

# Thomas Mocket

## Religious Holidays

The truth is, that Holy Days, Monkery, Nunnery, solitary life, images, praying for the dead, prayer to Saints departed and Angels as mediators, were brought in by the factors for Antichrist, yet with such specious pretenses, and seeming devotion and holiness, that even many good men were strangely deceived by them, till it was too late to withstand them. But by those Christmas sports, carnal pleasures and delights, God hath in those few holy days been more dishonored, the devil better served, evil men more hardened in their wickedness, and good men more grieved, and more souls sent headlong to Hell, then on any other day, yea, then on all the rest of the year besides. - Thus we see who first appointed those holy days we formally kept as holy festivities, namely the heathen pagan idolaters, in honor of their idol devil gods, the souls of some dead heroes, which all Christians ought to abominate, and that long after such idolatrous use of them, some seducing and seduced Christians turned the same days into Christian festivals in honor of Christ and the saints, in compliance with the heathen idolaters, out of hope to draw them to the Christian religion, but though the corruption of man's nature, especially they having no divine warrant from Jesus Christ so to do, it turned to the hardening of the heathens in their idolatry, and the universal and abominable corruption of the church of Christ. --- There is no precept, example, or approved ground in Sacred Scripture for the observation of that day in honor of Christ's birth, if any such be, let him that can show it, and I will embrace it, and recant my error, but it is a human invention, and a mere tradition of men, and was devised, and the religious observation of it, and other holy days were imposed and commanded merely and only by man without any ground and warrant from Christ, therefore they that will honor Christ, {as all ought to do} must not observe it or them, being without Christ's direction. It is an honor peculiar to Jesus Christ, to prescribe times, days and worship, and an high entrenching on His sovereign authority and Kingly office, to prescribe days and times. Therefore what Christ our Lord and Master doth not command, or allow warrant to do, we may not do; we may not observe days or times without His appointment and warrant, but punctually {as near as we can} keep to his command, Deut.5:32,33, Jer.7:22, Is.1:12. Therefore Dr. Fulk speaking of the sign of the cross in baptism saith; "It cannot be a memorial of Christ's, because Christ commanded it not;" and so may I say of this, and all other the like holy days; and because these days have been and are elsewhere to this day greatly abused to all manner of profaneness, dissoluteness and superstition, whereby God hath been more dishonored on the Christmas days, and so on all other holy days also, and the devil more served, then at any other time of the year, yea then on all the rest of the year besides, therefore they are to be abolished, as Hezekiah did the brazen serpent when abused to idolatry, he brake it into pieces, and called it Nehuftan, a contemptible piece of brass, though at first set up by God's special command for an excellent end, and did much good. II Kings 18:4. Thomas Mocket {Christmas - The 'Christians' Grand Feast, 1651} --- The Jewish traditions of the Elders, as of washing pots, cups, hands &c. received from their forefathers without warrant from God's Word, for the religious observation of them, though with good intention, was reprov'd and condemned by our Savior {Mark 7:3-9, Mt.15:2-13,}

therefore the observation of these also is justly reproveable, being mere inventions of man, and having been grossly abused and profaned. - The very name, with which the Pope and Papists have christened it Christ-mass, is enough to make all true Christians to abhor the observance of it, because the Papists had on that day a peculiar Mass pretendingly in honor of Christ, but to His great dishonor, it being a most detestable Mass of Idolatry, in divers particulars, as these Protestant Divines writing against the Papists doctrines, do unanimously affirm, and some have set them out particularly. --- Objection. But some have said, our fathers and forefathers for many hundred years have observed these days, especially Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide, and the observance of them have been approved by Parliament, Council, and Synods, and are we now grown wiser than all those that we should now reject them? Answer. I much reverence and honor Parliamentary Councils, and Synods and forefathers, but they are but men, as we are, and did err foully in these matters. Witness the establishing of Popery, the Mass, praying for the dead, praying to the saints, angels, images, pictures and the cross; yea, and adoring and worshiping of them, and of some saints, saints bones, clothes and other relics. 2. They lived in times of less means of knowledge and more ignorance, we of more means and knowledge. 3. As godly and learned and wise men have in all ages disallowed and condemned the observance of these days, as any that allowed, approved of them. And so hath our late English Assembly of Divines and Parliament also done, whom {I believe} are as pious and learned as ever any in any former age in this Nation. 4. The matter is not who is most learned, pious, and judicious, but which party hath God's Word on their side and sound reason, and for this let the judicious reader judge by what I have said, I magnify not myself, but desire to prefer the wisdom and authority of God before and above all men whatsoever, and so far only follow me as I have God's Word for my warrant. - Objection. But some say still, I see no hurt in them, they offend not me, I observe them out of love and duty to my Savior, and with a good intention and well-meaning I do no hurt to any man, and therefore I hope it is no offense to Christ. Answer. Good intentions and well meanings cannot justify any unwarrantable practice, as good and well meaning Uzzah found by woeful experience, II Sam.6:6. The action itself was good, his aim and end good, and of the man {surely} a good man, yet he died by the immediate hand of God, for touching of the Ark to save it when the oxen shook it, and it was in danger to be broken into pieces, because he had no warrant to touch it, being not a Levite. 2. Love to God must be showed in obeying his commands, {John 14:15,21, I John 2:3,4 & 5:3;} but the observation of this festival in honor of Christ hath been clearly proved to be unwarrantable, not of Christ's appointment, of mere human institution, and therefore no duty to Christ. It hath also been extremely abused to superstition and profaneness, and is not on the day Christ was born, and therefore is sinful, offensive to God and men, at least to the most godly and judicious knowing Christians, sinful and dangerous to the soul, and if thou be convinced that what I have here said is true, then thy observation of it is a sin against conscience, a presumptuous sin, and so a dangerous sin, which, as David, so all good men should carefully watch and pray against. Ps.19:13. - I conclude, that conformity onto, and retention of the heathenish customs in the observation of days, and particularly of those days first consecrated to heathens spurious idol deities, is not commendable in Christians, suitable or agreeable to the gospel, though under pretext of honoring Christ, and his worship, but to be renounced and cast off forever, with detestation of all Christian pious hearts. Thomas Mocket {Christmas - The 'Christians' Grand Feast, 1651}