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The name "Christmas" is from the old English "Christes Masse," meaning "mass of Christ." The apostate church has held a midnight mass on Christmas eve since the 6th century. "Christmas" was not used popularly till the 11th century. "Christmas" is Roman, Europe speaks of "Christ's birthday," and Scandinavia uses the pagan "Yule Day."

—309 Stanley Terrell Rd., Union City, TN 38261

NOTE: Christmas beyond question is America's biggest annual festival. It is a worldly religious, commercial and secular tradition. It was not a part of the worship or practice of the first century church. In fact, the Holy Spirit warned the saints in Galatia against making "holidays" a part of their service to Christ (Gal. 4:9-11). Such have no place in the worship or other activities of the church today. Congregations that have their "Christmas pageants or dramas" are adding to the worship and/or work of the church and are bringing the anathema of Revelation 22:18 upon themselves.

## FEDERAL LEGISLATION — ABORTION

A bill passed the House of Representatives on September 30, 1999 to recognize unborn children as crime victims. This bill was strongly opposed by the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARL), by Planned Parenthood, the ACLU, other pro-abortion groups and the Clinton-Gore Administration. (National right to Life News, Dave Andrusko, ed., Suite 500, 419-7th St., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20004, p.6, October 12, 1999)

This bill must now make its way through the Senate. Please write your two senators and ask them to support this bill for it requires that the law recognize that a criminal who injures a pregnant woman and her unborn child has claimed two victims. Write to: Senator \_\_\_\_\_, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510

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# BULLETIN BRIEFS

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## THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRISTMAS

Daniel Hamm

I have accepted a very exciting appointment this quarter; teaching 4th and 6th grade boys and girls. Our first lesson was on "The Birth of Jesus." One multiple choice question in the material read this way: *When was Jesus born? (Matt. 2:1) a. On Christmas Day, b. In the days of Herod the King, or c. On December the twenty-fifth? The biblical answer is b. In the days of Herod the King.* I then shared the following truths about the origin of Christmas.

"December 25th began to be celebrated as Christmas, the birthday of Jesus in 354 AD, as ordered by Bishop Liberius of Rome." (The World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. C, #3, p. 416). The catholic church was not fully developed at that time—the first pope came in 606 AD; apostasy was moving in that direction.

Why did Liberius choose December 25 to celebrate the birth of Jesus? In 312 AD Constantine had a "vision" at Milvian Bridge. In 313 AD, Constantine made "Christianity" the state religion of Rome. Masses of pagans like Constantine were converted to "Christianity." They had celebrated the Mithraic Feast of the Sun God at that time of the year. As days got shorter, they thought their god was losing his strength. Gradually, the days got longer. This pagan festival celebrated the triumph of light over darkness. When they learned of Christ, he became their "new light" so Liberius set December 25 to celebrate the birth of Jesus in an effort to turn away attention from these pagan feasts.

**Conclusion:** December 25 was set by the bishop of an apostate church in competition to pagan practices and is not a part of the Christian's religion in origin. Cont. Overleaf

## BACK TO THE BIBLE

Tim Arthur

One of the besetting sins of modern society is a lack of knowledge of the greatest book in the world – *the Bible!* It is really no surprise that so much ungodliness runs rampant in our streets. A lack of spiritual emphasis always results in chaos and wickedness. In Proverbs 14:34 the inspired writer boldly affirmed: “Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”

***Americans desperately need to get back to the Bible in our homes.*** Divorce runs rampant in our land because Americans have forgotten the Lord’s will in this matter, “What God has joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:9).

***We need to get back to Bible teaching regarding proper respect for authority.*** This is the only way to stop the disrespect for civil authority, parents, teachers and human life in general (see Rom. 13:1-8).

***We need to get back to Bible teaching regarding proper respect for authority in religion.*** The reason for denominationalism is a lack of respect for the authority of God’s Word, for God’s Word condemns division (I Cor. 1:10; 14:33). Men need to do away with their creed books, church manuals, etc., and return to God’s Word as the sole authority in religion. Jesus promised in Matthew 16:18 to build His church. We must go back to the Bible for that glorious body over which He rules as head (Colossians 1:18).

***Americans certainly need to return to God’s Word for moral purity and holiness.*** In an age of filth, nudity, and all kinds of sexual perversions, we plead with men to return to the wholesome purity taught in the Bible. Church councils may sanction homosexual preachers, but the Bible clearly and emphatically condemns such (Romans 1:27; I Corinthians 6:9).

