



Berean Christmas According to Scripture

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I. News of the Week :

- a. **Reminder: class notes available online thanks to Joerg !!!** (www.sjcalvaryberean.com)
- b. **REMINDER: NO CLASS DEC 26 OR JAN 2... see you all on Jan 9**
- c. **Understanding the Times: "Behold He Comes Conference Roundtable"**
(Jack Hibbs, Amir Tsarfati, Barry Stagner & Jan Markell)
 - i. Today at 1:00 on 88.1 FM or anytime at www.OliveTreeViews.org
 - ii. On YouTube this week at <https://youtu.be/GpFfQqxClI8>
- d. **Signs in the skies continue (Luke 21:25-26)**
 - i. <https://bit.ly/3FdPXQh>
- e. **And America's "wokeness" continues**
 - i. <https://bit.ly/3E9qxSC>
- f. **Further erosion of our religious freedoms**
 - i. <https://bit.ly/3FdRPsc>
- g. **You could get whiplash from the changes, but the OSHA vaccine mandate is back on**
 - i. <https://bit.ly/3qbYVHL>
- h. **David & Goliath Scenario: Calvary Chapel San Jose vs Santa Clara County (details & timeline)**
 - i. <https://bit.ly/3GVuegn>

II. It is not my intention to 'trample' on cherished traditions or childhood memories. There is nothing wrong with tradition. But, do we hold to 'truths' whose roots are in tradition rather than fact? Can repeating 'truths' based on traditions impact the acceptance by seekers of the truths of Christ's teachings?

- a. Was Jesus born on December 25?
 - i. Although it's not impossible, it's also unlikely. It would be unusual for shepherds to be "abiding in the field" at a cold time of year when fields were unproductive. The normal practice was to keep the flocks in the fields from Spring to Autumn. Winter would be a hard time for a pregnant Mary to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem (70 miles).
 - ii. A more probable time would be late September, the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, when such travel was commonly accepted. Thus, it is commonly believed (though not certain) that Jesus' birth was around the last part of September, possibly on the Feast of the Tabernacle.
 - iii. Does this invalidate our celebrating Christmas on December 25? NO!
 1. For a clear explanation, see <https://www.gotquestions.org/December-25.html>
 - iv. Mary may have been **told** she was pregnant in late December. So, our Christmas celebration could be observing the **incarnation** of "THE WORD MADE FLESH" (John 1:14).
 - v. If Christ were born on the Feast of Tabernacles, it would have been **very appropriate**, for it was at His birth that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt (literally 'tabernacled') among us" (John 1:14).
 - vi. [Dr. Henry M. Morris, *The Defender's Study Bible* (notes for Luke 2:8,13)]: "Thus, it might well be that when we celebrate Christ's birth at what we call Christmas - this darkest time of the year - the time of the pagan Saturnalia, and the time when the sun is at its greatest distance from the Holy Land—would surely be an appropriate time for God to send the spiritual 'light of the world' into the world as the 'Savior, which is Christ the Lord' (Luke 2:11)"

- b. Have you ever been 'challenged' for having a Christmas tree in your home? Has anyone ever told you this is a 'pagan practice' condemned in the Bible?
 - i. Misapplication of Jeremiah 10:1-16 and Isaiah 44:13-20
 - ii. We are not carving an idol from the tree
- c. How did Santa get interjected into Christmas?
 - i. St Nicholas was an actual historic figure. He lived 270 AD – 6 December 343 AD. He was born to wealthy parents, but orphaned at an early age, and raised by the Church. Appointed as Bishop of Myra, participated in the Council of Nicaea, and gave away his wealth.
 - ii. For a good study on how to discuss "Santa" with little children or grand-children, see <https://www.gotquestions.org/Santa-Claus.html>
Santa is for fun ... JESUS IS FOR REAL!!!

Merry Christmas!
We love you!