a **fact** that an angel of the Lord announced the day of His birth. Standing before shepherds in the field at night, the angel said, *"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord"* (Luke 2:11). But it is **fiction** to conclude that day was December 25th. Nothing in the word of God could cause anyone to accurately conclude that Jesus was born December 25th. The only hint we glean from the scriptures pertaining to time seems to rule out winter altogether. The fact that on the day Jesus was born shepherds were *"living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night"* (Luke 2:8) suggests the warmth of spring or summer, not the cold of winter.

It is a **fact** that the birth of Christ was a glorious occasion. *"When He brings the firstborn into the world, He says, 'Let all God's angels worship Him'"* (Hebrews 1:6), and they did! *"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!'"* (Luke 2:13-14). Yet it is **fiction** to assume the birth of Christ deserves a special annual observance. To assign His birthday some random date, then celebrate that date every year is arbitrary indeed. There are as many commands from God to celebrate the supposed date of Jesus' birth as there are commands to celebrate the unknown dates of His first miracle (John 2:1-11), His baptism by John

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(Matthew 3:13-17), or His transfiguration on the mount (Matthew 17:1-8), which is to say there is no such command. Celebrating His supposed birthday amounts to nothing more than vain worship (Matthew 15:9).

In contrast to the obviously human origin of Christmas as a religious celebration, God has specified a day on which Christians ought to worship. The Holy Spirit very clearly indicated that it was on the first day of the week that Christ arose from the dead (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1), and it was *"on the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread"* (Acts 20:7). *"The bread which we break is... the communion of the body of Christ"* (1st Corinthians 10:16). The Lord has given His disciples the first day of every week to memorialize His death, not one day a year to memorialize His birth. It is His death, after all, which saves us from sin.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR A SECULAR HOLIDAY

Bryan Matthew Dockens

For those who choose to observe a gift-giving holiday in December, apart from the trappings of a religious observation of "Christmas", here are some practical suggestions.

Skip those songs with a religious theme, like "The Little Drummer Boy", "Mary's Boy Child", "Silent Night", "Away In A Manger", "Angels We Have Heard On High", "Go Tell It On The

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Romans 16:16

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