

Happy Birthday Jesus?

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Driving through the streets of our neighborhood, and viewing all of the holiday decorations, we came upon one that was a bit different. A large banner, lighted by a big red floodlight, read: "Happy Birthday Jesus". We were reminded, of course, that many folks view Christmas day as the birthday of Christ. To them it is a day of special religious significance. These are the ones who are constantly urging us to "put Christ back into Christmas".

To tell you the truth, we've been doing our best to keep Christ out of our Christmas. Oh yes, we love to give gifts, enjoy meeting with friends and loved ones, and just basically delight in the special friendly atmosphere that the holiday season brings, but we do not make Christmas a special religious day.

Why is this so? Well, in simplest terms, it is because the Scriptures do not authorize such an observance. As you know, it is very important that we "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17) – this literally means that we must act on the basis of Bible authority. There is no Bible authority for the special religious observance of Jesus' birthday, and so we do well to abstain from adding to God's word (Rev. 22:18).

Add to this the fact that experts say December 25 is almost certainly not the actual day of our Savior's birth, and the celebration seems even more out of place. They say He was most probably born in one of the warmer months of the year.

Our remembrance of Jesus should definitely include all of His life: the virgin birth, His sinless life, the great teachings, His death on the cross for our sins, the resurrection. We should thank God for sending His Son --and this thanks should be given every day, not just once each year. But our duty in worship centers around the Lord's Supper, where we remember His death, as He has commanded us (1 Cor. 11:23-26).

And so, we'll not be having a birthday party for Jesus at our house this year. There is no lack of gratitude for His birth, but there is a total absence of Bible authority for a special religious observance of Christmas.