

Megachurches closed on Christmas

The above title is one of the headline articles found in the Wednesday, December 07, 2005 Times Record News put out by the Associated Press. The article states that “pastors are canceling services, anticipating low attendance on what they call a family day.” The article goes on to say that “church leaders decided that organizing service on a Christmas Sunday would not be the most effective use of staff and volunteer resources. The last time Christmas fell on a Sunday was 1994, and only a small number of people showed up...” Some “megachurches” have even decided to call off worship for New Year’s Day because it also falls on a Sunday this year. To justify said truancy, Cindy Willison (a spokeswoman for the evangelical Southland Christian Church) said, “but we’re having multiple services on Saturday and an additional service Friday night, We believe that you worship every day of the week, not just on a weekend, and you don’t have to be in a church building to worship.”

What is wrong with the above mentioned Article?

God’s authoritative word is no where in this picture. Did any of these “pastors,” “church leaders,” and “church spokeswomen” think to turn to God’s word to see if it is okay to *not* worship on Sunday? God’s word clearly prescribes a specific day for assembled worship. Where is the Bible authority for the above mentioned “pastor” to cancel services on the first day of the week? Let us remember what Paul told the Colossian brethren: “*Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him*” (Col. 3:17). If I decide to call off worship service for *any* Sunday I need to produce the scripture that authorizes such a practice. If there is no Bible passage to authorize such a cancellation yet I cancel it anyway I have sinned (cf. Rom. 4:15; I Jn. 3:4).

Does the Bible prescribe a Specific DAY of Worship?

Cindy Willison, the “spokeswoman” in the above article, dismissed her megachurch’s cancellation of Sunday worship due to Christmas falling upon a Sunday. The church’s decision was because many members will worship on Friday and Saturday. We may ask Miss Willison; “where is the authority for such a substitution is found in God’s word?” Yes, the OT worthies had a holy convocation on the Sabbath; however, Jesus nailed that law to the cross (Col. 2:14). What about Friday??? Yes, the Bible does have somewhat to say about a specific day of worship.

New Testament church members assembled on the first day of the week (cf. Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2). A prescribed worship service of singing (I Cor. 14:23, 26; Eph. 5:19), praying (I Tim. 2:8; 3:15), giving of our means as we have been prospered (I Cor. 16:1-2); preaching, and partaking of the Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:7ff) was to occur on *this* specified day. No where in these scriptures is found the authority to substitute this prescribed day for another day for convenience.

The Real Issue

The real issue is not “Christmas” worship service. The real issue is not whether a church is at liberty to worship on whatever day of the week it so pleases. The real issue is one of Bible Authority. The above mentioned article stated that only “a few church members complained” when they heard that Sunday worship was cancelled. Megachurches are known to have thousands in any one assembly.

A few, in relation to thousands, is maybe a handful. The few complainers (in relation to the thousands of content members) illustrate a lack of fear and love for God's word at such a gathering. If these churchgoers really wanted to serve God they would be more concerned with whether or not God permitted their absence on the first day of the week rather than looking to the matter of inconvenience, past attendance records of Christmas on Sundays, and whether or not the majority are satisfied or dissatisfied with the church leader's decision to shut down Sunday worship.

What types of worshippers are acceptable to God?

Jesus said, "*But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers*" (Jn. 4:23). Whether the Lord's Day falls on Christmas, New Year's Day, Easter, Halloween, or any other man made holiday the faithful will be assembled to worship.