Christmas

by

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Scrolling across the bottom of a news station a few days ago was a tagline that read "Christmas has lost its meaning."

The question, "What is Christmas?" seems to be asked every year. Many believe it is to celebrate the birth of Christ Jesus. Others believe it is a Scandinavian Norse (pagan) holiday (Yule) to celebrate the winter solstice.

As it happens, whether it is Christmas, Yule or some other religious or social celebration many of them fall around the same time. Initially, Christmas was not about the birth of Christ but rather as a means to convert pagans to Christianity during winter solstice celebrations (Saturnalia festival). .. Pope Julius I declared December 25 as the "Feast of the Nativity," which, in time, became known as Christmas.

But not every Christian believed that Christmas should be celebrated. In the early 1600's English Puritans cancelled Christmas celebrations as did the pilgrims. In fact, from 1659 to 1681 Christmas celebrations were actually banned in Boston. Violators were fined if they exhibited any Christmas spirit.

While many English customs were abandoned with America's independence it wasn't until the 1800's that Christmas was transformed from a Mardi Gras type celebration, to one that celebrated peace, love, family unity, charity, good will to others, and nostalgia.

As America embraced Christmas, many of the traditions and custom that immigrants brought to our country were incorporated into the holiday celebration. These included decorating homes and trees, sending holiday greetings, and giving gifts, especially to children. In 1870, Christmas was declared a federal holiday.

Merry Christmas vs. Happy Christmas, vs. Happy Holidays
These three phrases have come to have different meanings. Merry Christmas and Happy Christmas date back to before 1900. But these were not the only sentiments about Christmas that date back so far. Others included "Christmas Greetings," Season's Greetings," "Yuletide Greetings." Some people speculate that he difference between merry and happy have more to do with how the words are viewed – merry = festive or festival, while happy = jot and peace.

It should be noted that the last time the word "Christmas" was used in the presidential holiday cards sent out by the White House was in 1992 (George W Bush). While this is significant, Kennedy, Johnson, Reagan, and Clinton also strived to include non-Christians with their White House greetings. The omission of Christmas in these holiday cards could truly be called the beginning of political correctness with regard to Christmas and the Christmas Holiday. Our national leaders, while attempting to strive for "equality" and "inclusiveness" failed to remember that our nation was founded on religious principles, and also failed to recognize the disastrous impact their decisions would have on our former social norms. Truly their decision were based on ignorance.

In 2005 the "War on Christmas" was in full swing. Schools, colleges, and universities issued policies on how the "winter break," formerly called Christmas break was to be handled (https://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/the-guide-to-a-politically-correct-holiday-classroom-party).

The political correctness of *Happy Holidays* is retuning mankind to the pagan demigods of the past. It has turned people to worshipping possessions, money, and good times and away from family unity, peace, joyful hearts, and charity. This political correctness war does not enhance traditions but rather diminishes them. For al the talk by liberals about tolerance, political correctness is just another version of intolerance.

Let's quit this "Happy Holidays" and "Season's Greetings" baloney. Life is too short for meaningless platitudes. Christmas is a magical and hopeful time of year and doesn't deserve to be watered down to meaningless political correctness.

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, we need to worry less about what we can or can't say, and more about what we can and should do to put Christ back into Christmas.