



SHOULD SANTA BE PART OF A CHRISTIAN CHRISTMAS?

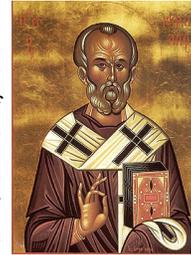
by Pastor George Shafer

If you are one of those people who have yet to remove Santa Claus from your Christmas, there are several facts you should know, as a Christian. These facts, combined with I Thessalonians 5:22 (abstain from all appearance of evil) are more than sufficient to either get Santa Claus out of your house or at least to give you a guilty conscience every time you see him.

Santa Claus and Saint Nicholas are one and the same. The person of Nicholas is the combination of two Lykian bishops from the Fourth and Sixth Centuries A.D., the oldest of which was the

legendary Bishop of Myra. During the middle ages the religious significance of Saint Nicholas was much greater than today, so much so that by the Ninth century he was held in higher regard than any other saint except the Virgin Mary.

In the middle ages Nicholas was not confined to Christmas, but was an important part of daily life. He was the patron saint of the poor, and was called upon by many when times got hard. In 1066 William the Conqueror called upon Saint Nicholas when his fleet was hit by a storm while crossing the Channel. Women at childbirth would [pray to Nicholas for assistance](#). Nicholas was a friend of family life, a helper in time of emergency, and an accepted source of material assistance in the day of need.



St. Nicholas

Nicholas had many other supernatural qualities. He was (and still is) regarded as omnipresent, so much so that men and women considered the possibility of meeting up with him at any time of day or night. He was a rewarder of good, an avenger of evil, and was said to be an accomplished exorcist -- one who could raise the dead, and who fought the devil. His wealth and power were said to come from Holy sources.

Just as Santa has elves (the word "elf" is from a German word which means "nightmare") it is interesting to note that in every version of the legend of Saint Nicholas he is accompanied by some type of helper. There are many names given to the helper (i.e. Black Peter, The Black One, or Pelzenpock), but it is agreed that [this helper represents](#)



An elf

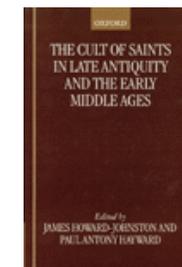
[none other than the devil himself](#). In fact, many of the names given to the helper are derivations of the names "Beelzebub" and "Lucifer." Rather than

damning the devil Saint Nicholas subdued and tamed him, making him his unwilling co-worker.

Another very familiar modern idea about Santa Claus can be traced back to Saint Nicholas. He was said to ride a white horse over the rooftops at Advent time and to drop candy and presents down the chimney. According to Meisen, "in olden times [the chimney was the means of connection between the world of evil ghosts](#) and that of the living. As such it was the obvious entrance for a person like the devil."



By now it should be clear that Santa Claus is exactly what we already knew he was . . . a substitute for the Lord Jesus Christ. In Greek documents he is often called the 'Second Saviour.' According to Adriaan D. De Groot, "[If Christ was the Saviour for Life Eternal, it was Nikolaos who taught the reconciliation with sin in this earthly life.](#)" To substitute details about Santa Claus for the Lord Jesus Christ at Christmas is to perpetuate those evil lies and obscure the true meaning of Christmas.



During the reformation, one of the doctrines from which Protestants wanted to be separated was the *Cult of Saints*. Because of this, men like Pastor Flimner preached against them, and particularly against St. Nicholas. Calvinist Walich Sieuwerts called the custom of filling children's shoes (or socks) with candy "[a sacrifice to an idol](#)." Saint Nicholas was considered by reformers to be "a fable of papism."

When you decorate your house with stockings or Santa Claus at Christmas, what you are really doing is setting up an idol. You are identifying with the "Cult of Saints" of the Roman Catholic church and



with a particular saint who is a counterfeit Jesus Christ -- one who has formed an alliance with the devil. You are also endorsing a doctrine which, according to De Groot, emphasizes the kingdom of the earth, and minimizes the Kingdom of Heaven.

In Revelation 2:15 the Lord told the church at Pergamos, "So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate." It is undisputed that the origin of many of the traits of the Nicholas legend predate the Bishop of Myrna, coming from very ancient pagan sources. Could it be that the "doctrine of the Nicolaitans" is from the very same source as the legend of Santa Claus? If Satan is the source of all false doctrine how can it be otherwise? Before you hang that Santa Claus face out on your front door again this year, maybe you should think about that for a moment. Why not make Christ the one you honor this year at Christmas?



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