



# **BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW!**

**Aligning your view of the world with God's Word!**

## **Christmas or Xmas?**

**Luke 2:1-14**

**Topical Message #8 – S976**

**Sermon given on December 19, 2021**

**@ Calvary Chapel French Valley, Murrieta, CA**



**Sunday Morning Service**

**Pastor Rick Lancaster**

# Christmas or Xmas?

*Luke 2:1-14*

## Opening Comments

- It has been a busy couple of weeks for Kelly and me
- We were blessed to take some time to visit our daughter and her family in Texas and celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary
- Joshua filled in two Sundays ago and did a great job sharing about Advent – waiting on and for the Lord
- Right before we left, we received news that Kelly’s dear cousin, who had been battling cancer for many years was taken home to be with Jesus
- While we were in Texas, we found out the service for Noelle would be on the 11<sup>th</sup> in Sacramento, the day we were supposed to be back here
- Randy did an awesome job reminding us that we are all involved in missionary work every time we give to the church
- He also spoke of us not forgetting that every time we leave this building we are going out as missionaries to everyone we meet
- It was also a blessing to see the love expressed to Barry and Barbara as you all prayed them out to whatever God has in store for them
- Well, it is six days until Christmas
- Today, we continue our series: **Worldviews: Aligning your view of the world with God’s Word!**
- So, I thought it would be good to take some time and examine the Christian worldview for Christmas
- In a survey this year, about 85 percent of Americans will celebrate on December 25<sup>th</sup>
- And that they will spend \$850 billion to do it
- This series is about aligning our view of the world with God’s Word – the Bible
- With the Bible as our lens, we want to avoid the negative influence of a culture that has rejected the reason for the season
- But how we do that is part of the reason for the season
- But first, let’s pray!

- **Pray**

## Teaching

- **Christmas or Xmas?**
- If 85% of Americans are celebrating on December 25<sup>th</sup>, the question is, “What are they celebrating?”
- And that is a very interesting question
- We know what we are celebrating – the birth of Christ
- Turn to **Luke 2**
- According to the Pew Research Center in 2019 about 65% of American adults identify as Christians
- That number has been in decline for about a decade
- It is probably between 58 and 62% today.
- Some believe it is much lower than that
- Barna did a study last year and found that only 6% of confessing Christians had a biblical worldview
- That statistic was one of the primary reasons for this series
- If those numbers are true than a very small percentage of people are celebrating on December 25<sup>th</sup> for the right reason
- Let’s start with the reason for the season
- **Luke 2:1-7**
- On December 25<sup>th</sup> we celebrate the birth Mary’s Son – Jesus
- Why December 25<sup>th</sup>?
- I was taught that December 25<sup>th</sup> was chosen to coincide with a pagan celebration so that persecuted Christians could celebrate the birth of Christ
- I have discovered that there is no actual historical evidence of that
- About the turn of the third century, the date of the crucifixion was dated March 25<sup>th</sup>
- Around that same time, the date of the creation of the world was marked as March 25<sup>th</sup>
- There was an ancient belief that a divine life comprised an exact number of years
- That is reflected in something **Saint Augustine** wrote  
**“For He is believed to have been conceived on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, upon which day also He suffered; so the womb of the Virgin, in which He was conceived, where**

