

ABOUT CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS

If you have the attitude that it really does not matter what proof is presented you intend to do whatever you believe, then you may not be influenced by reading this.

This is a study on "where did the custom of celebrating birthdays originate, and why did not Jesus, or the apostles, celebrate their birthdays?" Most important is how does God feel about Christians celebrating birthdays. If you have a computer go to your search line and type in "celebrating birthdays" to find all kinds of information about where it all started. Below is some info I found. What do you think God thinks about celebrating birthdays?

We find in *The Lore of Birthdays*, Linton, p. 20 a description of what was believed and practiced concerning birthdays in ancient times:

Originally the idea of birthday greetings and wishes for happiness was rooted in magic. The working of spells for good and evil is the chief usage of witchcraft. One is especially susceptible to such spells on his birthday, as one's personal spirits are about at that time. Dreams dreamed on the birthday eve should be remembered, for they are predictions of the future brought by the guardian spirits which hover over one's bed on the birthday eve. Birthday greetings have power for good or ill because one is closer to the (demon) spirit world on this day. Good wishes bring good fortune, but the reverse is also true, so one should avoid enemies on one's birthday and be surrounded only by well-wishers. 'Happy birthday' and 'Many happy returns of the day' are the traditional greetings. (*The Lore of Birthdays*, Linton, p. 20).

Since it was believed that the positions of the stars at the time of birth influenced a child's future, astrological horoscopes came into being, purporting to foretell the future, based on the time of birth. "Birthdays are intimately linked with the stars, since without the calendar, no one could tell when to celebrate his birthday. They are also indebted to the stars in another way, for in early days the chief importance of birthday records was to enable the astrologers to chart horoscopes" (*The Lore of Birthdays*, p. 53).

And in *Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore*, under *Mythology and Legend*, p. 144, we find more legends about the beliefs and practices of birthdays.

"Birthdays are the times when good and evil spirits have the opportunity to attack the celebrants who at these times are in peril." What is done to counter these malevolent spirits? "The presence of friends and the expression of good wishes help to protect the celebrant against the unknown pervasive peril" (*Funk & Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*, p. 144).

The giving of birthday gifts is a custom associated with the offering of sacrifices to pagan gods on their birthdays. Certainly the custom was linked with the same superstitions that formed the background for birthday greetings. "The exchange of presents is associated with the importance of ingratiating good and evil fairies on their or our birthdays" (*ibid.*).

The traditional birthday cake and candles also have their origin in ancient pagan

idol worship. The ancients believed that the fire of candles had magical properties. They offered prayers and made wishes to be carried to the gods on the flames of the candles. Thus we still have the widely practiced birthday custom of making a wish, then blowing out the candles. The Greeks celebrated the birthday of their moon goddess, Artemis, with cakes adorned each month and day it is sacred; and found out from the day of a man's birth, what he will meet with in the course of his life, and how he will end his days, and what sort of man he will be" (Herodotus, Persian Wars, Book II, ch. 82).

Rawlinson's translation of Herodotus includes the following footnote: "Horoscopes were of very early use in Egypt and Cicero speaks of the Egyptians and Chaldees predicting a man's destiny at his birth".

When we examine the principles of God's law closely, as they relate to birthday celebrations, we can understand why neither Christ, nor His Apostles, nor their true followers, observed their birthdays. As noted earlier, the practice has its origin in idolatry and the worship of the sun, moon and stars. Some may view birthday customs as purely secular, lacking any religious significance. Yet we need to be aware of the broader perspective of their origins, and the religious significance they have had—and still have—for vast multitudes of people.

Nowhere in the Bible are we, as believers given permission to observe our birthdays. On the other hand, we are not directly told not to observe birthdays; does that mean we are given permission to observe birthdays? Nowhere in the bible are we told not to smoke cigarettes, or do illegal drugs either. Does that mean it is alright to do these things?

Can we find examples of any indication of people who did observe the celebration of birthdays? Yes, we can, but you must search because the word "birthday" is scarce in the Bible.

Ge 40:20 And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants.

