

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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What Is Evil?

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ur word, “evil” is used in the New Testament to translate three Greek words in the original text. The Greek words denote two important facts. First, evil is that which is bad in the sense of it belonging to the low order of things or things that are worthless. The character of all our deeds comprise only two categories: that which is “evil” and that which is “good”. Jesus spoke of all people in the resurrection as, “they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil (PHAULOS) unto the resurrection of judgment” (John 5:29). Second, evil is denoting not only its character in being, but its effects as well. Thoughts can be evil in their character, even before we act upon them. Jesus said that our own hearts are the source of “evil (KAKOS) thoughts” (Mark 7:21). Our words can be evil in that they have destructive or evil effects. Jesus warns that His followers will have those who “say all manner of evil (PONEROS) against you falsely for my sake” (Matthew 5:11).

“Lying” is definitely in the category of “evil”. When the Jewish leaders were thinking in their

hearts that Jesus was blaspheming, Jesus called their thinking “evil” for it was a lie (Matthew 9:4). Christians are to make sure their speech is sound to change the minds of the enemies of Christianity who are speaking evil or lies about them and consequently make them ashamed (Titus 2:8).

Shall we do evil that good may come? Paul says “no”, and charges those with slander who say he does (Romans 3:8). There is nothing we call “good” that justifies doing something “evil” in order to bring it about. The end does not justify the means under the law of Christ.

Over the last few years it is interesting to see some who identify themselves as a “church of Christ” deal with “Christmas.” A road sign, identifying a group comprising the church Jesus established, had this message: “Remember, Christ is in Christmas for a reason.” Is this the truth?

The New Testament, which is the source of absolute truth never puts Christ in Christmas. Never in the New Testament do we read of the church established by Jesus celebrating “Christmas”. No apostle of Christ commanded

Christians to celebrate the birth of Christ in an anniversary festival.

Celebrating the birth of Jesus on December 25 was not practiced until the middle of the fourth century. The pagans celebrating with merrymaking the winter solstice of December 22 may have been the reason for the season, more than Jesus being born on December 25. The practice of the Catholic Church in the fourth century is the authority behind Christmas, not the God in Heaven.

The rationale of many in the church today is, even though Christmas is not authorized in the New Testament, it is a good thing for people to be reminded of Christ. To give the impression that Heaven put Christ in a mass of the church is a lie. Man put Christ and mass together, not God. Shall we then do evil (promoting a lie) that good may come (people thinking about Christ)? Our brethren in promoting a lie are doing evil! What good is accomplished if people connect Christ with celebrations and practices not authorized by God?