

"FOLLOW ME  
AND I  
WILL MAKE YOU  
FISHERS  
OF  
MEN"  
MATTHEW 4:19



## ***SOUTHSIDE SEARCHER***

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"They...searched the scriptures daily..." –Acts 17:11

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### **CHRISTMAS MYTHS**

**Michael Pickford**

Christmas is to me a National holiday and I celebrate it as such. I do not celebrate Christmas as the birthday of Jesus for two reasons: 1) The Gospel never says anything about celebrating December 25th as Jesus' birthday. 2) I simply do not believe Jesus was born on December 25th or any other day in December. Consider a couple of things which are taught about the circumstances around Jesus' birth, and believed by the majority of religious folks today.

MYTH # 1: "Jesus was born on December 25th." False! The fact is, the Bible simply doesn't tell us what day Jesus was born. Luke 2:8 tells us that immediately after Jesus' birth, "There were...country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night." Now, this just doesn't happen in the winter. Jesus was most likely born in spring, summer, or early fall.

MYTH # 2: "There were three wise men that came to Jesus in the manger." False! Actually, there are two myths in this one statement. First of all, the Bible records that "wise men from the east came to Jerusalem." We are not told how many there were. Secondly, modern day nativity scenes show the wise men at the manger. But, the text tells us they came to a house (Matt. 2:11). And, Jesus was probably two years old before they arrived, certainly not an infant as we are led to believe (Matt. 2:7, 16).

MYTH #3: "Santa Claus is real." Parents often bring their children up to believe this myth is actually true. To do so is to lie to and deceive your children. "But it's fun." Yes, no one ever denied that sin is fun; even the Bible points out this obvious truth (Hebrews 9:27). As Christians we are to lay aside all "deceit" and "hypocrisy" (1 Peter 2:1). The lake of fire is reserved for "all liars" (Revelation 21:8). When children learn their parents have lied to them about this, they may wonder what else they've been lied to about. "Is God real?" We expect our children to be honest with us, and punish them when they're not. In turn, let's be honest with them in all things, lest we become hypocrites! We've taught our child from the beginning that Santa is make believe, just like the tooth fairy, yet he still has just as much fun "waiting for Santa to come" as other children, if not more! We have not "Robbed him of his childhood" by being honest with him.

Be careful what you believe. Just because something is taken for granted to be true by the general public, this doesn't necessarily make it so. 🔍

**The elements of our worship, as prescribed by God's word, are as follows:**

- **SINGING:** Ephesians 5:18,19; Colossians 3:16
- **PREACHING/TEACHING:** Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:11,12
- **PRAYING:** Acts 2:42; Acts 12:5
- **LORD'S SUPPER:** 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 20:7
- **GIVING:** 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6,7

### **COME WORSHIP WITH US!**

**SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY...9:00**  
**SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP.....10:00**  
**SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP.....6:00**  
**WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES.....7:00**



- [www.defendthegospel.com](http://www.defendthegospel.com)
- 1st Sunday Singing Night: 6 pm
- 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Night: Guest Speaker
- Men's Business Meeting. 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday evenings following services.

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## FIVE REMINDERS

(Developed from a recent invitation given by Kenny Todd)

We all understand the importance of reminders. In the old days, folks would tie a string around their finger(s) as a reminder. Today, we use calendars, datebooks, etc to remind us of appointments, etc. But there are some very essential spiritual facts that we, perhaps through getting caught up in daily grind, forget about. We need to be reminded! Peter wrote, "For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth" (2 Peter 1:12). Let us remember the five following facts!

### 1) Remember That Life Is Brief.

In 2014, there were 72,197 Americans aged 100 or older, according to a report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That number is up 44 percent from 2000, when there were only 50,281 centenarians. Americans are living longer, and the quality of life for the aged is increasing, but even in light of these facts, life is brief when compared to eternity. Methuselah lived to be 969 years old, yet he has been dead for centuries. When we enter eternity, it won't matter how long we lived, but how we lived. In eternity, we will look back at how long we lived and understand just how brief it was. Psalm 103:15-16 compares a man's life to grass that withers away, and to a breeze that brushes against our face for a moment, but then is gone. James compares life to a vapor, and reminds us that our life could be snuffed out at any moment (Jms 4:13-16). Even the young die unexpectedly. We are perishable; life is brief!

