

Some Guidelines for the Holidays

By Roelf L. Ruffner

I love this time of year - Christmas and New Years. It is a chance to reflect on the value of friends and family. But the world tries to push things on the Christian at this time of year. **Remember** that we may be “in” the world but we should never be “part” of the world (I Jn. 2:15-17). The following are some guidelines for the New Testament Christian for the holidays.

Christmas should not be celebrated as Jesus’ birthday.

No one knows the day of Jesus’ birth; that notion came centuries “after the fact”. Many scholars think He was born in early spring not December 25th. The New Testament is conspicuously **silent** on this topic – indicating the absence of authority. The early Christians worshipped the resurrected Lord, not the image a baby in a manger, each and every Sunday.

All those “holy days” associated with Christmas are **not** from God, but man (Col. 2:16). *“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men”* (Matt. 15:9). Rather, the Christian **strives** to worship God “in truth” (Jn. 4:24; 17:17). The pseudo-religious side of Christmas is not of “truth”.

The Salvation Army (S.A.) is a church, a denomination, not just another non-profit organization.

We all see the bell ringers by their kettles in front of stores this time of year. And we all feel that rush of generosity and compassion this time of year. But the **faithful** Christian must realize that the S.A. is a denomination, **not** the church we read about in the Bible. I have no doubt that they do help feed the hungry, along with a strong dose of **false** doctrine. So your donation would go to help support **false** teachers, however “sincere” they seem to be (Matt. 7:21). Rather than donating to them, use that renewed spirit of generosity to contribute **more** to the Lord’s work this Sunday (I Cor. 16:1-2).

Don’t tarnish your influence (and sin) as a Christian by drinking alcohol.

The consumption of alcohol this time of year seems to be universal. Beer, wine, spirits, mixed drinks and liquor can flow like water. Inhibitions and self control are often lost at office parties and holiday celebrations. But **remember** who you are - a “holy priesthood” (I Pet. 2:9). Just one drink is drunkenness. *“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God”* (I Cor. 10:31).

Let us all have a spiritually safe and happy holiday season!