Mt 14:6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

Mr 6:21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee;

When we go to the surrounding scriptures we find during both celebrations a person was beheaded. Another place found in the bible indicates Job's children were celebrating what appears to be birthday parties which ends in disasters. Job 1:4-5, 13-19. The point is that no place in the bible do we find God giving permission, or good examples, regarding celebrating birthdays.

Now I ask, if celebrating birthdays are pagan based, as shown, why would we want to introduce our little children to paganism? Is not this, paganism (idolatry), one of the most hated practices on God's list of condemnations? To answer this question refer to any Bible Concordance and find the word "idolatry", then read some of the

bible verses referenced. If we want our nation to grow up under the protection of God we must take a new look at what we are teaching our children, and the examples we are setting before them. When we look at the crime and drug trafficking and immorality our young people are involved in we have to admit we are not teaching them (either by example or word) what God requires of His people for protection and lasting happiness.

Not only do we fail to teach our children what idolatry is. We teach them it is acceptable to indulge in idolatry if we decide it is not wrong to do so. God says:

Re 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

If our purpose is to build godly and holy offspring and loving, giving, godly children, then we should not do any thing that would hinder this godly purpose – put no temptations in their pathway – do nothing to encourage them to think too highly of themselves in pride and arrogance. Rather, we should teach them to give, to serve, to be humble, to revere God and His Word, and to love others and seek to help, serve, and honor them.”

De 18:9 When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

De 18:12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

De 20:18 That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so should ye sin against the LORD your God.

Since God says he doesn't change it is safe to decide he still considers certain types of idolatrous beliefs as "an abomination".

As noted earlier, the practice of celebrating birthdays has its origin in idolatry.

It is not that we are left with no special days to celebrate. God, himself, has assigned some very valuable and enjoyable holy days for our enjoyment. He even gives us instructions as to when and how to keep them. He approves our observing seven holy days every year, the seventh day Sabbath every week, observance of the new moon every month, national holidays, as well as giving honor to our parents, etc. Why keep these holy days he says are his? These Holy days are so important to him that he is going to reinstate them in the sixth age for the whole world to keep. Read the last eight chapters of Ezekiel and Zech. 14:16-19 for more information. Keeping God's holy days is a way to keep him and his future plans close to our hearts, we need to be reminded every year of our wonderful future. I am convinced it will please him to see us celebrating his days with fellow believers, instead of the pagan celebrations of the world. Satan has subtitled his counterfeit days such as Easter, halloween, birthdays, Christmas, etc in place of God's celebrations for us, all of which have their origins in idolatry. Read the study on Holy Days and/or Lev. chapter 23. These are days God does want us to celebrate; they have nothing to do with our birthdays. On the other hand there are other things God says are more important to remember than our births.

Re 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the

Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

God says (physical) "death" can be a blessing (to the saints), and Paul says death is a gain, and Solomon says death is better than birth..

Ec 7:1 A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.
Php 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Jesus wants us to celebrate his death not his birthday.

Lu 22:19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.
1Co 11:24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Instead of giving people permission to celebrate birthdays, (or his birthday) he does tell us to do something in remembrance of his death.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.
26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.
27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

Birthdays were definitely of pagan origin. Should God's people emulate the pagans and pagan societies around them? God inspired the prophet Jeremiah to write, Jer 10:1-10 "Hear ye the word which the Lord speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: Thus saith the Lord, and be not dismayed at the signs of the heaven (astrology!); for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain".

Clearly, Almighty God commands His people not to follow in the ways, customs, and practices of the heathen, pagan nations around them! Obviously, therefore, the Word of God does not sanction or approve of birthday celebrations or birthday parties!

God is even more plain in His Word. Celebrating birthdays with lavish birthday parties was a pagan Egyptian custom. God commands His people, Lev 18:3 "After the doing of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances" .

Jesus' last warnings to his called out ones is very serious. Remember; many are called but few are chosen.

Re 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Pr 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Don't rely on your conscious to be your guide, rely on God's word. May God bless and guide us in our search for the truth.