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## **THE SURE WORD by Jonnie Hutchison**

### **WHERE DID “CHRISTMAS” NOT ORIGINATE?**

The religious celebration of the birth of Jesus did not originate with God. If it had originated with God, then we would be able to find in the Bible either a command to celebrate “Christmas” as a religious holy day or an example of its celebration by first century Christians. Both are conspicuously absent from the pages of God’s Word. God authorizes religious practice

S by what He has said, not by what He has not said. Inspiration declares “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11a). The “oracles of God” consist of what God has spoken (revealed in His Word) not what He has not spoken. One cannot speak where God is silent and still speak as “the oracles of God.” The silence of God regarding an annual religious celebration of the birth of Jesus prohibits such a celebration.

Consider an example: The Bible authorizes five acts of worship for the church on the first day of the week: singing, praying, giving, partaking of the Lord’s Supper and teaching or preaching the Word of God (Eph. 5:19; 1 Tim. 2:8; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 1 Cor. 11:23-29; Acts 20:7). It’s obvious that God says nothing about “belly-dancing” as an act of worship. Does His silence then permit us to add “belly-dancing” to our worship? Can we truthfully claim to be speaking as the oracles of God while adding a religious practice that He has not spoken? Think about it! If the silence of God permits where do the additions originated by men end?

The divine account of the miraculous conception of Jesus in the womb of His virgin mother by the power of the Holy Spirit proves Jesus to be “Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” (Matthew 1:23). We certainly should never diminish the importance of this event. However, the Bible authorizes a remembrance of the death of Jesus each first day of the week rather than an annual celebration of His birth. When Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper He declared, “Do this in remembrance of me” (Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-25). There is both a command and an example of the New Testament church assembling each first day of the week to remember the death of Jesus by observing the Lord’s Supper as shown in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 and Acts 20:7. Therefore God has given us His permission by what He has spoken to remember the death of Jesus each first day of the week in partaking of the Lord’s Supper.

Faithful churches of Christ do not celebrate the birth of Jesus as a religious holy day because we cannot find in the Bible any authority from God to do so. To engage in any religious practice that is not authorized by God is a violation of the command of God, “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.” May each of us endeavor always to please our God and not self.