



Church of Christ

December 3, 2000

204 Dix Road Jefferson City, MO 65109

Heart to Heart...

I'm writing this, not to create controversy or put others down, but to make us think with some spiritual maturity. We are coming upon a time when the religious world will be calling attention to the birth of Jesus. His birth will be in song, in visible ornaments, in pageants and plays, dramatized and worshiped. Many sincere, religious people focus on His birth this time of year.

The birth of Jesus is not what Jesus asked His followers to remember about His life. He sat with His own apostles and asked them to remember His death. (Luke 22:17-20) The most important fact of His life is His death, burial and resurrection.

The Old Testament prophets spoke of the death of Jesus over and over. Isaiah was filled with the prophesy that Jesus would die (Isa. 53:5,7), He would be crucified with sinners (Isa. 53:12), and He would be buried with the rich (Isa. 53:9). David prophesied He would have none of His bones broken in His death (Psa. 34:20).

God planned the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus from the beginning of time! It was not an accident. **A...at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.** (Rom. 5:6) **A**This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Eph. 3:11) God told the devil himself that **A**He shall crush you on your head, and you shall bruise Him on the heel. (Gen. 3:15) Peter spoke to the Jews that **A**this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. (Acts 2:23) All of creation was pointing to this one event as it would be what the life of man would hinge on.

The apostles were sent into all the world with good news of the fact that Jesus had died, was buried and arose on the third day. Nothing was mentioned about His birth. God expected people, if they were to be saved, to heed the teaching of this gospel or they would be condemned. **A**Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. (Mark 16:15-16) It was the gospel that was to be preached!

The Corinthian brethren had gotten off track and Paul had to bring them back to the very foundation of their salvation in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. (I Cor. 15:1-4) It was His dying for my transgressions and His resurrection for my justification (declared not guilty). (Rom. 4:25) Our lives are to live daily around the resurrected Christ! (Gal.2:20)

The churches of Galatia were being led back into following the Jewish customs of feasts and seasons as set by God under the Law. In Christ, here is God's response to those people: **A**But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain. (Gal. 4:9-11)

God never intended our lives to be broken down into seasons. Our worship and adoration of our Lord is not seasonal. Jesus left us a life-giving proclamation to unite His people every first day of the week. It's called the Lord's Supper. (I Cor. 11:24-25) His death, burial, and resurrection are our motivation for coming together each first day of the week to honor and glorify His name. This eternal gospel is the motivation for our lives!

I realize Matthew and Luke record the birth of Jesus. Only Luke describes the birth in detail. Very few verses are given attention to the event. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John relate chapters to describing the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

To use seasons for family, friends and enjoyment, that is a privilege we have been given in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 14) There is nothing wrong with that. We can enjoy it! Our worship and adoration of our Lord is not to be seasonal but daily because of the resurrected Christ. He is our life and love everyday. **See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.** (Col. 2:8) Think about it!!!

Brent