



Does God Hate Christmas Parties?

My late and dearly missed friend, Rusty Anderson, told me a couple of years ago that he really liked Christmas...except for Jesus.

Now that was a twist! Most Christians I know complain about the way Christ has been taken out of Christmas, and they act like maniacs every time they see “X-mas” or “Happy Holidays.” It’s quite fashionable in many religious circles to decry the way pagans have taken away the true meaning of Christmas.

So I asked Rusty why he would say something like that.

He said that he really liked the parties, the time with family, the presents, the great food and the fun of Christmas, but there was always this feeling in the back of his mind that he really should be doing something “religious.” He said that Jesus kept messing up his good time.

I don’t remember whether it was Rusty or me who then made the joking comment that there ought to be one religious and one secular Christmas at different times of the year—so we could do religious things on one Christmas and, on the other, we could party.

Christmas is a time when I think about and am thankful for my friends who are now home with Christ. I suspect that Rusty and Jesus have had a conversation about the whole idea of Christmas.

Rusty was on intimate terms with Jesus before he died, and I’m sure that didn’t change—it only deepens—in heaven.

“Lord,” Rusty would say, “there’s been something that has bothered me for a long time. See, I really liked Christmas, but I always felt guilty

about it. Seemed that the really religious people kept trying to remember you at the parties...and I kept trying to forget you.”

Rusty, I love you, but that’s neurotic.

“I know, but you loved me anyway. Right?”

Of course I did. And, just so you know, I loved you at the parties even when you weren’t thinking about me. I loved you even when you were just having a good time.

“Really, Lord?”

Really.

Where did you get the idea that I was against parties? I loved the Puritans, too. But they were a sour bunch around Christmas. They had this thing about not celebrating with Christmas trees and presents. I tried to tell them that I liked the parties, too.

But they were very religious and never more so than at Christmas. In fact, sometimes they were so religious they couldn’t hear what I was saying to them about the whole Christmas thing. Do you know what your problem was?

“Well, I’ve seen a lot that I didn’t notice before I got here and, as you know, I have rejoiced in your forgiveness and your grace each time I discovered where I got it wrong or did it wrong. I get the feeling that you’re going to show me something else...and that is about Christmas.”

Yes, I am...but don’t look so serious. Your problem (and your friend Steve’s, too) was that you wanted me to be Lord, but you only wanted me to be Lord of religious stuff. If I’m Lord, I’m Lord at the parties, too.

I didn’t go back in the church every time you had a party. I was at the party. I rejoiced with you, laughed with you and celebrated with you just as much at the parties as I did at church.

Don’t you remember what Peter, my servant, said to Cornelius? He said that I

Your problem...
was that you
wanted me to
be Lord, but
you only
wanted me to
be Lord of
religious stuff.
If I’m Lord, I’m
Lord at the
parties, too.

If you've been
helped by PTM



why not help
others?

You're not the first one to make the journey out of legalistic religion. Thousands have gone down that road before you and thousands will come afterward. We know because many of them have shared their story with us. We've traveled the road ourselves, and we know how hard it can be—especially without someone to share the journey. That's why PTM is there for travelers on the road out of legalistic religion. We provide resources, encouragement and even online church services. If you've been helped—why not help others? Your prayers and regular financial support will bring Christ-centered comfort and healing to thousands of hurting people.

To make a tax-deductible contribution by credit card, go to

- www.ptm.org/donation
- or call 1-800-309-4466
- or send an offering by personal check to

**Plain Truth Ministries,
Pasadena, CA 91129**



he asked me...

was 'Lord of all.' Didn't you believe him? After all, it was in the Bible and you were always reading the Bible.

I guess I forgot.

Well, try and remember it. And while we're talking, do you remember what the angel said to the shepherds on the first Christmas?

Of course I do. After all, I went to seminary.

We have to talk about that sometime, too. But for now, I want you to think about what the angel said: "Don't be afraid, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

So, you're saying that the parties were okay...even if they weren't religious. That's good. I need to remember that.

You will. I'll keep reminding you...forever...and ever...and that with great joy! In fact, I was thinking that we would have a party here on Christmas.

We'll sing some Christmas songs—some won't be religious—and we'll laugh and have a good time. So many of the sour ones who are here missed the parties when they were on earth. After they realize how much fun they missed, I'm going to make it up to them.

Really?

Of course. This is, after all, heaven. Did you think that all you would do would be to sit around singing hymns? That's what they do in the other place.

Some of you are probably thinking, "Steve, that's blasphemous!"

Maybe you're right. I struggle with being a Scrooge at Christmas, too. But I don't really believe what I wrote is blasphemous.

In fact, I believe that a great part of Christmas is the celebration of the High King of Heaven's victory over all other philosophies and religions.

That's why we can borrow traditions like the Christmas tree, the decorations, the idea of presents and other traditions from pagans, because Jesus won!

He asked me to remind you. □

—Steve Brown

THE PLAIN TRUTH