ORIGIN OF CHRISTMAS TREE!

DEVELOPMENT and MEANING;


The Christmas Tree is a decorated tree, ideally an evergreen conifer such as pine or fir, associated with the celebration of Christmas. An artificial Christmas tree is an object made to resemble such a tree, made from various substances.

In Germany, however, no Christmas Trees made of plastic are allowed, but real natural fir or spruce are used must be used. Annually, about 40 million fresh Christmas Trees per year are cut in the USA, and twice that many in Europe.

- The Christmas Tree was traditionally decorated with edibles such as apples, nuts or dates.
- Martin Luther, the non-Catholic Reformer is the first known person to put lighted candles on an evergreen tree in the early 1500’s.

In the 18th century, the Christmas Tree began to be widely illuminated by candles, and after electricity was invented, candles were replaced by Christmas lights.

Today, there are a wide variety of traditional ornaments, such as garland, tinsel, and candy canes - which originally had a strong spiritual meaning for the colors, stripes, and shape.

An angel or star is often placed at the top of the Christmas Tree, to represent the host of angels or the Star of Bethlehem from the Nativity.

The custom of the Christmas Tree developed in early modern Germany with predecessors that can be traced to the 16th and possibly the 15th century, in which "devout Christians brought decorated trees into their homes.”[1]

The Christmas Tree acquired popularity beyond Germany during the second half of the 19th century.[2]

Christmas Tree History - Possible predecessors

While it is clear that the modern Christmas tree originates in Renaissance and early modern Germany, there are a number of speculative theories as to its ultimate origin. [NewtonStein Note: and this is ALL they are: Speculative Theories!]

It is thought by some atheists, and agnostics that there was symbolism of evergreen trees in pre-Christian winter rites, especially with the story of Donar’s Oak and Saint Boniface.[8]

According to the Encyclopædia Britannica,
It was the aging countess who told the story of the first Danish Christmas tree to the

tree was lit in 1808 by countess Wilhemine of Holsteinborg.

In France, the first Christmas tree was introduced in 1840

Adoption by European nobility

As a result, it remained confined to the upper Rhineland for a relatively long period of time. The custom did eventually gain wider acceptance, beginning around 1815, by way of Prussian officials who emigrated there following the Congress of Vienna.

In the 19th century, the Christmas tree was taken to be an expression of German culture and of Gemütlichkeit, especially among emigrants overseas.[15]

A decisive factor in winning general popularity was the German army’s decision to place Christmas trees in its barracks and military hospitals during the Franco-Prussian War. Only at the start of the 20th century did Christmas trees appear inside the military hospitals.

In France, the first Christmas tree was introduced in 1840 by the duchesse d’Orléans. In Denmark a Danish newspaper claims that the first attested Christmas tree was furnished with candles and placed in the house and barn with evergreens at the New Year to scare away the devil and to set up a tree for the birds during Christmas time.[9]

In such a way, a tree decorated with apples (to represent the forbidden fruit) and wafers (to represent the Eucharist and redemption) was used as a setting for the play. Like the Christmas crib, the Paradise tree was later placed in homes. The apples were replaced by round objects such as shiny red balls.[4][5][10][11][12][13]

However, none of these myths can be shown to be more than myths . . . and many nations took the Hebrew concept of EVERGREEN TREES to represent ETERNAL LIFE . . . a rather simple symbol, since the ever green tree is EVER GREEN and all others lose their leaves.

Early evidence

Customs of erecting decorated trees (just regular trees, not evergreen and having to spiritual purpose) in wintertime can be traced to Christmas celebrations in Renaissance-era guilds in Northern Germany and Livonia. The first evidence of decorated trees associated with Christmas Day are trees in guildhalls decorated with sweets to be enjoyed by the apprentices and children.

In Livonia (present-day Latvia and Estonia), in 1441, 1442, 1510 and 1514, the Brotherhood of Blackheads erected a tree for the holidays in their guild houses in Reval (now Tallinn) and Riga. On the last night of the celebrations leading up to the holidays, the tree was taken to the Town Hall Square where the members of the brotherhood danced around it.[14]

A Bremen guild chronicle of 1570 reports that a small tree decorated with “apples, nuts, pretzels and paper flowers” was erected in the guild-house for the benefit of the guild members’ children, who collected the dainties on Christmas Day.[2]

In 1584, the pastor and chronicler Balthasar Russow in his Chronica der Provinz Lyfflandt (1584) wrote of an established tradition of setting up a decorated spruce at the market square where the young men “went with a flock of maidens and women, first sang and danced there and then set the tree aflame”.

This transition from the guild hall to the bourgeois family homes in the Protestant parts of Germany ultimately gives rise to the modern tradition as it developed in the 18th and 19th centuries.

18th to early 20th centuries - Germany

Die Gartenlaube (1871) showing “the German Christmas tree” (Der deutsche Weihnachtsbaum) in a field hospital in Versailles after the Franco-Prussian War.

