

He's Here!

It's been said that the shortest outline of the Bible is, "Someone's coming; He's here; He's coming back again." I agree! The primary theme of the Old Testament is, "Someone's coming." The theme of the gospels is, "He's here!" And He really was. The theme of the rest of the New Testament (and the last 2000 years) is, "He's coming again."

We don't really know what day of the year Jesus was born, but we know the year pretty closely. We know the first century church did not celebrate the birth of Christ - the fact that He was here on earth is ample evidence He was born, as were all humans. But it was His resurrection from the dead that proved to all who saw it that He is who He said He was, Emanuel, God with us, (Isaiah 7:14 comes true in Matthew 1:23).

Some choose to celebrate His birth as a personal expression, some don't. Romans 14:1-12 gives us insight into how to relate to one another when personal issues are under consideration. *We're not speaking of doctrinal issues here, but personal expression.* (Pause here and read Romans 14:12). When personal opinions and personal expressions of faith are considered, God has allowed room for those personal expressions. Again, the context here is not doctrinal truth, worship or church practices. For these reasons, we believe each individual Christian may choose to follow his opinions, so long as he or she is not going against God's word.

The important thing is that we bow the knee to Jesus and seek to follow in His steps (1 Peter 2:21). God, through Paul's pen is clearly calling us to peace through following God's truths in daily practice:

As for the things you have learned and received and heard and **seen in me**, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. (Phil. 4:9)

YES! PEACE! We remember the joys of the day of Jesus birth when the angels announced, "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among people with whom He is pleased." (Luke 2:14) Our job is to be pleasing to God, His job is to deliver peace, and He does that through Jesus to those whose lives are pleasing to Him.

I love that fact that in December more Americans think about Jesus than at any other time of the year. That reality is a wonderful opportunity for us help them think about Him more deeply, more personally, more biblically.

Whatever you choose to celebrate, or not, let us all rejoice that a multitude of people are considering Jesus at this time.

Ray Wallace