***There is a genuine need for men to return to the Bible for God’s plan of redemption.*** The majority of the religious world rejects baptism as a condition for salvation; however, in Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 3:21; etc., it is clearly seen that baptism into Christ for the remission of sins is a necessity.

Note: If you set a goal to read four chapters a day in 2000 you can read the New Testament twice and the Old Testament once. Why not memorize one verse of scripture each weekday and get your children or grandchildren to do the same.

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## LEGISLATIVE ALERT — GAMBLING

Jim E. Waldron

The New Year will see many bills to promote the lottery and other forms of gambling put forward in the legislative assemblies of this

nation. Gambling is a very big tree that grows out of the soil of covetousness and “covetousness is idolatry” (Col. 3:5). While for generations states fought the “numbers racket” because it was a plague on society and its economic health, they are now promoting such.

Robert Goodman of Northampton, Massachusetts published a book on gambling in 1995 in which he carefully documented many of the evils of the gambling explosion in America. Here are three brief statements from that book:

◆ “*Yet criminals never promoted their gambling operations the way governments now do with multi-million dollar advertising campaigns, public relations efforts, focus group research, and penetration studies. No matter what you do for a living,*” says a *Massachusetts Lottery advertisement, “there’s an easier way to make money”* p. 136.

◆ “*When Thomas J. Meskill ran for governor of Connecticut in the early 1970s, he promised voters that if they elected him, he would work hard to have a new state lottery so that they wouldn’t have to introduce a state income tax. Meskill got elected and Connecticut not only got a lottery but also went on to legalize betting on horses, dogs, and jai alai to avoid imposing an income tax. Twenty years later, the state found itself with a higher per capita amount being spent on legal gambling than almost any other state in the country, as well as with the highest recorded incidence of problem gambling -- over 6 percent of the state’s adult population.*” p 157.

◆ “*It is quite possible that at no other time in history have so many people been trying so hard to make money without having to work for it*” p. 188.

Let me urge you to phone and/or write your member of the state legislature and urge him or her to oppose the growth of gambling in your state. Better yet, buy a copy of the above named book and put it into the hands of your representative. It is *The Luck Business*, Robert Goodman, 1995, The Free Press, Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1230 The Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020; ISBN 0-02-912483-2

12/99

## SODOMITES

The Holy Spirit testified in I Corinthians, “Do you not know the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites...will inherit the kingdom of God” (I Cor. 6:9). The Spirit testified to Israel, “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination” (Lev. 18:22). Bill Clinton, who carries a black Bible when he goes to church, apparently does not believe such is an abomination.

For example, note this report by *Bay Window*, a “gay and lesbian newspaper” in their October 7-13, 1999 issue: “President Bill Clinton spoke October 2 in Los Angeles before 1000 people at the Access Now for Gay and Lesbian Equality (ANGLE) black tie dinner at the Beverly Hilton Hotel.” *Bay Window* quoted the president as saying, “I want to say again, I am grateful to people who have made me more alive to the concerns of your community, not only those who themselves are gay and lesbian, but to others, beginning with my vice-president (Al Gore), who has been terrific on all of that in ways you will never know.” (*Bay Window*, vol. 17, No. 42, p.5). Mr. Clinton said at the close, “And I want you to remember the enthusiasm with which you greeted me tonight. And I want you to remember that its easy to shout in the moment. But the world is turned by those who, day in and day out, with courage and determination and heart and hope stay the course. We need you. America needs you. I still believe in the future of America and you are a part of it. Thank you and God bless you. Thank you.” (applause) (*Ibid.* p. 5).

As followers of the Prince of Peace we abominate and abhor the physical violence done to people because they are caught up in such a life style. Those who use such violence are condemned themselves for we are to “repay no one evil for evil” (Rom. 12:17); and again, “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Rom. 12:21).

We know there were saints in Corinth who had come out of homosexuality and had been washed in the blood of the lamb (I Cor. 6:9-11). Our earnest desire is that those caught up in this immoral life style will repent, turn to God and do works worthy of repentance (Acts 26:20).

Yet, as John the Baptist rebuked Herod Antipas for his ungodliness (Matt. 14:1-4), even so we must rebuke such people today including politicians like Bill Clinton and Al Gore who promote the agenda of the so-called “Gay Rights Movement.”