By the early 18th century, the custom had become common in towns of the upper Rhineland, but it had not yet spread to rural areas. Wax candles, expensive items at the time, are found in attestations from the late 18th century.

Along the lower Rhine, an area of Roman Catholic majority, the Christmas tree was largely regarded as a Protestant custom.

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Adoption by European nobility


In the early 19th century, the custom became popular among the nobility and spread to royal courts as far as Russia. Princess Henrietta of Nassau-Weilburg introduced the Christmas tree to Vienna in 1816, and the custom spread across Austria in the following years.

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The tradition was introduced to Canada in the winter of 1781 by Brunswick soldiers stationed in the Province of Quebec to garrison the colony against American attack. General Friedrich Adolf Riedesel and his wife, the Baroness von Riedesel, held a Christmas party at Sorel, delighting their guests with a fir tree decorated with candles and fruits.[21]

A woodcut of the British Royal family with their Christmas tree at Windsor Castle, initially published in The Illustrated London News December 1848, was copied in the United States at Christmas 1850, in Godey's Lady's Book. Godey's copied it exactly, except for the removal of the Queen's tiara and Prince Albert's moustache, to remake the engraving into an American scene.[22] T

he republished Godey's image became the first widely circulated picture of a decorated evergreen Christmas tree in America. Art historian Karal Ann Marling called Prince Albert and Queen Victoria, "the first influential American Christmas tree".[23]

Folk-culture historian Alfred Lewis Shoemaker states, "In all of America there was no more important medium in spreading the Christmas tree in the decade 1850–60 than Godey's Lady's Book". The image was reprinted in 1860, and by the 1870s, putting up a Christmas tree had become common in America.[22]

Several cities in the United States with German connections lay claim to Americas first Christmas tree: Windsor Locks, Connecticut, claims that a Hessian soldier put up a Christmas tree in 1777 while imprisoned at the Noden-Reed House, while the "First Christmas Tree in America" is also claimed by Easton, Pennsylvania, where German settlers purportedly erected a Christmas tree in 1816. In his diary, Matthew Zahm of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, recorded the use of a Christmas tree in 1821, leading Lancaster to also lay claim to the first Christmas tree in America.[24]

Other accounts credit Charles Follen, a German immigrant to Boston, for being the first to introduce to America the custom of decorating a Christmas tree.[25]

August Imgard, a German immigrant living in Wooster, Ohio, is the first to popularise the practice of decorating a tree with candy canes. In 1847, Imgard cut a blue spruce tree from a woods outside town, had the Wooster village tinsmith construct a star, and placed the tree in his house, decorating it with paper ornaments and candy canes. The National Confectioners Association officially recognises Imgard as the first ever to put candy canes on a Christmas tree; the canes were all-white, with no red stripes. Imgard is buried in the Wooster Cemetery, and every year, a large pine tree above his grave is lit with Christmas lights.

German immigrant Charles Minnigerode accepted a position as a professor of humanities at the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1842, where he taught Latin and Greek. Entering into the social life of the Virginia Tidewater, Minnigerode introduced the German custom of decorating an evergreen tree at Christmas at the home of law professor St. George Tucker, thereby becoming another of many influences that prompted Americans to adopt the practice at about that time.[26]

The lyrics sung in the United States to the German tune O Tannenbaum begin "O Christmas tree", giving rise to the mistaken idea that the German word Tannenbaum (fir tree) means "Christmas tree", the German word for which is instead Weihnachtsbaum.

1918 to present;

In Russia, the Christmas tree was banned shortly after the October Revolution but then reinstated as a New-year spruce (Новогодняя ёлка, Novogodnyaya yolka) in 1935.
It became a fully secular icon of the New Year holiday, for example, the crowning star was regarded not as a symbol of Bethlehem Star, but as the Red Star.

Decorations, such as figurines of airplanes, bicycles, space rockets, cosmonauts, and characters of Russian fairy tales, were produced.

This tradition did NOT persist after the fall of the USSR, with the the traditional Christmas meanings returned for a wide majority of Russian people.[27]

The TV special A Charlie Brown Christmas (1965) was influential on the pop culture surrounding the Christmas tree. Aluminum Christmas trees were popular during the early 1960s in the US.

They were satirized in the Charlie Brown show and came to be seen as symbolizing the commercialization of Christmas. The term Charlie Brown Christmas tree, describing any poor-looking or malformed little tree, also derives from the 1965 TV special, based on the appearance of Charlie Brown's Christmas tree.

Public Christmas trees

Since the early 20th century, it has become common in many cities, towns, and department stores to put up public Christmas trees outdoors, such as the Macy's Great Tree in Atlanta (since 1948), the Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree in New York City, and the large Christmas tree at Victoria Square in Adelaide.

The United States' National Christmas Tree has been lit each year since 1923 on the South Lawn of the White House. Today, the lighting of the National Christmas Tree is part of what has become a major holiday event at the White House.

