

# Jack Michael Outreach Ministries

A Ministry of the Watchman on the Walls, preparing God's People for the End Times

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**I NOW HAVE A WEBSITE:** [www.jackmichaeloutreachministries.com](http://www.jackmichaeloutreachministries.com)

I am pleased to announce that a good friend of mine is in the process of developing a Website for my ministry.

In the November Teaching Letter, I explained why I continue to print hard copies of my Teaching Letters and books. That need will continue as long as necessary to minister to everyone on my mailing list.

In addition, my Teaching Letters and books will also be available electronically. Anyone who desires to read my Teaching Letters online, and download them, will be able to do so. Likewise, some of my books will also be available online, for reading, and for downloading.

## Word from the Watchman – Jesus is the light of the world

*“The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it”* (nor recognized it). (John 1:5 NIV).

Almost 2000 years ago, **JESUS, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD**, was born in Bethlehem. The Scriptures give this account:

*“Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock **BY NIGHT**. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord **SHONE AROUND THEM**, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them: Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”* (Luke 2:8-11 NKJV).

There was **LIGHT** that night; the glory of God pierced the darkness, and shone all around the shepherds. Yet, there was an even greater light that night; **JESUS, THE TRUE LIGHT** was born into this world.

Yet, most of the world did not (and, still does not) recognize Jesus, nor understand him, and has not received him.

Recently, I strolled through a local shopping mall. I was astounded by the abundance of **LIGHT**. The shimmering glitter promoting Christmas was everywhere. Yet, I saw no evidence of Jesus Christ, the **TRUE LIGHT**. The light was just man-made glitter that excluded the birth of Jesus.

Please turn the page over ➤

Previously – in this Teaching Letter – I told you that I found a station on my automobile radio, which played all Christmas music. So, I tuned in, and listened while I drove around town doing my errands. After about two days, I realized they had played no Christmas Carols; nothing about the birth of Jesus. There was lots of: 🎵 **Jingle Bell Rock** 🎵 and 🎵 **Santa Claus is coming to town** 🎵, but nothing about the **LIGHT** of the world.

I was equally astonished that there are so many Christmas songs that exclude Jesus! Man has strived to create an abundance of artificial light in an attempt to dim the **TRUE LIGHT** of the world.

I tuned in to You Tube on my computer, and listened to some Gaither Homecoming Music; specifically: 🎵 **Jesus is the Light of the World** 🎵 (featuring Jessy Dixon and Guy Penrod). At least there are some of us who still believe in the **TRUE LIGHT** of the world.

Why does most of the world not recognize Jesus, nor understand him as **THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD**? There are many reasons. I will share one reason in this Teaching Letter: **MEN LOVE DARKNESS**:

*“This is the verdict: **LIGHT HAS COME INTO THE WORLD** (through Jesus Christ), but **MEN LOVED DARKNESS** instead of light because their deeds were evil.” (John 3:19 NIV).*

This Christmas, you probably will not be able to altogether avoid the artificial light by which men have attempted to dim the **TRUE LIGHT**, but I encourage you to make an effort to emphasize Jesus, the Christ, as the **TRUE LIGHT** (the provider of spiritual enlightenment).

*“He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know him. He came to His own (the Jewish People), and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.” (John 3:10-12 NKJV).*

Jesus was probably not born on December 25<sup>th</sup>, but – whatever the date on the calendar – on that special night when the angels appeared, and the shepherds were told of his birth, the Scriptures say:

*“The **TRUE LIGHT** that gives light (or, spiritual understanding) to every man was coming into the world.” (John 1:9 NIV).*

# Answering a Question from the Bible

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## Is it wrong for Christians to have a Christmas Tree ?

There are some Christians, who sincerely believe it is wrong – and even displeasing to God – to have a Christmas Tree. They cite Scriptures like Jeremiah 10:3-4:

*“For the customs of the peoples are futile; for one cuts a tree from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They decorate it with silver and gold; they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it will not topple.”* (NKJV).

However, before we take the above Scriptures out of their context, and apply them to Christmas Trees, we need to take a closer look...

**FIRST:** The tradition of Christmas did not begin until 386 AD. On December 25<sup>th</sup>, the Romans celebrated a pagan holiday – *NATALIS INVICTI* – when the sun was in its winter solstice. Roman Catholic Church Leaders were concerned because Christians were celebrating with the Romans. So, they set up an alternative celebration called: *CHRIST MASS*, which means: Christ’s coming. Sometime later, the name was shortened to Christmas.

**SECOND:** According to one source I found on Google, the tradition of Christmas Trees started in Germany, sometime during the 1500’s.

**THIRD:** Jeremiah spoke forth the prophecy, from which we get our Foundational Scriptures (above ↑), probably around 650 years before the birth of Jesus.

Here is my point: From the time when Jeremiah spoke forth the prophetic word, until the first Christmas Tree showed up, was more than 2,000 years. So, obviously, Jeremiah’s prophecy had nothing whatsoever to do with Christmas Trees!

What then was Jeremiah prophesying about? If you continue reading in Jeremiah, chapter 10, you discover these words in verse 8: “...**A WOODEN IDOL** is a worthless doctrine” (please read verses 1-16 for the complete story).

So, this portion of Scripture is really not referring to Christmas Trees, but to cutting down a tree for the purpose of fashioning an idol.

Continued on the reverse ↗

Nevertheless, those who are zealous about this issue would explain that wasting money on lights and ornaments, and spending countless hours decorating a tree is akin to worshipping it. Not really! In my lifetime, I have known many Christians who had a Christmas Tree, but I do not know of even one who worshipped their tree.

Probably, some of you are wondering: *“Brother Jack, do you have a Christmas Tree during this season?”* No, I do not, but not because of spiritual reasons. I’m too busy! I do not have time to decorate Trees. The words of an old country song say: *♪ You decorate a tree; you throw it in the yard ♪*. Sometime later, a truck comes around from the city, and picks up all the dead Christmas Trees, and turns them into mulch.

Some of the more traditionalists might also ask: *“Where then do you put your Christmas presents, if not under the Christmas Tree?”* They pass from my hand, directly into the hands of the recipients!

So, what is the conclusion to this matter? **BE FREE**. If you object to Christmas Trees on what you believe are spiritual grounds, then do not have one! If you desire to have a Christmas tree, and believe it is acceptable in the sight of God, then put up a tree, and enjoy it.

## Do not cause a problem in The Church on opinions, which have no Biblical Foundation

*“Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.”* (Romans 14:19 NKJV).

Just remember that the major emphasis during this season is the birth of Jesus Christ, not Christmas Trees. Listen to Colossians 1:18:

*“And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that **IN ALL THINGS HE MAY HAVE THE PREMINENCE**”* (that Christ may be first, in rank, or in influence). (NKJV).

Even though Jesus almost certainly was not born on December 25<sup>th</sup>, be thankful that we have a holiday, which celebrates his birth. Someone once coined a phrase, which I believe would be appropriate to end these non-productive arguments about Christmas Trees...

 **Jesus is the Reason for the Season** 