

## IDOLATRY

The worship of idols.

## IDOL

An image or representation of a god used as an object of worship.

### WHY IS IDOLATRY WRONG?

According to God's first commandment in Exodus 20:3, idolatry is wrong. The first commandment states, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." When you worship idols, you're placing that idol in God's place. Our love and respect for God should take precedence over everything we love. We have to make time for God in our lives and make sure we're not putting relationships, material things, and ever ourselves before God.

### CHRISTMAS, A MAN-MADE TRADITION

Some will say what's wrong with Christmas? Shouldn't we show love towards our family and friends? Some may even ask, "How is Christmas idolatrous?" While on earth Christ asked an important question in Matt 15:3. Jesus asked, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" Great question, right? Why do we esteem the traditions of men above God? The celebration of Christmas is indeed a tradition that began 336 AD. This was 300 years after Christ's death. So, if Christmas is supposed to be about the celebration of Christ's birth, why did people wait almost 300 years later to celebrate Christ? Moreso, where can you find in the Holy Bible where Christmas was a continuous observance? Did the apostles celebrate

Christ? Surely if Christmas is an event special to Christ, he would've mentioned it as one of his commandments, right? The word Christmas or the date December 25 isn't in the Holy Bible. Furthermore, Christmas is a tradition-man made holiday.

## CHRISTMAS AND IDOLATRY

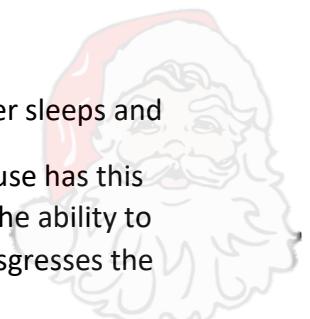
**R**emember idolatry is worshipping of idols. In addition, idols are images or representation of gods used as an object of worship. In ancient Rome, the people worshipped the sun god, Mithras; his birthday was December 25. Emperor Constantine worshipped this false (pagan) god blended his practices with Christian worship. Emperor Constantine proclaimed that the Christians worship the SON of God when in actuality he worshipped the sun god, Mithras. It is no coincidence that people all over the world attribute Christmas to Christ's birth.

No one knows the exact birth of Christ, in fact Christ was born during the Feast of Tabernacles (Fall feast). Joseph and Mary traveled to Jerusalem to keep the feast as commanded for all males to do in Deu 16:16. The area of Jerusalem was very crowded with visitors, because of the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles (Luke 2:1-5). Therefore, making the inn crowded. As a result, Christ was born in the manger (Luke 2:7). In essence, Christ's birthday couldn't have been on Dec 25, because he was born during the Fall season-not winter where it would've been too cold to deliver a baby in the manger.

This fact illustrates that people all around the world are worshipping another god, Mithras whose birthday was December 25. Paul warned the Corinthians about those who preach "another" Jesus in II Corinthians 11:4. Paul also tells us that there are false apostles, deceitful workers who transform themselves as the apostles of Christ (II Cor 4:13). In actuality, these false apostles are Satan's ministers for he himself was transformed into an angel of light (II Cor 11:15). Emperor Constantine (false prophet) has used subtlety to blend pagan practices into Christian worship and the whole has been deceived. Although many people around the world are unaware of Christmas's pagan roots, this subtle worship of another god is the very definition of idolatry.

## MAJOR IDOLS OF CHRISTMAS

**S**anta Claus is an idol because he is portrayed as an immortal figure that never sleeps and monitors the goodness and naughtiness of children 24/7. To say that Santa Clause has this ability is idolatrous because only the true and living God is immortal and have the ability to judge our behaviors. To tell children that this fictitious character exists also transgresses the



ninth commandment, thou shalt not bear false witness (Exo 20:16). As Bible Christians we want to be followers of Christ and not followers of the devil. Christ told the Pharisees that they were of their father the devil; he is the father of lies (John 8:44). People are under Satan's control if they continue to lie to their children about Santa Claus. Furthermore, Rev 21:8, states that all liars along with other sinners will have their part in the lake of fire.

**C**hristmas trees are also called groves. During the Christmas season, there are many groves with trees and people purchase these trees for the holidays. In ancient times tree worship was forbidden; the tree was considered an idol because the tree itself was a representation of false gods. They also made sacrifices to these gods under the trees. Tree worship is idolatrous because the people made sacrifices and praises to false gods wherein their reverence should have been to the one true living God. The Lord told Israel to cut down the groves of the Canaanite people in Exo 34:11-13. But instead, Israel disobeyed God and sacrificed under green trees (idols).

*Then you will know that I am the Lord, when their slain are among their idols around their altars, on every high hill, on all the tops of the mountains, under every green tree and under every leafy oak-the places where they offered soothing aroma to all their idols.*

Ezekiel 6:13

Lastly, God told his people to learn not the way of heathen for they cut a tree out of the forest and deck it with silver and gold.

*Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.*

Jeremiah 10:2-4

We are to obey God's command and refrain from taking on the customs of tree worship. In modern times, having Christmas trees in homes, workplaces, schools, and public places seems harmless. However, it is subtil tree worship. One may say, "but I'm not burning incense under my tree." "I'm not worshipping any trees!" We have to remember that the tree is not idolatrous; there are trees all around us. However, the practice of cutting a tree and then decorating the tree is what God commands us not to do. Decorating the tree is what makes the practice idolatrous. In addition, it dates back to paganistic rituals of tree worship.

**R**eindeers Santa's reindeer are associated with the "Horned God" of the pagans. Although reindeer have been extinct in the British Isles since the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, the Horned god continued

to be commemorated. Ceremonies using the reindeer antlers were often performed at Yuletide, during the twelve days of Christmas. The Celtic god Cernunnos (Hercules, “the horned one”) bears the antlers of a deer. The belief is that Santa Claus evokes the memory of the northern gods Odin and Thor. Santa is transported in a sleigh drawn by reindeers. The idea of flying reindeers is false just as the idea of Santa knowing all things—particularly “the good and bad, naughty or nice.” And just like the tree, reindeers aren’t pagan; it’s the attribution of its likeness with other gods. Notice how reindeers appear only during Christmas (Yuletide). Click here for more information on Yuletide [What is Yuletide?](#)

In conclusion, as Bible Christians we believe in the one and only true God. Any other worship of any other god is transgressing the first commandment. John 14:15 says “if you love me keep my commandments.” If we love God, we should reverence and obey his commandments. We have to make sure that we’re keeping God first in our lives because people, relationships, inanimate objects can all take the place of God and become idolatrous.

---

Watch the [Origins of Christmas History Channel Documentary](#)

Take notes as you watch

Ancient Northern European Yule Traditions

Ancient Roman Celebrations of Saturnalia and Mithra

Christians and Christmas in the Fourth Century

Pagan Traditions Incorporated into Christmas

Christmas Raucousness in Old England

Puritan Christmas Reform

Watch the [Origins of Christmas History Channel Documentary](#)

Take notes as you watch

Christmas in Early America

Leaders and Writers Respond to Christmas Rioting

Victorian Christmas

Santa Claus

Commercialization of Christmas

Christmas in the 1950s

Christmas Today