President Jimmy Carter lit only the crowning star atop the tree in 1979 in honour of the Americans being held hostage in Iran.[28] The same was true in 1980, except that the tree was fully lit for 417 seconds, one second for each day the hostages had been in captivity.[28]

During most of the 1970s and 1980s, the largest decorated Christmas tree in the world was put up every year on the property of the National Enquirer in Lantana, Florida. This tradition grew into one of the most spectacular and celebrated events in the history of southern Florida, but was discontinued on the death of the paper's founder in the late 1980s.[29]

In some cities, a Festival of Trees is organized around the decoration and display of multiple trees as charity events.

In some cases the trees represent special commemorative gifts, such as in Trafalgar Square in London, where the City of Oslo, Norway presents a tree to the people of London as a token of appreciation for the British support of Norwegian resistance during the Second World War;

in Boston, where the tree is a gift from the province of Nova Scotia, in thanks for rapid deployment of supplies and rescuers to the 1917 ammunition ship explosion that levelled the city of Halifax;

and in Newcastle upon Tyne, where the main civic Christmas tree is an annual gift from the city of Bergen, in thanks for the part played by soldiers from Newcastle in liberating Bergen from Nazi occupation.[30]

Norway also annually gifts a Christmas tree to Washington, D.C. as a symbol of friendship between Norway and the US and as an expression of gratitude from Norway for the help received from the US during World War II.[31]

A candle on a Christmas tree

Both setting up and taking down a Christmas tree are associated with specific dates. Traditionally, Christmas trees were not brought in and decorated until Christmas Eve (24 December) or, in the traditions celebrating Christmas Eve rather than on the first of day of Christmas, 23 December, and then removed the day after Twelfth Night (5 January); to have a tree up before or after these dates was even considered bad luck.

In many areas, it has become customary to set up one's Christmas tree at the beginning of the Advent season.[32] Some families in the U.S. and Canada will put up a Christmas tree soon after American Thanksgiving (the fourth Thursday of November), and Christmas decorations can show up even earlier in retail stores, often the day after Halloween (31 October).

Some households do not put up the tree until the second week of December, and leave it up until 6 January (Epiphany). In Germany, traditionally the tree is put up on 24 December and taken down on 7 January, though many start one or two weeks earlier, and in Roman Catholic homes the tree may be kept until late January.[why?][citation needed]

In Italy and Argentina, along with many countries in Latin America, the Christmas tree is put up on 8 December (Immaculate Conception day) and left until 6 January. In Australia, the Christmas tree is usually put up on 1 December, which occurs about a week before the school summer holidays; except for South Australia, where most people put up their tree after the Adelaide Christmas Pageant in late November.

[citation needed] Some traditions suggest that Christmas trees may be kept up until no later than 2 February, the feast of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple (Candlemas), when the Christmas season effectively closes.[33] Superstitions say that it is a bad sign if Christmas greenery is not removed by Candlemas Eve.[34]
Reformation

Tinsel and several types of garland or ribbon are commonly used to decorate a Christmas tree. Silvered saran-based tinsel was introduced later. Delicate mold-blown and painted colored glass Christmas ornaments were a speciality of the glass factories in the Thuringian Forest especially in Lauscha in the late 19th century, and have since become a large industry, complete with famous-name designers.

Baubles are another common decoration, consisting of small hollow glass or plastic spheres coated with a thin metallic layer to make them reflective, with a further coating of a thin pigmented polymer in order to provide coloration. Lighting with electric lights (fairy lights) is commonly done. A tree topper, traditionally either an angel or a star, completes the ensemble.

Individuals' decorations typically include a mix of family traditions and personal tastes; even a small unattractive ornament, if passed down from a parent or grandparent, may come to carry considerable emotional value and be given a place of pride on the tree.

Conversely, trees decorated by professional designers for department stores and other institutions will usually have a "theme"; a set of predominant colours, multiple instances of each type of ornament, and larger decorations that may be more complicated to set up correctly. Some churches decorate with Chrismon trees, which use handmade ornaments depicting various Chrismon symbols.

Many people also decorate outdoor trees with food that birds and other wildlife will enjoy, such as garlands made from unsalted popcorn or cranberries, orange halves, and seed-covered suet cakes.

Because candles were used to light trees until electric bulbs came about, a mat (UK) or skirt (US) was often placed on the floor below the tree to protect it by catching the dripping candle wax, and also to collect any needles that fell.

Even when dripless candles, electric lights and artificial trees have been used, a skirt is still usually used as a decorative feature; among other things, it hides the Christmas tree stand, which may be unsightly but which is an important safety feature of home trees.[citation needed] What began as ordinary cloth has now often become much more ornate, some having embroidery or being put together like a quilt.

A nativity scene, model train, or Christmas village may be placed on the mat or skirt. As Christmas presents arrive, they are generally placed underneath the tree on the tree skirt (depending on tradition, all Christmas gifts, or those too large to be hung on the tree, as in "presents on the tree" of the song "I’ll Be Home for Christmas").

