

# Christmas Decorations

by Rev. Richard Moore

## Question

I was just wondering if there is any place for a Christmas tree, Christmas lights, and all the other things that we see at Christmas time in the Christian home?

## Answer

We will keep our answer to this question rather brief. In the first place it appears that the use of the Christmas tree in the home came into being sometime early in the 17th century. The practice started in France or Germany. Later in the 1800's it seems as though a consort of the Queen Victoria introduced its use in Great Britain and from there, came to the United States. There is a least one or two sources that attribute the introduction of the Christmas tree to the Reformer Martin Luther, who is said to have brought an evergreen tree into his home for this use.

It really matters not exactly how it was introduced as a holiday tradition for us today. It is a tradition, which brings a festive atmosphere to the house during the holiday season. With respect to your question I would answer that the use of the Christmas tree belongs to the area of Christian liberty. Many of God's children in good conscience use the tree during this time of the year and it serves the homey feeling of the home much in the same manner as a fire in the fireplace during a winter eve. Certainly the season in which we remember with much thanksgiving the birth of Jesus as the gift of God, given us to deliver us from our sin is a time of joy and festive rejoicing for the church of Christ. And if we attribute no special spiritual significance to the tree, do not use it to teach about Christ, etc., we may use the tree in the home much as we also use plants to decorate our home normally or on special occasions.

On the other hand, there are those who in good conscience, cannot have the tree in their homes because in their opinion and minds it detracts from the proper remembrance of the birth of Christ and the thanksgiving they would render on God. These children of God usually attribute the tree with the present day materialism associated with Christmas, and thus in good conscience cannot use the tree. This is in harmony with the whole concept of Christian liberty.

The one thing in this connection as with so many others, we must not make precepts where God has not. We must not be legalistic as the Pharisees. And there is the danger of this as one would consider such a question as the above. Another thing to remember is that we ought not to judge one as to his use of such a thing, or his lack of use of such a thing. Our judge as to why we do such and such that is not directed literally by the Scripture is the living God, in these things we are to judge not. Paul teaches in I Corinthians 4:3-6 "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." ♦

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