

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

December 23

2018

## LEARNING FROM CHRISTMAS??

In years past at about this time each year you would find many articles concerning the celebration of Christmas in church bulletins. These articles would usually call attention to the fact that there is no Bible authority for the celebration of any day as the birthday of Jesus and that no one knows the exact day of His birth. They would also point out that the celebration of Christmas was started in paganism and Roman Catholicism.

Now we are seeing articles in church bulletins upholding the celebration and announcements of Christmas activities. You would expect to find such in the bulletins of denominational churches, however it is surprising to find such in the bulletins of churches which identify themselves as churches of Christ. I received one such bulletin a few years ago from a church near where I lived which contained announcements of "Upcoming Events." These events included a "*Teen Christmas Party*" and "*Congregational Christmas Carolling.*" Other articles have suggested things we could "take advantage of" and "learn from" the celebration of Christmas. Some of the points are good. For example, one writer suggested that we could make the same use of the celebration of Christmas as Paul made of the idol to the "unknown god" in Athens. By taking advantage of the people's interest in Jesus we could direct their attention to the truth. Surely this would be a commendable thing to do.

However, do we do this by becoming a participant in that which is wrong? Of course not! Paul did not join in the activities connected with the worship of idols so that he might teach the truth. Yes, there are some things we can learn from the celebration of Christmas. We learn that when men enjoy doing something it usually doesn't matter to them that the thing may not be authorized. We learn of the influence the Catholic Church has had upon the whole of the religious world. What was begun by the Catholic Church is now almost universally accepted. We learn that something wrong can be made to appear to be something good and wonderful. Of course, we could also learn this by reading the story of Adam and Eve in the Bible.

I think the words of Paul in Ephesians 5:11 are very appropriate at this time. "*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*" *✍ James Hahn*



## REFLECTIONS ON ATTITUDES

It has often been said that one's actions tell you a great deal about his attitude. I am convinced that this is true and that by observing the actions of some it is evident some attitudes need to be changed.

What is our attitude toward truth and the teaching of truth? We have all seen those who accept the truth only if it pleases them or is in agreement with what they already believe. These will not examine any teaching upon the basis of it being "*right or wrong,*" but upon the basis of "*I like it or I do not like it.*" The fact that you may be able to present Bible authority for what you are teaching does not really matter to these individuals. If they do not like what you teach they will not receive it. Sometimes they will deliberately misrepresent what you say and teach if they do not agree with you or do not like what you say. I had one man to accuse me of teaching that "*we are not human*" because I questioned the practice of some who try to cover up or excuse sin by saying, "*After all, we're just human.*" This clearly indicates the wrong attitude toward truth and the teaching of

truth. One who has the proper attitude toward truth will always be open-minded and will investigate that which is taught to make sure it is the truth (Acts 17:11).

Again, what is your attitude toward the church which Christ purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28)? Those who teach that one church is as good as another or that it doesn't matter what church one is a member of indicate by such teaching that they do not make any distinction between the Lord's church and the many churches that have been established by men. Many will close their minds to the possibility that they may be members of some church unknown to God. We should all desire to learn what we need to do to become members of that one body (church) we read about in the New Testament (Eph. 4:4,5 cf. Eph. 1:22,23).

I would also like to ask those who are members of the Lord's church about their attitude toward their responsibilities as members of the church. What attitude do you have toward studying God's word or assembling with the saints to worship God? Some spend little or no time in studying God's word. They will not take advantage of classes designed to teach God's word. Can such an individual really believe that he is pleasing to God with such an attitude toward the study of God's word? Others show the wrong attitude toward the public assemblies by being habitually late for each assembly. Do we show this kind of attitude toward other activities? Do you show this kind of attitude toward your job? Individuals usually are habitually late for those things to which they attach little importance. When we see members who are late nearly every time we meet it tells us that they do not consider assembling with the saints to worship God an important activity. It indicates they consider such an assembly a casual affair demanding only half-hearted interest and effort. Some may disagree with these conclusions, but, sometimes, actions speak louder than words.

Let each of us examine our attitude toward God and serving Him. Let us make sure we are motivated by love and devotion to Him and His word in all we say and do. This is the only attitude we can have and be pleasing in His sight. Without this attitude one cannot please God.  
*✠ James Hahn*

## ARE WE REALLY SPIRITUALLY MINDED?

I'm sure all would agree that one must be spiritually minded if he is to be a child of God. However, as I observe the lives of many who claim to be children of God I must ask the question which serves as the title of this article.

Many will not even attend the public periods of worship and Bible study with any kind of regularity. They may attend once a week (Sunday morning only), but will not attend Sunday night or Wednesday night or any other time the saints may assemble to worship or study God's word. Is one really spiritually minded when he has no desire to attend such assemblies?

Many find time for TV, magazines or the daily newspaper, but never find time to study God's word. When we talk about anything under the sun except things spiritual, are we spiritually minded? One of the greatest needs today is for a show of spirituality in the lives of those who claim to be children of God. To do so, we must set our "affection of things above" (Colosians 3:2). Jesus said, "*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness...*" (Matthew 6:33)  
*✠ James Hahn*

### Belleville church of Christ

5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258

[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

#### Schedule of Services

|                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Sunday Bible Study . . . . .     | 9:30 a.m.  |
| Sunday Morning Worship . . . . . | 10:30 a.m. |
| Sunday Evening Worship . . . . . | 5:00 p.m.  |
| Wednesday Bible Study . . . . .  | 7:00 p.m.  |

#### Evangelist

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