

The Old Paths

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“I Am Not Bothering Anyone!”

Jarrod Jacobs

Often we find folks who justify their sinful behavior by saying, “I am not bothering anyone.”

This excuse may sound thoughtful, but it is not. In fact, when we study the nature of sin, we learn that when we commit sin, any sin, we “bother” others!

Let us begin by noting that when we sin, we have “bothered” both the Father and the Son! Remember, it is sin that nailed Christ to the cross! Christ came to this world so that He could die (Jn. 18:37). From Genesis 3:15 to the end of the Bible, we see our Lord Christ as the sacrifice for our sins (Rev. 13:8)! At the same time, we read in the Bible about the degree of love possessed by God. He loves man so much that He gave His only begotten Son as the supreme sacrifice (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8; I Jn. 4:9-10). Therefore, let us not say that when we sin, we are not “bothering” anyone! God and Christ will both disagree with that statement!

Furthermore, our sins often “bother” men! When we are young, our sins affect the lives of our parents. Though we may not like to admit it, it is still the truth! In addition to this, there are some sins we commit that not only affect our parents, placing undue worry and emotional and/or financial strain upon them, but our sins can result in society (through taxes) paying for our housing and

food for a time (i.e., prison).

We also recognize that for the Christian, when we sin and refuse to repent, it places a burden upon the church, wherein the church must withdraw from us (II Thess. 3:6, 14-15; I Cor. 5:5-7)! The church cannot continue to be in fellowship with a person who is “walking disorderly”, or literally, “out-of-step” with God! Therefore, one’s sin has affected an entire congregation of God’s people! (One’s sins have also placed a burden on a family of Christians who now have a family member from whom the church has withdrawn, II Thess. 3:6; I Cor. 5:11!) In light of these things, how can we say that the sins we commit do not “bother” anyone? In fact, just the opposite is true! “*For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself*” (Rom. 14:7).

Yet, if it could be proven that there is a sin which “bothers no one”, remember that this sin has an effect upon the one who has committed it! Sin separates us from God (Isa. 59:1-2), and sin results in spiritual death (Jas. 1:15; Rom. 6:23)! Knowing that this is the case, who can believe that man can engage in sinful activities, but “bother no one”? It’s impossible!

Let’s stop offering excuses for sin. Rather, let us admit our sin, repent of it, and live as God wants us to live (Acts 17:30; Jn. 14:15)! In so doing, we can have a positive effect upon ourselves and upon others, influencing folks for good and not evil (Matt. 5:16; Col. 3:17).

Why Some Are Not Asked

R.L. Whiteside

Happy is the person whose conduct does not raise a question in the minds of others as to where he stands. Some people never have to answer the question, “Will you have a drink with me?” There is a reason. Some young people are never subjected to certain temptations to which others are frequently subjected, and there is a reason. When your conduct raises a question as to where you stand or as to what you might do, the devil will make you answer that question. Every person who raises a question mark in the mind of people has to defend himself or surrender.

Could It Be ...

Selected

- that people reject the Bible — not because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them?
- that some brethren do not attend various worship periods and Bible study classes because Christ is not really their “first love”?
- that Satan has lulled us into thinking that we are really standing, when indeed, we are ready to fall?
- we utterly abhor the violence going on in the world, yet do not think twice about what our families entertain themselves with on television and at the movies?
- that some brethren honestly see no connection between commitment, attendance, and involvement?

Who Put Christ In Christmas?

Larry Ray Hafley, Cookeville, TN



During December we are reminded to, "Keep Christ In Christmas." Who, though, put Him there in the first place?

Did God? We know *"the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world"* (1 Jn. 4:14). Jesus said that He neither acted or spoke of his own will, but that he said and did only those things authorized by his Father (Jn. 6:38; 12:49). Is the celebration of Jesus' birth a thing spoken by the Father to the Son?

We are not saying the birth of Jesus was not the Father's will. It was. To God the Father, Jesus said, *"A body hast thou prepared me"* (Heb. 10:5). *"When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman"* (Gal. 4:4). About Jesus' birth, as related by Matthew and Luke, there can be no dispute. However, we are asking a separate question; namely, did God put Christ in the tradition that we know as Christmas? What Scripture shows that God placed Christ in Christmas and put Christmas in the worship of the church? Does anyone know? If not, how can we say that God put Christ in Christmas?

Did Jesus? Jesus was given all authority (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:20-23). Did He place himself in Christmas? Since He is the founder and the foundation of our faith, if His Father did not put Him in Christmas, perhaps, as

head of the church, He did so himself (Eph. 5:23, 24). If He did, where might we find this information? Surely, in the New Testament, but do we find it there? Do we have a source which shows that Jesus taught His disciples to keep a tradition called Christmas, or an annual remembrance of His birth? If so, where is it? If it cannot be found, is it correct to say that Christ put himself in Christmas and that he set Christmas in the church?

Did The Holy Spirit? Jesus promised the apostles the Spirit would guide them *"into all truth,"* revealing to them things He had not spoken to them directly (Jn. 16:12-15). So, then, did the Spirit design the Christmas season as we know it, and did He put Christ in Christmas? If He did, we must accept His word and "keep Christ in Christmas," for to reject the Spirit is to reject God (1 Cor. 2:10-13; 1 Thess. 1:5; 2:13; 5:19; Cf. Acts 5:3, 4, 9). Where has the Spirit revealed that He is the one who put Christ in Christmas and Christmas in the church?

Did The Apostles? To reject the word of the apostles is to reject the word of Christ and God (Lk. 10:16; 1 Cor. 14:37; 1 Thess. 4:1, 2, 8). The *"apostles' doctrine"* is *"the doctrine of the Lord"* (Acts 2:42; 13:12). Thus, if we can find the apostles putting and keeping Christ in Christmas, we

may do likewise with the approval of heaven. Do we read of disciples who, at the behest of the apostles, observed the Christmas tradition, or who noted the birth of Jesus in any manner? Since keeping Christ in Christmas allegedly is an important duty, we should expect to find the first fervent and devout disciples of the Lord doing so. But, is that what we find?

"December 25 is...observed as the...birth of Christ. In early times this day was not one of the feasts of the Christian Church. In fact, the church fathers frowned upon the celebration of birthdays and thought them a heathen custom. It is thought that Christmas was not celebrated until some 300 years after the birth of Christ.

"No one is certain why December 25 was chosen. There is nothing in the New Testament to indicate that this is the date of the Nativity" (The New Book Of Knowledge, Vol. 3, p. 289).

Since neither God, nor Christ, nor the Holy Spirit, nor the apostles put Christ in Christmas, why should we? If your preacher encourages you to "keep Christ in Christmas," show him this article and ask him to answer it.

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