Generally, the difference between a mat and skirt is simply that a mat is placed under the Christmas tree stand, while a skirt is placed over it, having a hole in the middle for the trunk, with a slot cut to the outside edge so that it can be placed around the tree (beneath the branches) easily. A plain mat of fabric or plastic may also be placed under the stand and skirt to protect the floor from scratches or water.

A Christmas tree stand is an object designed to support a cut, natural Christmas tree or an artificial Christmas tree. Christmas tree stands appeared as early as 1876 and have had various designs over the years. Those stands designed for natural trees have a water reservoir to hydrate the live tree. Artificial Christmas trees usually have a plastic or metal stand, with three legs shaping like a Y.

In the 1940s and 1950s flocking was very popular on the West Coast of the United States. There were home flocking kits that could be used with vacuum cleaners. In the 1980s some trees were sprayed with fluffy white flocking to simulate snow.

Typically it would be sprayed all over the tree from the sides, which produced a look different from real snow, which settles in clumps atop branches. Flocking can be done with a professional sprayer at a tree lot (or an artificial tree's manufacturer), or at home from a spray can.

This tradition seems to be most popular on the west coast and southern parts of the United States. Because flock contains flame retardants, a flocked tree can be placed in a public building in accordance with local fire safety codes.

In the late 1800s and, most probably, long before, home-made white Christmas trees were made by wrapping strips of cotton batting around leafless branches creating the appearance of a snow-laden tree. This family tradition eliminated killing and care of a live tree and needle drop in the house while providing a beautiful way of displaying ornaments.

After Christmas, the cotton batting was unwrapped and stored with the Christmas presents and the branches were burnt or discarded. It is thought these home-made white trees at least, in part, inspired flocking popularized by Hollywood films in the late 1930s.

Christmas tree production

Each year, 33 to 36 million Christmas trees are produced in America, and 50 to 60 million are produced in Europe.

In 1998, there were about 15,000 growers in America (a third of them "choose and cut" farms). In that same year, it was estimated that Americans spent $1.5 billion on Christmas trees.[35]

Natural trees - Christmas tree cultivation
The most commonly used species are fir (Abies), which have the benefit of not shedding their needles when they dry out, as well as retaining good foliage colour and scent; but species in other genera are also used.

In northern Europe most commonly used are:

- Norway Spruce Picea abies (the original tree, generally the cheapest)
- Silver Fir Abies alba
- Nordmann Fir Abies nordmanniana
- Noble Fir Abies procera
- Serbian Spruce Picea omorika
- Scots Pine Pinus sylvestris
- Stone Pine Pinus pinea (as small table-top trees)
- Swiss Pine Pinus cembra

In North America, Central America and South America most commonly used are:

- Douglas-fir Pseudotsuga menziesii
- Balsam Fir Abies balsamea
- Fraser Fir Abies fraseri
- Grand Fir Abies grandis
- Guatemalan Fir Abies guatemalensis
- Noble Fir Abies procera
- Red Fir Abies magnifica
- White Fir Abies concolor
- Pinyon Pine Pinus edulis
- Jeffrey Pine Pinus jeffreyi
- Scots Pine Pinus sylvestris
- Stone Pine Pinus pinea (as small table-top trees)
- Norfolk Island Pine Araucaria heterophylla

Several other species are used to a lesser extent. Less-traditional conifers are sometimes used, such as Giant Sequoia, Leyland Cypress, Monterey Cypress and Eastern Juniper.

Various types of spruce tree are also used for Christmas trees (including the Blue Spruce and, less commonly, the White Spruce); but spruces (unlike firs) begin to lose their needles rapidly upon being cut, and spruce needles are often sharp, making decorating uncomfortable.

Virginia Pine is still available on some tree farms in the southeastern United States, however its winter colour is faded. The long-needled Eastern White Pine is also used there, though it is an unpopular Christmas tree in most parts of the country, owing also to its faded winter coloration and limp branches, making decorating difficult with all but the lightest ornaments.

Norfolk Island Pine is sometimes used, particularly in Oceania, and in Australia, some species of the genera Casuarina and Allocasuarina are also occasionally used as Christmas trees. But, by far, the most common tree is the Monterey Pine. Adenanthos sericeus or Albany Woolly Bush is commonly sold in southern Australia as a potted living Christmas tree.

Hemlock species are generally considered unsuitable as Christmas trees due to their poor needle retention and inability to support the weight of lights and ornaments.

Some trees, frequently referred to as "living Christmas trees", are sold live with roots and soil, often from a plant nursery, to be stored at nurseries in planters or planted later outdoors and enjoyed (and often decorated) for years or decades. Others are produced in a container and sometimes as topiary for a porch or patio.

However, when done improperly, the combination of root loss caused by digging, and the indoor environment of high temperature and low humidity is very detrimental to the tree's health; additionally, the warmth of an indoor climate will bring the tree out of its natural winter dormancy, leaving it little protection when put back outside into a cold outdoor climate.

