

I. CHOOSING BETWEEN JESUS CHRIST AND SANTA CLAUS

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A. SOME REASONS WHY THIS WORLD PREFERS SANTA CLAUS TO THE SAVIOUR.

1. Firstly, this world prefers Santa Claus to Christ because the "god of this world" (Satan) doesn't want people to hear about Christ and why He came into this world (II Cor. 4:3,4; Lk. 19:10; I Jn. 3:8). For this same reason, Satan has blinded the unsaved of this world to the glorious truth of Christ's resurrection with a tradition of bunny rabbits and eggs at Easter.
2. Secondly, Santa Claus is preferred to Christ because he is someone who is commercialized by this world and it produces huge profits for the corporate sector. Notice while there are some commercial profits for religious items to celebrate Christmas, these pale by comparison when contrasted with the toys and things associated with Santa Claus.
3. Thirdly, this world prefers Santa Claus to Christ because the vast majority of this world are unsaved, deceived by the devil, and have no room in their hearts and lives for Christ. Just as there was no room for Him in Bethlehem (Lk. 2:7), there is still no room for Him today. Those unsaved have a fallen sinful nature and therefore rebel against God and love darkness or sin rather than light or righteousness (Jn. 3:19,20).
4. Fourthly, this world prefers Santa Claus to Christ because people like to have fun in participating in the folklore and traditions surrounding Santa Claus even though it is dishonoring to Christ, involves gross idolatry, and perpetuates a lie. What could be more dishonoring to Christ than to have a celebration that leaves out His birth and why He came into this world? What could be more idolatrous than to have figures of Santa Claus all around and leading little children to expect his coming rather than the Lord's coming? What could be more sinful than to lie to little children about a fictitious character for the sake of having fun and leaving out the wonderful truth of Christ's birth?

B. SOME REASONS WHY IT'S SINFUL AND SHAMEFUL TO PERPETUATE THE FICITIOUS LEGEND OF SANTA CLAUS.

1. Notice what the legend of Santa Claus involves:

“The legend of Santa Claus can be traced back hundreds of years to a monk named St. Nicholas. It is believed that Nicholas was born sometime around 280 A.D. in Patara, near Myra in modern-day Turkey. Much admired for his piety and kindness, St. Nicholas became the subject of many legends. It is said that he gave away all of his inherited wealth and traveled the countryside helping the poor and sick. One of the best known of the St. Nicholas stories is that he saved three poor sisters from being sold into slavery or prostitution by their father by providing them with a dowry so that they could be married. Over the course of many years, Nicholas's popularity spread and he became known as the protector of children and sailors. His feast day is celebrated on the anniversary of his death, December 6. This was traditionally considered a lucky day to make large purchases or to get married. By the Renaissance, St. Nicholas was the most popular saint in Europe. Even after the Protestant Reformation, when the veneration of saints began to be discouraged,

St. Nicholas maintained a positive reputation, especially in Holland” (The History Channel).

“Santa Claus is a variation of a Dutch Folk Tale based on the historical Saint Nicholas, a bishop from Myra in Asia Minor (the greater part of modern-day Turkey), who used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. His charity became legend when a man lost his fortune and found himself incapable of supporting his three daughters, who would not be able to find husbands as they lacked dowries. This man was going to give them over to a life of prostitution; however, St. Nicholas provided them with gold and cookies, enabling them to retain their virginal virtues and marry” (Wikipedia, on-line).

This legend has been altered in a number of ways and has become a fictitious story comprising absurd fantasies. These include making toys at the North Pole with elves, flying in a sleigh pulled by reindeer, visiting every house on Christmas Eve, landing on houses and climbing down the chimney and the list goes on and on.

2. Perpetuating this fictitious legend is to perpetuate a lie. Oftentimes parents don't realize the importance of being truthful with their children. If they lie to their children about Santa Claus they may have trouble getting them to believe the truth about the Lord Jesus. That would be the worse thing that ever happened to them.
3. Perpetuating this fictitious legend is nothing short of idolatry because it ascribes the attributes of God to someone else.
 - a. The Scriptures teach that only God is **omniscient** or all-knowing (Psa. 147:5; Matt.19:26), but the world ascribes omniscience to Santa Claus. To do this is idolatry, yet little children are taught that Santa knows all about them. He knows exactly what they want for Christmas and he knows if they have been good or bad. Note the lyrics of the songs, “Here comes Santa Claus.” and “Santa Claus is Coming to Town:”

Here Comes Santa Claus

(Gene Autry, Oakley Haldeman (c) 1947)

Here comes Santa Claus!
Here comes Santa Claus!
Right down Santa Claus Lane!
He's got a bag that's filled with toys
for the boys and girls again.
Hear those sleigh bells jingle jangle,
What a beautiful sight.
Jump in bed, cover up your head,
'Cause Santa Claus comes tonight.

