

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Calvert, Mrs. Douglas, Mr. Douglas' mother, Mr. and Mrs. Hadley, Mrs. Kelly Hall, Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Siota, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website:  
[www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com](http://www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com)
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

## Oak Grove Church of Christ Bulletin

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December 22, 2019

### Should Churches Have a Christmas Program?

By Derek Long

Christmas will be celebrated by many people throughout the world in various ways on Wednesday. Over the last several weeks, I have heard about churches having special programs for Christmas. Churches may have a nativity scene, may put on a play, may have a float in a parade, may have a special song performance, etc. Does God's word authorize churches to put on a special Christmas program?

It does us good to remember Christ is head over all things to the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18) and possesses all authority (Matthew 28:18). Anything one might do will be authorized from one of two sources. It will either be authorized by heaven or by men (Matthew 21:23-25). In order for us to bring glory to God, we must, "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Colossians 3:17), which means to do all things by His authority. In order for churches to be authorized by Jesus to have a Christmas program we should be able to find some direct statement, approved example, or necessary inference authorizing such an action in the Bible. The fact the Bible does not provide us with a direct statement, approved example, or necessary inference for a church having a Christmas program teaches churches are not authorized by God to have such things.

The actions engaged in during various Christmas programs are often violating aspects of God's will. Special song performances put on by choirs would be one such example. When the Lord speaks of singing being done in worship to Him, it is something we are to do to "one another" (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). God does not teach for a select group of people to practice and put on a performance while others sit and silently listen. The focus seems to shift to a display of people's talent for the enjoyment of others rather than blending voices together to sing songs of praise to God. Having a play would fall into the same sort of situation. God did not establish the church to provide us with plays and entertainment. Theatrical productions were not put on by the early church and there is no authority for such things today. We need to recognize many things done as Christmas programs by various churches violate the instructions God has given for His church.

When a church puts on a Christmas program, the typical emphasis is upon them celebrating the birth of Christ. The New Testament is silent about disciples celebrating the birth of Christ. Jesus' birth was certainly important and necessary for the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. However, there is no indication in Scripture of there being an annual celebration of Jesus' birth. It may appear to some to be a very religious thing to celebrate Jesus' birth but we need to remember such things are actually offering what we think is a good idea rather than sticking with what God has commanded. Colossians 2:23 speaks of things certain people were engaged in and says, "These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but

are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh." When we come up with our own way of serving God, it may look very religious but it is "self-imposed religion" or as some translations say "will worship." We need to remember our thoughts are not like God's thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9) and so just because something seems like a good idea to us does not mean it is a good idea. We cannot direct ourselves but must rely upon the word of God (Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12; 16:25; 3:5-6). Celebrating Jesus' birth may seem like a good idea to some but it is one which is without authority from God.

Let's be content to practice only those things which we can find authority for in the word of God. Adding a Christmas program to the work of the church is something outside of the word of God. Remember when we go beyond the doctrine of Christ we no longer stand in a right relationship with God or with Jesus (2 John 9-11).