

## Merry Christmas

Saying "Merry Christmas" years ago used to be commonplace. No one put any thought into analyzing it, they just said it. Typically, when someone says "Merry Christmas" to someone else, they tend to repeat it back to them. Again, no one analyzed it. Nowadays, people are spending entirely too much time on analyzing anything and everything until what's being analyzed is left without any meaning. Someone, somewhere decided that saying Merry Christmas to others was offensive. I can't explain why they feel it is offensive, but apparently, it has become that way.

Department store managers started to debate whether or not they should hang decorations with the famous Merry Christmas phrase on it, or if they should simply do without the phrase. It became the basis of lengthy articles in newspapers. Talk show hosts debated it. Somehow, the opinion of a few people in thinking that this popular phrase was offensive, had taken over the minds of so many groups of people. The simple phrase of Merry Christmas had taken away some of the focus of the holiday itself. Religious leaders stepped up and debated what the phrase actually meant. Those offended by the simple phrase argued that Happy Holidays would be much more appropriate as it covered all of the various holidays that occurred around Christmas. While there is a favorable argument in that logic, eliminating the phrase Merry Christmas simply is offensive to a large amount of individuals as well.

In the famed story, 'Twas the night Before Christmas', Santa doesn't fly off into the night saying Happy Holidays. He waves good-bye and says, "Merry Christmas to all...". If it wasn't an issue when that story was written, why has it become such an issue today? Sure, there are lots of people celebrating Hanukkah and Kwanza, but that doesn't mean that the phrase Merry Christmas has to be eliminated. It means that we should all be respectful of the different holidays. If you know that someone celebrates something different than you do, wish them a wonderful holiday - whatever it may be for them. Be aware of the fact that not everyone celebrates Christmas, but don't let that stop you from saying Merry Christmas. Not to mention the fact that if someone happens to say Merry Christmas to you, and it may not be something that you celebrate, say it back to them. Why? Because it is the respectful and polite thing to do. The holidays should not be about a simple phrase or who may be offending who. They should be about celebration and happiness. Forget all of the phrases - celebrate what you want, how you want, but don't take away someone else's joy by refusing to say Merry Christmas.