

More Than a Holiday

Kathy and I have friends who live in Switzerland. Our friends have made summer trips to the states and we have gone to visit them three times, also in the summer. Each trip we used vacation time off from work and they did the same. Our friends kept referring to the time off as a “holiday.” To Europeans, the word holiday has already been related to a lesser meaning. Even though the word “holiday” actually means “holy day,” in Europe it is used to describe *any* vacation.



In the United States the word holiday is becoming a generic term for time off from work, without regard to the reason for the celebration. We tend to forget the reason behind national days such as Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Martin Luther King’s birthday, President’s Day, etc. Unfortunately, we do the same with Christmas and Easter. It has become politically correct to overlook the life-changing events that Christians celebrate at Christmas and Easter. Our culture is obsessed with the vacation benefit of the holiday, which waters down its meaning.

How do you refer to Christmas? Is it more than a vacation? Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ. Without Christ, any time off from work would be just a vacation. And, since Jesus is the Savior of the world, this celebration is very important.

If you have Christ in your heart, refer to this time of year as the Christmas season. Share the good news of his birth and what that means to you.

The Christmas season begins with Advent and concludes on Epiphany, January 6. Advent is a four week preparation and anticipation of the coming of Jesus Christ. The advent candle at church last Sunday was for **Hope**, and this Sunday we lit the candle of **Love**. **Joy** and **Peace** are to come in the two remaining Sundays leading up to Christmas Day. Yes, Jesus came into this world to give us hope for an eternal future, to share His love, and to bring us joy, and to share His peace. These four blessings are far more important than a generic vacation called “holiday.”

Question: Do you invite others to celebrate the meaning of Christmas, and do you refer to the Christmas season in a way that honors Jesus Christ?

Scripture: *She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).*

Closing Prayer: Help us, dear Lord, to always maintain our excitement to celebrate the birth of your son, Jesus Christ. Let the anticipation of His coming be our priority during the entire Christmas season. Amen.