



Happy Holi Days

“The Church Year” Series

Colossians 2, p. 984
December 15, 2019
Pastor Mickey Klink

Introduction

In this sermon we explore how “holi days” help Christians know and live out their unique identity and mission.

The Text: Colossians 2

1) There is biblical, historical, cultural, and pastoral warrant for establishing sacred days (“holi days”) for directing allegiance and desires for Christ and his Kingdom.

2) Neither the Bible nor our Christian forefathers give us a clear path forward in applying and establishing sacred days, but both encourage such practices.

3) The dominating and “disciple-making” influence of the secular calendar in our American culture is itself an argument for establishing a counter-calendar for negotiating allegiance and desires.

Colossians 2: ⁶Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. ⁸See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

4) Churches and Christians should use their Christian liberty wisely, being sensitive and faithful to their cultural context while seeking to live as strangers in this world and missionaries for the world to come.

Romans 14: ⁵One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. ... ⁷For none of us lives to himself....

5) By establishing and practicing sacred days in the life of the church and the family, Christians are refreshed in their life in Christ and reinforced in their identity and mission as the people of God.

6) A biblically-directed and pastorally-wise appropriation of sacred days would emphasize the importance of weekly Sunday gatherings and select “holi days” as significant for discipleship and mission.

The 2019-2020 “Church Year:”

(1) Sunday – Celebration of New Creation in Christ: faith, identity, and mission (weekly).

(2) Advent – Start of the church year and season of preparation (Dec 1, 8, 15, 22, and 24).

(3) Christmas – Celebration of the incarnation and coming of Christ (Dec 25)

(4) Holy Week – Celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ (April 5-12).

a) Palm Sunday (April 5)

b) Good Friday (April 10)

c) Easter/Resurrection Sunday (April 12)

(5) Ascension Sunday – Celebration of Christ’s ascension and intercession (May 24).

(6) Pentecost Sunday – Celebration of the gift of Spirit and formation of the church (May 31).

(7) Reformation Sunday – Celebration of God’s care and reforming of the church (October 25).

So what does practicing “the church year” look like?

- (1) *We should educate our congregation about the significance of weekly worship on Sunday.*
- (2) *We should feel Christian liberty to practice church year “holi days” that ground us in the gospel and reinforce our mission to the world.*
- (3) *With wisdom and in context, we should feel freedom not to practice or recognize secular (American) calendar dates, especially as we try to live “in but not of the world” and create a counter-culture.*
- (4) *We should use every Sunday and the church year “holi days” to proclaim the true story of the world that our congregation is invited to inhabit.*

Response

Seek first the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33)!

Sunday Text Questions for Colossians 2 (Church Year Series)

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- 1) Starter Question: How can the church help Christians live “in the world but not of the world?”
- 2) Read the text aloud and discuss together any significant observations or issues needing clarification.
- 3) How do vv. 6-7 depict the spiritual growth and maturity of a Christian?
- 4) In those same verses, what does it mean to “walk,” be “rooted,” and “built up in Christ?”
- 5) How is the local church essential (in theory and practice) to accomplishing the above stated process of spiritual growth?
- 6) What might Paul be saying when he speaks of the captive philosophy and empty deceit of human tradition, and what counts as “human tradition” (v. 8).
- 7) What is your response to Paul’s explanation at the end of v. 8 that human tradition can be influenced by spiritual (demonic) forces?
- 8) How can we make sure that we are identifying and following “according to Christ” (v. 8) and not human tradition?
- 9) How might the church and its counter-cultural practices help Christians remember the full and true story of the world and live it out with intentionality?
- 10) How has this series on “the church year” helped you grow in your understanding of the importance of weekly Sunday gatherings and the practice of the church’s sacred days to help disciple Christians?

Further study this week: Romans 14 on Christian liberty (Mon); Matthew 5 on the missional distinction of the church (Tues); Matthew 6 on seeking first God’s Kingdom (Wed); 1 John 2 on not loving the world (Thurs); John 17 on Christian’s other-worldly identity (Fri).