Often Christmas trees are a large attraction for living animals, including mice and spiders. Thus, the survival rate of these trees is low.[36] However when done properly, replanting provides higher survival rates.[37]

European tradition prefers the open aspect of naturally grown, unsheared trees, while in North America (outside western areas where trees are often wild-harvested on public lands)[38] there is a preference for close-sheared trees with denser foliage, but less space to hang decorations.
In the past, Christmas trees were often harvested from wild forests, but now almost all are commercially grown on tree farms. Almost all Christmas trees in the United States are grown on Christmas tree farms where they are cut after about ten years of growth and new trees planted.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture’s agriculture census for 2007, 21,537 farms were producing conifers for the cut Christmas tree market in America, 571,709 hectares (1,412,724 acres) were planted in Christmas trees.[39]

The life cycle of a Christmas tree from the seed to a 2-metre (7 ft) tree takes, depending on species and treatment in cultivation, between 8 and 12 years. First, the seed is extracted from cones harvested from older trees. These seeds are then usually grown in nurseries and then sold to Christmas tree farms at an age of 3–4 years. The remaining development of the tree greatly depends on the climate, soil quality, as well as the cultivation and how the trees are tended by the Christmas tree farmer.[40]

Artificial Christmas tree

The first artificial Christmas trees were developed in Germany during the 19th century, [41][42] though earlier examples exist.[43] These "trees" were made using goose feathers that were dyed green.[41] The German feather trees were one response by Germans to continued deforestation in Germany.[42]

Feather Christmas trees ranged widely in size, from a small 2-inch (51 mm) tree to a large 98-inch (2,500 mm) tree sold in department stores during the 1920s.[44] Often, the tree branches were tipped with artificial red berries which acted as candle holders.[45]

Over the years, other styles of artificial Christmas trees have evolved and become popular. In 1930, the U.S.-based Addis Brush Company created the first artificial Christmas tree made from brush bristles.[46] Another type of artificial tree is the aluminum Christmas tree.[42]

The trees were manufactured in the United States, first in Chicago in 1958,[47] and later in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, where the majority of the trees were produced.[48]

Most modern artificial Christmas trees are made from plastic recycled from used packaging materials, such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or other plastics.[42] Approximately 10% of artificial Christmas trees are using virgin suspension PVC resin; despite being plastic most artificial trees are not recyclable or biodegradable.[49]

A tree with fibre optic lights

Other gimmicks have developed as well. Optical fiber Christmas trees come in two major varieties; one resembles a traditional Christmas tree.[50] One Dallas-based company offers "holo"mylar" trees in many hues.[43]

Tree-shaped objects made from such materials as cardboard,[51] glass,[52] ceramic or other materials can be found in use as tabletop decorations. Upside-down artificial Christmas trees became popular for a short time and were originally introduced as a marketing gimmick; they allowed consumers to get closer to ornaments for sale in retail stores and opened up floor space for more products.[53]

Artificial trees became increasingly popular during the late 20th century.[42] Users of artificial Christmas trees assert that they are more convenient, and, because they are reusable, much cheaper than their natural alternative.[42] They are also considered much safer[54] as natural trees can be a significant fire hazard. Between 2001 and 2007 artificial Christmas tree sales in the U.S. jumped from 7.3 million to 17.4 million.[55]

Environmental issues

The debate about the environmental impact of artificial trees is ongoing. Generally, natural tree growers contend that artificial trees are more environmentally harmful than their natural counterparts.[55]

However, trade groups such as the American Christmas Tree Association, continue to refute that artificial trees are more harmful to the environment, and maintain that the PVC used in Christmas trees has excellent recyclable properties.[56]

Christmas tree recycling point (point recyclage de sapins) in Paris, 22 January 2010

Live trees are typically grown as a crop and replanted in rotation after cutting, often providing suitable habitat for wildlife. [citation needed] In some cases management of Christmas tree crops can result in poor habitat since it sometimes involves heavy input of pesticides.

Concerns have been raised about people cutting down old and rare conifers, such as the Keteleeria evelyniana, for Christmas trees. Real or cut trees are used only for a short time, but can be recycled and used as mulch or used to prevent erosion.[57] Real trees are carbon-neutral, they emit no more carbon dioxide by being cut down and disposed of than they absorb while growing.[58]

An independent life-cycle assessment study, conducted by a firm of experts in sustainable development, states that a natural tree will generate 3.1 kg (6.8 lb) of greenhouse gases every year (based on purchasing 5 km (3.1 miles) from home) whereas the artificial tree will produce 48.3 kg (106 lb) over its lifetime.[59] Some people use living Christmas or potted trees for several seasons, providing a longer life cycle for each tree.
Living Christmas trees can be purchased or rented from local market growers. Rentals are picked up after the holidays, while purchased trees can be planted by the owner after use or donated to local tree adoption or urban reforestation services.[60]

Most artificial trees are made of recycled PVC rigid sheets using tin stabilizer in the recent years. In the past, lead was often used as a stabilizer in PVC, but is now banned by Chinese laws. The use of lead stabilizer in Chinese imported trees has been an issue of concern among politicians and scientists over recent years.

