

ARE CHRISTIANS REQUIRED TO KEEP HOLY DAYS

I am not being dogmatic about anyone being required to observe God's holy days or new moon days now, why? Because these were required only for the whole nation of Israel (not just Judah) during the second age, a different age than we live in today. God did make changes after the resurrection of Christ, even to opening the door to Gentiles. As far as I understand Paul never taught Gentiles about many Old Testament ordinances, that was required of Israel by God at that time.

It may surprise many to know the last eight chapters of Ezekiel is all about these days being reinstated, after the resurrection of The Whole House of Israel, in the sixth age, so, I am convinced He is pleased if we volunteer and keep those of "His holy days" now, not because we are required to but because we want to please Him.

Jesus did not tell anyone not to keep them, actually He told His followers to be at Jerusalem on one of the holy days called "Pentecost" to receive the holy spirit.

And I hope no one thinks God threw away his ten commandments, that were given even before Abraham was born.

Does our salvation depend on whether or not we keep the Holy Days? If not why bother?

To keep the Holy Days shows God that we want to stay in touch with the history of His ancient nation, Israel, the beginnings of His church.

Keeping the Holy Days keeps us in mind of the workings of His plan. Each Holy Day pictures His plan for mankind.

God doesn't require us to go above and beyond certain things that we don't understand, or beyond our abilities, but He does abundantly bless us for doing everything we are capable of to please Him.

Keeping His Holy Days must please Him else why would He claim them to be "HIS" and to institute them in the beginning as a "gift" to His people? God is so interested in us keeping His holy days that He is going to have people keeping them in the future. Zech.14:16 and Eze. last eight chapters.

Keeping the holy days gives us, who are striving to please God, an exceptional opportunity to fellowship with fellow Christians, which we are instructed to do.

Ancient Israel was commanded to observe the seven Holy Days as a means of worshipping God, and of learning about Him. Why wouldn't we want to do the same?

It's also a way of bonding with family and friends, making new friends, and growing spiritually.

Actually, some of the reasons Christian people don't attend the Feasts of God is because they aren't even aware of God's holy days, or they put more importance on their time, energies, and finances than they do finding groups that host the holy day festivals, not aware of the benefit to their spiritual growth. Another reason is that they are suspicious of other religions, afraid they will become contaminated with false doctrines. Others may be concerned that their acquaintances will find fault with them going outside of their own group. They may fear that they will not be accepted by regular attendees, or their inability to fit in comfortably.

Whatever the reasons, they are not seeing the spiritual benefits of keeping God's holy days. Some will say, "that's old testament stuff, or "that's Jewish, we're not required to do that now. You may not be "required" to take a bath more than once a week, but you do it anyway...I hope. God doesn't "require" you to do a lot of things that would make Him happy if you sacrificed some of your time for Him. There also are lots of things you greatly benefit from when doing willingly. Maybe you don't think you would benefit spiritually from fellowshiping or hearing other than your own ministers speaking. There can be any number of reasons why you don't see the need or reason to observe God's holy days.

There's some very important Biblical reasons why a believer should keep God's holy days. If we believe the Bible to be God's word we need to understand all about God's holy days. They are very important to Him and He claims them to be His very own, not Jewish, Israelite or Gentile's. He puts them on the same level as the Sabbath.

We are to follow the examples Jesus and his apostles set for his church realizing both Jesus and Paul kept these festivals. If the holy days had been fulfilled along with the sacrificial, priesthood, and circumcision laws, would not Paul have mentioned this to his new converts? He did explain about fulfillment of those mentioned, but said nothing of a change in keeping the holy days. Instead of doing away with the observance of the holy days Paul actually instructed the Colossians (2:16) to not allow

anyone judge them for “eating or drinking or keeping the Sabbath, New Moon, and/or Holy Days”. The holy days, new moon, and Sabbath are grouped together as days that the early converts were observing. He reminds them that these days are “shadows” of future things to come. In other words they are prophetic revelation in regard to God’s plan. Religious leaders of their time were trying to confuse and /or condemn them for observing these days. Paul says, “let no man judge you!” in these observance.

Heresy at Colosse

By way of historical background, it is widely known that the Colossian heresy was not Judaizers but Gnosticism. Many have assumed that both elements were present due to the references to circumcision, Sabbath and Holy Days. However, Gnosticism was not a separate religion but a religious concept that could be combined with an established religion with the promise of "improving" it. It was a sort of spiritual "hamburger helper" in the sense that it was a belief system that combined with, and allegedly improved, the host religion. So Gnostic Judaism was a blend of Jewish religious practices with a Gnostic flavor (to extend the hamburger helper analogy). It is most important to bear in mind that Gnostic Judaism, seeking to absorb the newly emerging Christian religion into its syncretic admixture, was the main culprit Paul was combating in this epistle, as it was in Galatians and other New Testament books. This fact provides a perspective which is vitally important to understand the points Paul makes in Colossians 2:16-17.

A brief summary of the basic tenets of Gnosticism will enable us to understand the philosophical underpinnings of the problems in Gnosticism gets its name from its claim of higher knowledge (Greek gnosis) which it promised to its disciples.

One of the basic tenets of Gnosticism was that matter is evil. This belief led many down the road of asceticism as a way to avoid physical pleasure, which was considered evil. (This makes the hamburger helper analogy a humorous oxymoron.) The idea was that one must purge himself of evil matter by asceticism (avoiding physical pleasures) and by punishing the flesh. The libertine element of Gnosticism took an opposite approach that since one cannot avoid matter, and being spiritual is totally unrelated to matter, one could do as he pleases and indulge the flesh to the limit and still be spiritual. The ascetic aspect is the obvious target of Paul's warnings in chapter 2.

Angel worship was also a fundamental aspect of Gnosticism. This took many forms, including celebration of special days and other religious customs based on astrological concepts of time.

Gnosticism achieved a large measure of success in Judaism and Christianity, as evidenced by the many Gnostic-based terms and concepts found in several New Testament books.

The conclusion: You may not be “required” to keep the Holy Days since they are not specifically commanded in the New Testament, but if you refuse to please God, by going above and beyond the call of duty, you may lose the blessings you would receive by so doing. On the other hand if you choose to keep the Holy Days because you love fellowshiping with God and His people you can’t go wrong.