**Where Is Jesus?**

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 Do we remember the hype and excitement of December 25, 2012? After Thanksgiving Day 2012, we saw numerous billboards, TV and radio ads, etc., which reminded us to remember the “reason for the season.” Yet, beginning December 26th and to this present time, it has been very hard for me to find any type of display reminding me of the One who seemed so important to folks for the majority of December. What happened to Jesus?

 It seems to me that if folks are excited about the event of the Christ-child’s birth, His life ought to produce that much, if not more excitement. Sadly, this doesn’t seem to be the case! Many are willing to look upon the “babe in the manger” as He coos and cries in the stable. Yet, the number of people interested in Him dwindles rapidly when we look for folks ready to follow the adult Jesus to the cross! Why is this? Where is Jesus?

 So we all understand, I do not believe Jesus was born on December 25th. Biblical evidence suggests another time. I do not celebrate any day as “Jesus’ birthday”, for Jesus never told us to celebrate His birth. Some folks will reason, “Since we don’t know the exact day of His birth, December 25th is as good a day as any to remember His birth. It gets folks to think about Christ.” Such statements declare that folks either have not read the Bible, or they just do not care to listen to what Christ said. Christ and His apostles continually emphasized His death, burial, and resurrection, not His birth (Matt. 26:26-29; Jn. 18:37; Acts 2:42, 20:7; Rom. 6:3-6; I Cor. 15:1-4; etc.). At the same time, I cannot help but note the inconsistency when the bulk of our population claims to love Jesus and wants to celebrate His birth; and yet after December 25th, these folks will return to the way they were acting before December! Am I the only one who sees this hypocrisy? Where is Jesus?

 I know Jesus could not have died on the cross had He not been born; yet when we listen to Jesus, He essentially tells Pilate, “I was born to die” (Jn. 18:37)! Therefore, let us follow Jesus, not to the manger, but to the cross (Matt. 10:38). Let us not follow the shepherds to the barn, but follow the “chief shepherd” (I Pet. 5:4) to Heaven (I Pet. 2:22; Heb. 6:20, 10:19-20; Acts 7:56). Let us not follow the wise men to the house (Matt. 2:12)! Let us be wise men and follow the Lord’s footsteps to Heaven as He teaches us how to be true disciples (I Pet. 2:21; Jn. 8:31-32; I Cor. 15:58; Col. 3:17; Heb. 6:19-20).

 Friends, where is Jesus? Jesus is not to be found in the lives of the bulk of our population! We know this to be true based upon our observations of man’s inhumanity to man. God does not want His creation to be cruel and hate each other (Jas. 3:9-20; I Jn. 4:20). How then can we treat one another the way we do? It is because the bulk of our population is satisfied to keep Jesus “in the manger” instead of allowing Him access into their hearts and lives.

 How do we allow Jesus access into our lives? Jesus told folks, “Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 7:21). Therefore, it takes more than simply speaking a word or a prayer, and saying, “Jesus come into my heart” to be saved. It demands action! We must believe that He is the son of God (Jn. 8:24; Rom. 10:17), and we must obey what He says (Jn. 14:15; Rom. 10:16; Jas. 2:24, 26)! “Where is Jesus?” He is not in a manger, or a stable, but is in Heaven, wanting mankind to hear, believe, and obey Him (Mk. 16:15-16; II Cor. 6:2; II Pet. 3:9)!

*-- You are invited to visit with the Caneyville church of Christ. Times of services: Sun.: 10:00 am, 10:45 am, 5:00 pm; Wed.: 7:00 pm. Website: http://caneyvillechurchofchrist.com Tune in to our radio program on 99.9 FM at 1:00 pm and 1570 AM at 8:30 am, Mon-Fri. Questions? Call: (270) 589-4167*