A 2004 study found that while in general artificial trees pose little health risk from lead contamination, there do exist "worst-case scenarios" where major health risks to young children exist.[61] A 2008 United States Environmental Protection Agency report found that as the PVC in artificial Christmas trees aged it began to degrade.[62]

The report determined that of the 50 million artificial trees in the United States approximately 20 million were 9 or more years old, the point where dangerous lead contamination levels are reached.[62]

A professional study on the life-cycle assessment of both real and artificial Christmas trees revealed that one must use an artificial Christmas tree at least during 20 years to leave an environmental footprint as small as the natural Christmas tree.[69]

Secular vs. religious nature

Syncretising traditions in Northern Spain, the Bilbao airport displays a Christmas tree and a Santa Claus and Christmas elf alongside the Basque Olentzero, 6 January 2005.

The Christmas tree's origins are uncertain, but it is associated with the celebration of the Christmas holidays, so there has been some amount of debate as to whether it should be considered a secular or a religious custom.

- It has been rejected as a "pagan" tradition that should not be associated with the Christian religious celebration of Christmas.
- It has been rejected as a "Christian" tradition that should not be allowed to be endorsed in secular contexts in countries that have a separation of church and state.
- As a custom arising in Protestant parts of Germany, it has been rejected as a "Protestant" custom in Catholic countries, detracting from the Mediterranean traditions of the Christmas crib.[63]

Pope John Paul II introduced the Christmas tree custom to the Vatican in 1982.[64] Although at first disapproved of by some as out of place at the centre of the Roman Catholic Church, the Vatican Christmas Tree has become an integral part of the Vatican Christmas celebrations,.[63] and in 2005 Pope Benedict XVI spoke of it as part of the normal Christmas decorations in Catholic homes.[65]

In 2004, Pope John Paul called the Christmas tree a symbol of Christ. This very ancient custom, he said, exalts the value of life, as in winter what is evergreen becomes a sign of undying life, and it reminds Christians of the "tree of life" of Genesis 2:9, an image of Christ, the supreme gift of God to humanity.[66]

In the previous year he said: "Beside the crib, the Christmas tree, with its twinkling lights, reminds us that with the birth of Jesus the tree of life has blossomed anew in the desert of humanity. The crib and the tree: precious symbols, which hand down in time the true meaning of Christmas."[67]

The Catholic Church's official Book of Blessings has a service for the blessing of the Christmas tree in a home.[68]

In 2006, the Seattle–Tacoma International Airport removed all of its Christmas trees in the middle of the night rather than allow rabbi to put up a menorah near the largest tree display.[69]

Officials feared that one display would open the door for other religious displays,[69] and, in 2007, they opted to display a grove of birches in polyethylene terephthalate snow rather than religious symbols or Christmas trees.[69]

In 2005, the city of Boston renamed the spruce tree used to decorate the Boston Common a "Holiday Tree" rather than a "Christmas Tree".[70] The name change drew a poor response from the public and it was reversed after the city was threatened with several lawsuits.[71]

See also
- Chrismon tree
- Eiresione
- Festive ecology
- Festivus Pole
- Hanukkah bush
- Christmas tree controversies
- New Year tree
- Star of Bethlehem


13. ^ Encyclopædia Britannica. 2003. "The modern Christmas tree ... originated in western Germany. The main prop of a popular medieval play about Adam and Eve was a fir tree hung with apples (paradise tree) representing the Garden of Eden. The Germans set up a paradise tree in their homes on December 24, the religious feast day of Adam and Eve. They hung wafers on it (symbolizing the host, the Christian sign of redemption); in a later tradition, the wafers were replaced by cookies of various shapes. Candles, too, were often added as the symbol of Christ. In the same room, during the Christmas season, was the Christmas pyramid, a triangular construction of wood, with shelves to hold Christmas figurines, decorated with evergreens, candles, and a star. By the 16th century, the Christmas pyramid and paradise tree had merged, becoming the Christmas tree."^1


27. ^ "1 мая собираются праздновать 59% россиян [May 1 going to celebrate 59% of Russians]" (in Russian). April 27, 2012. Retrieved December 2, 2012. "New Year is among the most important holidays for 81% of Russians, while Christmas is such only for 19%, ranking after Victory Day, Easter, International Women's Day."


37. ^ "Christmas tree". Department of Forestry, Michigan State University.[dead link]


BRIEFS: CHRISTIAN News Makers

[CLICK ICONS]


57. "Engineer Update: Old Christmas trees protect town beach". United States Army Corps of Engineers. March 2007.[dead link]


59. a b "Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of Christmas trees — A study ends the debate over which Christmas tree, natural or artificial, is most ecological". Ellipsos Inc.. December 16, 2008. Retrieved December 18, 2012.


External links

Christmas.

- Christmas trees at the Open Directory Project
- "History of the Christmas Tree". AllAboutHistory.org.


