



God doesn't tell us to celebrate Christmas, so why do we?

It's true that there's no command in God's Word (the Bible) telling us to celebrate the birth of the Messiah (Christ).

What we are doing in celebrating Jesus' birth is following the example we find in Exodus 12 in the Old Testament. You may remember the story of when the Angel of Death passed over the houses of the Israelites who had followed God's command to sacrifice a lamb and apply the blood to their doorposts. This "pass over" event set in motion the exodus ("going out") of the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt. Of course, on their way they had to cross the Red Sea. God parted the waters so they could walk across on dry land, but brought the waters back on the Egyptian army that was chasing them.

God instructed them (as we read in Exodus chapter 12) to celebrate this miraculous event every year with a special feast called Passover. This annual celebration was designed to serve two purposes:

1) To be a reminder of what God had done for them, so they would never forget how God displayed His love, power and salvation in that event.

2) It would force them to be sure to tell future generations what God had done, so the memory of it would not die out with the generation that actually experienced it. As Moses said to the people when relaying God's command, "And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean?' you shall tell them..."

I'd say that it is very appropriate to do the same thing with the day God came to earth in human form as that baby in the manger. Celebrating that event each year helps ensure that we don't forget that amazing thing God did. It also ensures that we tell the next generations, because they are going to ask the same kinds of questions as kids did in Moses' day: "What is the meaning of this tree.... and these candles... and why do we give gifts.... and why did God come to earth...?"

I'd invite you to join us for our Sunday School Christmas program, (during worship on December 18 @ 10:00) when the kids will actually answer our questions about the meaning of many of the symbols we use for our Christmas celebrations!

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net