### 2) Remember That Death Is Certain.

There are many uncertain things each individual faces in life, but every man knows that he will one day face death. "For the living know that they will die" (Ecc 9:5). Though some men live life as if they think they will live forever, they will certainly keep their appointment with death (Heb 9:27). Genesis chapter five is sometimes referred to as the graveyard chapter of the Bible; the phrase "and he died" occurs 8 times in the chapter. It is here that we learn about Methuselah, the oldest man on record to ever live, but the Bible says, "And he died." You may be blessed to live a long and prosperous life, but you will die. The only exception will be those still living when the Lord returns (1 Cor 15; 1 Thess 4). Death is coming, don't forget it.

### 3) Remember That Judgment Will be Just.

God is a righteous and just God, so our final judgment will be just. It will be just because God has provided for us the standard by which we will be judged, and He has warned us of the consequences if we fail to pattern our lives after that standard. We will be judged by the Gospel of Christ (John 12:48), and the punishment for disobeying the Gospel will be everlasting destruction in a hell that is described as a lake of fire where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (2 Ths 1:7-9; Rev 21:8; Mk 9:42-48). If anyone ends up in that horrible place, it will be their own fault for not serving God while in the body (2 Cor 5:10). It will not be God's fault, for He is just, and judgment will be just.

*Continued on Next Page...*

*(Five Reminders Continued)*

### 4) Remember That Eternity Is Long.

Unpleasant experiences in this life seem to drag on forever! Sitting in a dentist's chair under the drill. Enduring a stomach ache, or a headache. Suffering with a cold. Healing from an injury or surgery. Seems like these take forever! But they do end. In eternity nothing will end. The Bible presents two places where we could spend eternity. It could be heaven or hell. It could be eternal life, or it could be everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46). Those who obey God will have "eternal life" (Romans 2:7). Those who "Do not obey the truth" will suffer unending "Indignation," "Wrath," "Tribulation," and "Anguish." (Romans 2:8-9). We need to remember right now that in whichever of these two states we find ourselves in, it will last forever!

### 5) Preparation is Necessary.

We realize how essential preparation is in various aspects of life. We buy various types of insurance in order to be prepared. We study for tests to be prepared. The most important thing we'll ever prepare for is eternity. People don't accidentally miss hell and end up in heaven. We must do the preparation! Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people (Jn 14:1-4). This life is the only time we have to prepare for eternity, while in these bodies. There will be no second chance after death (2 Cor 6:2; 2 Cor. 5:10). We prepare by hearing the Gospel, believing in Jesus as God's Son, Repenting of our sins, confessing our faith, and being baptized in order to have our sins washed away (Rom 10:17; Jn 8:24; Acts 2:38; Rom 10:9-10; Acts 22:16). We stay prepared by serving the Lord faithfully until we die (Rev 2:10). Life is brief. Death is certain. Judgment is coming. Eternity is long. "Prepare to meet your God!" (Amos 4:12). 🔍

#### **DUTY LIST...**

##### **SUNDAY MORNING**

- Announcements.....Michael Pickford
- Scripture Reading...Eli Todd  
Reading: 1 Cor. 14:26-40
- Song Leader.....Kenny Todd
- Opening Prayer.....Michael Pickford
- Lord's Table:  
Lead.....Tony Jenkins  
Serve.....Michael Pickford  
Serve.....Lynn Buttrey
- Closing Prayer.....Kenny Johnson

##### **SUNDAY EVENING**

- Song Leader.....Kenny Johnson
- Lord's Table.....Kenny Johnson

##### **WEDNESDAY EVENING**

- Song Leader.....Kenny Todd
- Invitation.....Michael Pickford

**Thank You For Serving!**

#### **GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION**

There is only one true saving plan of Salvation outlined in Scripture. No substitutes will do. Have you really been saved? Get out your Bible and study the plan below.

- Hear The Gospel: Romans 10:17
- Believe: Mark 16:16; John 8:24
- Repent of Sin: Acts 2:38; 17:30
- Confess Faith: Romans 10:9, 10
- Be Baptized: Mark 16:16;  
Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21
- Remain Faithful: Rev. 2:10

***Obey Today!***

***Home Bible Studies  
Available Upon Request!***