"HOW TO"

Start a Church, Christian School, or Bible School;
"HOW TO"

Begin Home-Schooling, or get a Christian or Bible School Accredited, etc;

How to Start a Church Legally: PART-1
How to Start a Church Legally: PART-2 (Background)
How to Start a Church Spiritually: PART-3
How to Start a Local Church Ministry: PART-4
How to Start a Church Legally: PART-5
How to Name a Church: PART-6
How to Write a Statement of Faith: Part-7
How to Name a Church: PART-8

Why You Should NOT INCORPORATE! (MOST IMPORTANT LEGALLY!)

How to Start a Church TODAY with immediate Tax-Exemption!
Just TEN-SURE-&-SIMPLE STEPS! PART-9 (Most Popular!)
HOW TO DO Church Planting, Part-10

How to do Church Minutes for Business Meetings: Part-11
How to know if you are being called to Minister: Part-12
How to make your Ministry Sales Tax Exempt: TODAY Part-13

EKKLESIA ARCHIVES: Who Started Your Church? History, Part-14

HOME-SCHOOLING: How to get Started! TODAY! Part-15

What Is A "FREE-CHURCH!" - General Background;
What is a "FREE-CHURCH?" 33-Questions and Answers
CHURCHES as CORPORATIONS: "IS IT A GREAT SIN?"
You MUST understand this Teaching! "EYE-OPENING!"

HOW TO START A CHURCH LEGALLY: TOP-TEN Webpages
Pulpit Freedom Sunday! Freedom of Speech and Preachers!

WHY PREACHERS WIN NO SOULS (DO YOU?)
Home School Your Children: 20-Great-Reasons!
How To Get Your Christian School or Bible School Accredited By;
"CAMBRIDGE! Greatest Name in Education"

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Cambridge Theological Seminary:
Religious Degrees, Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate

I"" Why You Should "UNINCORPORATE" your Church
BEFORE it's TOO LATE!
BEFORE it's TOO LATE!
BEFORE it's TOO LATE!

Do You Qualify for
An Honorary "Doctor of Divinity" from Cambridge Theological Seminary?
If you believe God's Word as Stated Above:
Probably!
(Click for a Free Evaluation!)

Many Fine Bible Scholars seem unaware,
Of Christ's Great Parable covering the whole Church Age,
From His Sowing First Seed to His Great End-Time Harvest of Souls!
And Final Judgment of the Unsaved and their Damnation;
To Christ's Presence with us and The Eternal Kingdom!
(See Greatest Parable on End of Times!)

Christ's Greatest Parable on End of Times: Brief Overview

"AMAZING ETERNAL LIFE FILES!"

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An Honorary "Doctor of Divinity" from Cambridge Theological Seminary?
If you believe God's Word as Stated Above:
 Probably!
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(Cambridge Theological Seminary Archives!)

What Is
The WORD of GOD?

CHRISTIPEDIA™

Statement On The Holy Scriptures;
‘Lens’ Through Which ALL Knowledge Is Understood;
THE WORD of GOD, AXIOM-1:
"IF" there exists any such thing as ‘The Word of God’; [and ALL evidence proves such does exist:] "THEN" by inherent definition - it must be "GOD-BREATHED!"
DEDUCTING the above from the simple fact: That GOD EQUATES HIS WORD WITH HIMSELF!
"In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, . . ." John 1:1

Thus 'GOD'S WORD' can have no lesser standard than that stated;
"GOD'S WORD MUST" THEREFORE BE ...
...AS TRUE IN history, archeology, geography, Earth science, medical
science, nutrition, gerontology, agriculture, botany, astronomy, physics,
chemistry, climatology, government, law, psychology, sociology - AND
EVERY TOPIC IT TOUCHES - as in Theology, Divinity and Doctrine:

And "IF IT BE NOT" - true in ALL subjects mentioned above; And "IF IT BE NOT"
Holy, Inspired, Inerrant, Infallible, Indestructible, Inexhaustible,
Intrepid, Inalienable, Invincible - Immutable, Impalpable, Impossible-to-
Improve: Indubitable-and-Indomitable in EVERY FIELD OF KNOWLEDGE:

"THEN" it cannot be 'The Eternal, Incomparable Word' of the Great and Living
God!

God's Eternal Guarantee!
"Heaven and Earth Shall Pass Away;
But 'MY WORDS', SHALL NOT, PASS AWAY!"
-- Jesus of Nazareth, "The Messiah!" AD-33 (Matthew 5:18)

"God's Goals"
For This World!

Does God Achieve His Goals?
OR, does Satan achieve his goals?

(All Teaching and Commentary from "INSPIRED-INERRANT!" View of Scripture!)

THE MOST IMPORTANT "3-QUESTION QUIZ" - EVER!

The Adversary's Goals:

SCRIPTURE: "The 'Devil' ... walketh about seeking whom he may
deceive." 1 Pet 5:8
DEVIANCE: The 'Thief' (Devil) cometh not, but for to steal, to kill and to
destroy." John 10:10

QUESTION: Do you Believe the Devil Succeeds?___ Or Fails?