**no one of mortals was begotten, corresponds to the new grave in which He was buried.”**

- According to Augustine, if Jesus died on March 25<sup>th</sup>, then He was conceived on March 25<sup>th</sup>
- Notice, Augustine believed that Christ’s life began at conception
- So, if Jesus was conceived on March 25<sup>th</sup>, He would be born exactly nine months later on December 25<sup>th</sup>
- We celebrate the birth of Jesus on December 25<sup>th</sup> because that is when the early church believed He was born
- We might also need to remind ourselves why we celebrate
- **Luke 2:8-14**
- We will talk more about that at the Christmas Eve service and the Sunday after Christmas
- Jesus is the reason for the season
- We celebrate on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December because our Savior was born on that date
- What is the rest of the culture celebrating if they are celebrating Christmas?
- It is hard to say – capitalism, materialism,
- some might say family or the idea of peace on earth
- There are forces at work in our culture that are seeking to take Christ out of Christmas
- They want to keep the celebration but remove all identification with Christ
- We see that with the substitution of Xmas for Christmas
- The traditional greeting at this time of year is Merry Christmas
- It can be dated back to at least 1534 and appeared on the first commercially available Christmas card in 1843
- The phrase ‘happy holidays’ can be traced back to about 1863
- Another phrase used commonly is ‘Seasons Greeting!’
- The liberals pushing to excise Christ from the public vocabulary and the highly popular celebration have pushed businesses and retailers to substitute ‘Happy Holidays’ or ‘Seasons Greetings’ for the traditional ‘Merry Christmas’
- All three terms are religious and point to the birth of Christ
- ‘holiday’ comes from an old English word that means ‘holy day’

- ‘Seasons Greetings’ – the season is the four-Sunday season of Advent that includes Christmas
- Christmas is about Christ
- Most of the traditions and symbols point to Christ and the gospel He brought to the world
- The trees, the lights, the presents – they are symbols of Christ and the gospel
- 85% of Americans will be celebrating the birth of our Savior on December 25<sup>th</sup>
- Most of them will not associate their celebration to the birth of Christ
- And while they are blindly celebrating our Savior, we must never forget that He died for them too **1 Timothy 1:15**

**This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...**

- We are living in a time when much of the world has turned its back on God and rejected His Word and His Son
- Would like to leave you with three things
- First – **Examine your Christmas**
- And as we prepare ourselves for this blessed celebration, we ought to examine ourselves
- Are we keeping the reason for the season at the front of our mind?
- Something we have done since our children were small is to hide baby Jesus from out of our nativity scene
- Before we open presents, they need to find baby Jesus
- And then, we read the story of Jesus’ birth
- As you go through your celebrations, examine the atmosphere
- Our celebrations ought to be marked by joy, peace, and love
- Especially love **John 13:34**

**A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.**

- As we celebrate God’s physical expression of love – sending His Son – we ought to express love to everyone we meet
  - Second thing – **Share your Christmas**
  - Pray about inviting someone to share in your Christmas celebrations
  - You might be thinking – Christmas is about family – is it? **John 3:16**
- For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

- By sharing your Christmas with someone, you might be able to share the greatest gift anyone will ever receive - the gift of eternal life through the gospel of Jesus Christ
- Third and final thing before we partake of Communion – **Share your Christmas Publicly**
- This can be as simple as wishing people a Merry Christmas
- Some people get real emotional when companies tell their employees to avoid saying Merry Christmas
- What else would you expect, they reject God and His Word?
- Just because an employee can't say Merry Christmas doesn't mean you can't
- And if you are able, start a conversation with them
- If you see the word 'Xmas' – point out that if you rotate the 'x' 45 degrees it resembles a cross which reminds us that Christmas is about Christ
- Or if they wish you a happy holiday, ask them if they know that the word 'holiday' means holy day – then ask them what holy day they are referring to
- They will probably look at you like you are from Mars – that's okay
- Let them know that your holy day is Christmas – the day you celebrate the birth of the Savior of the world
- And then you might ask them if they have given their lives to Christ
- The Christmas season is a great time to share the gift of salvation
- 85% of the people around you are thinking about Christmas
- Most of them have little or no idea what they are celebrating
- Give them the gift of love and share with them the reason for the season
- A good Christmas is not measured by the gifts we give or receive
- It is not measured by the people we entertain or the food we prepare
- A good Christmas is one that glorifies Christ and reflects His love to everyone around us
- It is my prayer for you all that you have a very good Christmas
- **Prayer/Communion!**