

Observing the Holidays

The question is asked, “Is it all right to observe holidays?” There are some that do not regard any observances or customs during this time of year, and they have their reasons. There are things about certain holidays that we should not observe simply because they are not in keeping with what the Bible teaches and would confuse our neighbors. Romans 14:5–8 says:

One-man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.

Clearly, there is nothing wrong in observing a holiday. It is the manner in which we remember the holiday that could present a problem. For instance, if we celebrated Halloween with the idea that there really were ghosts and monsters, then we would be teaching lies. Yet, to use it as a time to dress up in costumes and have fun, then there is no real danger. Christmas has often been observed as the real birthday of our Lord. Some even accept much of the other religious traditions that go along with it. If we celebrate that day and believe and teach those customs, we are also teaching falsehoods and should not do so. However, if all we are doing is using it as a day to enjoy our family and exchange gifts, then there is no problem. In fact, it is vitally important for families to spend these times together to strengthen their bonds, but this should not be the only times to do so.

In the passage mentioned, Paul says that we need to be fully persuaded in our own minds. If we are uncertain about the way that we celebrate the holidays, then we need to do more study until we are convinced that we are not violating God’s will or teaching false doctrine by the way that we observe them. May all of us enjoy the holiday season and spend time in love and companionship with our earthly family but let us not forget our heavenly family while doing so.

By Robert Barcroft