Santa Claus Is Coming To Town

J. Fred Coots, Henry Gillespie (c) 1934

You better watch out

You better not cry
Better not pout
I'm telling you why
Santa Claus is coming to town.

He's making a list,
And checking it twice;
Gonna find out Who's naughty and nice.
Santa Claus is coming to town.

He sees you when you're sleeping
He knows when you're awake
He knows if you've been bad or good
So be good for goodness sake!

O! You better watch out!
You better not cry.
Better not pout, I'm telling you why.
Santa Claus is coming to town.
Santa Claus is coming to town.

- b. The Scriptures teach that only God is **omnipotent** or all-powerful (Gen. 18:14; Dan.4:35). Despite this fact the world ascribes omnipotence to Santa Claus. To do so is idolatry, yet little children are taught that Santa Claus is able to visit every home on Christmas Eve by flying through the sky on a sled pulled by reindeer and delivers gifts to all children. That would certainly require omnipotence but there's nothing too hard for Santa.
- c. The Scriptures teach that only God is **omnipresent** or present everywhere all the time (Psa. 139:7-12). The world ascribes omnipresence to Santa which is idolatry. Yet little children are taken to see Santa who appears in a red suit at all the malls, on city streets and in various stores - all at the same time. This too is a miracle that would require omnipresence.
- d. The Scriptures teach that only God is **immutable** or changeless (Mal. 3:6). To ascribe this attribute to Santa is idolatry. Yet, children are taught that Santa will always be by their home on Christmas Eve and will ever be jolly, benevolent, and the same as he has always been.
- e. The Scriptures teach also that God is **faithful** and that we can count upon Him to fulfill His Word and promises (Dt. 7:8-10; Titus 1:2). The world ascribes this personal attribute also to Santa which is idolatrous. Little children are taught that Santa will keep his word and bring them whatever they have asked of him on his knee or in response to their letter to Santa.
- f. The Scriptures teach that only God is **eternal** (Gen. 18:14; Psa. 90:2). The world ascribes this attribute also to Santa Claus. He is portrayed with the same white beard and he never grows older or dies.

- g. The Scriptures teach that the Lord is **coming again** and we're to live in expectation of His coming (II Tim. 4:8; Titus 2:13; I Jn. 3:2,3). At Christmas the world is living in expectation for Santa's coming and little children are taught to be nice so they will be rewarded by him when he comes. All such teachings are nothing short of idolatry because they take the glory which belongs to the Lord only and gives it to a fictitious character. This then is nothing short of worshipping a false god.

C. SOME REASONS WHY IT'S WRONG FOR CHRISTIANS TO CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS INVOLVING SANTA CLAUS.

1. First, the Bible teaches it's a sin for a Christian not to do what he knows is right to do (James 4:17).
2. Secondly, the Bible teaches it's wrong for a Christian to lie and that means even to little children for the sake of having fun (Eph. 4:25).
3. Thirdly, the Bible teaches that God hates idolatry and nothing is any more idolatrous today than perpetuating the fictitious legend of Santa Claus (Ex. 20:3; Isa. 42:8).
4. Fourthly, someone has well said, "It's never right to do wrong, it's always wrong to do wrong, it's always right to do right, and it is never wrong to do right." This moral precept no doubt applies to Christmas practices as well.
5. Oftentimes professing Christians will take a compromising position and try to honor the Lord's birth and also participate in the practices associated with Santa Claus. The Bible teaches a person cannot partake of the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons (I Cor. 10:21). This is what some of the Lord's people sought to do at other times. Notice Obadiah's example in I Kings 18 and also the example of others in II Kings 17:32,33.

D. SOME REASONS WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO HONOR THE LORD AND HIS BIRTH DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON.

1. First of all, the Christmas season is all about the birth of Christ. Someone has said, "He is the reason for the season." But it should be seen that He is the "only" reason for the Christmas season.
2. Secondly, to substitute something else for Christ is the greatest mistake that any person will ever make. Assuredly, the most important question that every person needs to answer is simply this - What will you do with Jesus who is called the Christ? Will you receive Him as Saviour or reject Him?
3. It's important to seek Him and receive as Saviour because He is the "only" Saviour and the "only" way to heaven (Acts 4:12; Jn. 14:6). Like the wise men who sought Christ (Matt. 2:1-12) someone has said, "Wise men still seek Him."

4. It's important to make much of Jesus' birth because He had to be born before He could die for our sins and provide salvation for us (Gal. 4:4,5).
5. It's important to celebrate Jesus' birth in order to share the truth with others and especially with little children. The Scriptures mention that those who offend or cause little children to stumble will stand one day in judgment for it (Mark 9:42). And taking Christ out of Christmas and substituting other things for Him is certainly something which will cause them to stumble.

Note from the foregoing study a Christian should conclude that the Santa Claus folklore associated with Christmas is nothing less than idolatry. Therefore it requires a choice. It cannot be Santa Claus **and** Jesus Christ, it must be either Santa Claus **or** Jesus Christ.