

The Truth about Christmas - Santa

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Introduction

So, Santa. How do we handle Santa? Some ignore him, others dismiss Christmas as pagan, and there are others who embrace it.

This will be a topical series this Christmas.

Saint Nicolas (aka SN) (preferred to be called as Pastor Christmas) is somewhat connected to Santa.

“Saint” refers to everyone who is a believer and there is no place in scripture where someone is referred to as “saint so and so”.

Is there some redeeming value about SN?

Get to know the real st. nicholas

Acts 21:1

Paul is coming back to Jerusalem on his third missionary journey and he arrives in Patara.

This is where SN was born. He was born to wealthy parents (everyone was wealthy there). He was taught to read and write the greek parchments of the new testaments. His parent's brought him up on good theology when he was very young.

And then his parents died when he was 9 years of age. His uncle adopted him.

He was about to go out on his own and he made a vow that his mind and wealth was to be dedicated to the glory of God.

This was soon to be tested. A friend of his lost his business and had no dowry to give. SN secretly gave some money at night.

His friend's second daughter - same scenerio. Third daughter - same scenerio and SN was caught and thus his reputation for being a generous man.

If no dowry was given then you couldn't get married and a woman had to work at the temple of Diana as prostitutes.

There are many legends about SN - some true and some not so

Who SN really was has gotten over simplified and lost in the weeds.

Acts 27:5

Note Myra. The elders of this church invited SN to be the pastor after he landed there during a storm. SN was a generous servant.

Problems in Rome - Dioclecia came along who was worse than Nero!

Because SN was such a tough and vocal leader (and a leader of the leaders of the church) he was highly persecuted.

Every generation has a heracy that they have to face What are ours today?

Constatine then came along and a heracy arose: Arianism:

1. Holy Spirit didn't have a personality
2. Christ was not deity

SN was an expositor of the Word of God and Constatine set the pastors to sort this out which lead the council of Nicia.

The most recent statistic shows that there are over 1200 churches globally named after him.

The ties between SN and Santa has destroyed this mans true reputation.

Origin of Santa

Coke first came up with Santa in the 1930s

The Dutch refered to SN. as Senter Klass.

A Greek prof in the 1800s wrote a poem "The Night before Christmas" in his sled back to the General Theological Seminary. He references SN not Santa!

We see Santa as harmles but he hides the *real* SN.

We should live like Pastor Nicholas

A model life is a life of example.

Philipians 3:12-17

Paul was saying "I haven't arrived nor am perfect!"

There is a precedent for us to live according to those who have gone before us and lived "according to the pattern you have in us".

There is a type of life that we are to live.

3 Characteristics of Nicholas that we are to follow.

Hard-Nosed (Uncompromising in Doctrinal Purity)

Titus 1:9

When it came to truth this man was tough! We are to stand for truth! Being confrontational is something that we're not afraid of.

"I don't know if homosexuality is a sin or not".

vs

"I love those who are homosexual, but God in His word declared that this is sin, and therefore I must see it as such"

Soft Hearted (Cared and Loved People)

Matthew 9:35-36

"felt compassion" "splanchna"
bowels intestines and gut
speaks as the center of your emotions.

Open-Handed (Very Generous)

2 Corinthians 9:6

What are you sowing?

The 1% of average Americans gave to charity in 2007. Christians: 2%.

We sing of his generosity, but we don't live like this!

We can replenish our wealth today. We have 401ks and fancy banks. SN didn't have this.

1 John 3:16

In the context John is talking about being generous! If we see those who are in need and

A man celebrates the day of Nicholas by putting money in his kids shoes and they had to either give it or spend it on someone who couldn't give back,

Application

Spend this Christmas giving to those who can't give back to you!