

## NO ROOM FOR JESUS

Michael Pickford

Luke tells us that Mary brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:7). After reading this, we think it is awful that those folks couldn't make room for Jesus. If only they would have known Who He was, surely they would have given Him the biggest room in the Inn.

Sadly, there are many homes that no longer have room for Jesus. I'm talking about so-called Christian homes; families who no longer sit down together and pray with one another, or study the word of God together. Jesus has been edged out by hectic schedules, immoral TV programs, ungodly music, and various secular activities. In many homes wives are rebellious towards their husbands, husbands abuse their wives, and children are not being brought up with proper discipline in the training and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 5:22-6:4). In many homes Sunday morning is a time for golfing, hunting, or fishing rather than going to the house of the Lord (Hebrews 10:25). In many homes, speech that imparts grace to the hearer has been replaced with language that reflects bitterness, resentment, and unjustified anger.


Friends, invite Jesus back into your home. Make room for Him! 🔍

### 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

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- [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> Monday of each month at 7 pm.



## SOUTHSIDE SEARCHER

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

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## MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH

Michael Pickford

Paul tells us that "God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16). John wrote, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Why did God become flesh and dwell in this world?

**He Came To Save.** *"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief"* (1 Timothy 1:15). Jesus declared, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Again, Paul stated, "God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law..." (Galatians 4:4-5). In fact, before His birth, Joseph was instructed by an angel to name Him "Jesus, for he will save His people from their sins." The very name "Jesus" means "Savior." Man did nothing to deserve this indescribable gift. In fact, man did everything to be undeserving of it, but because of God's love for us, He sent His Son into the world to save us from our sins (Romans 5:6-9). That's why it's grace, unmerited favor, a free gift. From His birth through every moment following, everything Christ did was Done in view of the fact that He would do His Father's will and hang on that cruel cross for my sins. And for yours!

**He Came To Serve.** *"Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many"* (Matthew 20:28). His ultimate service to man was His death on the cross, but He meant to serve in other ways as well, while on this earth. The reason He washed His disciples feet was to give them an object lesson, teaching them to be humble servants of one another (John 13:15-17). Paul used The Lord's ultimate service on the cross as an example for disciples to follow in looking out, not just for our own interests, but also for the interest of others (Php 2:3-8).

**He Came To Seek.** *"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost"* (Luke 19:10). Before ascending to heaven, Jesus commissioned His disciples to seek the lost with the Gospel message. Certainly we, as His disciples, will be interested in seeking out the lost with the Gospel. We must strive, in some way, to speak of Jesus to those with whom we come in contact with in the world. So they too might be found and saved by the blood of Christ. 🔍

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# OPPOSING CHRISTMAS?

Michael Pickford

Some oppose the celebration of Christmas because some aspects of it have their roots in pagan worship to false gods. If they have a conscience problem separating those aspects from the celebration then they are right in not observing it, and I will not criticize them for their decision (Romans 14:3-4, 6; 1 Corinthians 8:7). But neither should they condemn me for celebrating it (Romans 14:2-6).

In 1 Corinthians 8, Paul discussed the issue of eating meats that had been previously offered to idols and then sold in the markets. Some opposed eating them, and their arguments would be the same as many today (They are connected to paganism). Paul argued in the chapter that while the world acknowledges many gods and lords, we know there is only one true God. Those who were secure in this knowledge were at liberty to eat meat that had been offered to idols because to them idolatry was not associated with the meat. I have never, not even once, celebrated Christmas while in my heart associating the tree, or the mistletoe, or gift giving with idolatry. I have never, not once, been tempted to give honor in my heart to a false god via my Christmas tree or any other decoration or tradition associated with an old-fashioned American Christmas. But at the same time, I will not criticize my brother who chooses not to observe it for this reason.

Some argue against the observance of Christmas from Galatians 4:10-11. But context must be respected. In the book of Galatians, Paul was rebuking some who were teaching that Gentile Christians MUST observe the Holy Days recorded in the Old Testament. They argued that to be truly saved, one must be a Jew according to Moses' Law (Acts 15:1). Yes, it would be wrong to teach that Christians must celebrate Christmas in order to be truly saved. But I know of no brethren who are doing this. Even Paul had no issue with Jews (who had become Christians) observing customs and days associated with their heritage; he himself took a vow in the temple in order to prove this very point (Acts 21:18-27). But there's a big difference in observing them as a national tradition as opposed to observing them because you thought your salvation depended on it. This is how I observe Christmas, as part of my national heritage.

Some oppose Christmas because Jesus was not born on December 25th. This is true, He wasn't. No one knows what day He was born on and even the year of His birth is debated among scholars. I partially agree with these brethren. I do not celebrate Christmas as the birthday of Jesus. That was the Catholics' idea, not God's. Again, I celebrate Christmas as a National holiday. I leave out the manger, the star, the nativity scene, and other elements associated with the Lord's birth. Truth is though, I can be thankful to God for the Lord's incarnation on this day just as I should any other day of the year, I just don't celebrate any particular day as Jesus' birthday.

Individuals can do many things the Local church cannot do (1 Timothy 5:16). While I am at liberty as an individual Christian to celebrate Christmas as a National Holiday, the local church has no authority to do so. The local church may do only those things authorized for its work and worship by Christ (Colossians 3:17). If

Christmas pageants, parades, plays, trees, gifts etc. are not found in the work and worship of the church in the Bible, then neither should they be found in the church today. This is where many denominations and so-called "Churches of Christ" make a fatal mistake. This is one area in which we must all oppose the observance of Christmas. The local church is not authorized to observe Christmas any more than it is authorized to observe any other National Holiday, including Presidents Day, Memorial Day, etc.

In closing, let me remind all involved that The Lord has commanded and authorized the local church regarding a memorial of Him. Not a birthday to memorialize His birth, but a Supper to memorialize His death. On the first day of every week (Acts 20:7) the local church is to come together in one place as a church (1 Corinthians 11:18, 20) and partake of the unleavened bread (which symbolizes His body) and the fruit of the vine (which symbolizes His blood). The purpose of this supper is single-fold – to "Proclaim the Lord's death till He comes" (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

Instead of clamoring to put Christ back in Christmas, more folks should be concerned about putting the Lord's death back into the Lord's Supper each and every first day of the week as God has commanded. This is what will truly glorify Christ and His purpose for being born into the world (1 Tim. 1:15). 🔍

## DUTY LIST...

### SUNDAY MORNING

- Announcements.....Michael Pickford
- Scripture Reading...Jeff Isbell  
Reading: Proverbs 14:8-14
- Song Leader.....Kenny Todd
- Opening Prayer.....Sam Miller
- Lord's Table:
  - Lead.....Michael Pickford
  - Serve.....Lynn Buttrey
  - Serve.....John Nelson
- 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!***