God the Father's Goals:

SCRIPTURE: "For God sent NOT His Son into the world TO CONDEMN
the world, but that THE WORLD though Him might BE SAVED!
John 3:16
John 3:17
SCRIPTURE: "Beloved, be NOT ignorant of this ONE THING, ...The Lord is... NOT WILLING that
ANY should perish, but that ALL should come to REPENTANCE. 2 Pet 3:9

QUESTION: Do you Believe Father God Succeeds?___ Or Fails?

God the Son's Goals:

SCRIPTURE: "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to SAVE that which
is lost!" 10:10
SCRIPTURE: "And I, if I be lifted up from the Earth, I WILL DRAW ALL men unto Me." John 12:32

QUESTION: Do you Believe God the Son (Jesus Christ):
Succeeds?___ Or Fails?___

God the Spirit's Goals:

SCRIPTURE: Jesus declares: "'I WILL' send Him (Holy Spirit) unto you, and
when He is come He 'WILL' testify of Me: John 16:26
SCRIPTURE: "He 'WILL' reprove the world [convict, convince, correct] of sin, of righteousness, and
of judgment: John 16:7
SCRIPTURE: (1)Of Sin, because they believe not on me; ... (2) Of
Righteousness, because I go to my Father; ... (3)Of Judgment, because the
'Prince of this World' IS JUDGED. John 16:5-10

QUESTION: Do you believe God the Spirit Succeeds?___ Or
Who Achieves STATED GOALS? GODHEAD or Satan?

If you believe, God the Father, God the Son, & God the Spirit Achieve Goals, NOT Satan;
Please "CLICK" below!

"I Believe GOD ACHIEVES HIS GOALS for the World!"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Conservative Percentage</th>
<th>Liberal Percentage</th>
<th>Difference +/-</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Voting Righteousness is God’s Command!
(Cambridge Theological Seminary Archives!
(CLICK VOTER LOGO ABOVE)
(Then Click “YOUR STATE” for “YOUR CANDIDATES!”)
Nebraska 40.8% 17.8% +23.0
Indiana 40.6% 17.8% +22.8
Kentucky 40.3% 18.0% +22.3
North Carolina 40.6% 17.8% +22.2
Kansas 40.7% 19.0% +21.7
West Virginia 38.4% 17.4% +21.0
Alaska 41.1% 20.1% +21.0
Arizona 40.3% 16.8% +23.5
Iowa 40.5% 26.0% +20.5
Ohio 38.9% 18.7% +20.2
Missouri 39.3% 19.1% +20.2
Florida 39.3% 19.3% +20.0
New Mexico 40.6% 21.4% +19.2
Virginia 38.5% 19.4% +19.1
Pennsylvania 38.8% 20.0% +18.8
Delaware 37.4% 19.0% +18.4
Wisconsin 37.7% 20.4% +17.3
Michigan 37.6% 20.9% +16.7
Colorado 37.3% 21.3% +16.0
New Hampshire 37.8% 22.5% +15.3
Minnesota 37.6% 22.4% +15.2
Nevada 37.2% 22.8% +14.4
Maine 35.9% 23.5% +12.4
Illinois 34.8% 22.7% +12.1
Maryland 33.4% 24.0% +9.4
Washington 33.8% 25.6% +8.2
New Jersey 32.5% 24.7% +7.8
California 33.1% 25.4% +7.7
Connecticut 34.4% 24.1% +10.3
Oregon 33.4% 26.3% +7.1
Rhode Island 36.0% 23.0% +7.0
New York 31.6% 26.3% +5.3
Massachusetts 30.4% 26.0% +4.4
Hawaii 27.1% 25.9% +1.2
Vermont 28.8% 28.0% +0.8
District of Columbia 21.5% 36.3% -14.8

[SOURCE: GALLUP Polling Company, 2011-12].

UNITING CONSERVATIVES into "ONE NATION UNDER GOD!"

"WAS JESUS PATRIOTIC?"
"IS 'PATRIOTISM' SINFUL?"
"WAS ESTHER PATRIOTIC?"
"WAS PAUL PATRIOTIC?"
BIBLE MNEMONICS!

No other spiritual exercise pays greater spiritual dividends than MEMORIZING Scripture!

(I am convinced, that one of the GREATEST things we can do is to memorize Scripture.)

(MEMORIZE THEME of EVERY CHAPTER IN NEW TESTAMENT!)

(With Little Rhymes, Limericks for EACH CHAPTER!)

In just 90 days, ... YOU know know from MEMORY, WHAT EVERY CHAPTER in the WHOLE NEW TESTAMENT is about!

"AMAZING ETERNAL LIFE FILES!"

The "Inerrant Word of God!" Declares "These things have I WRITTEN unto you who BELIEVE, THAT YE MAY KNOW that ye have Eternal Life." 1 John 5:13

So How Can We Know?

Dearest Visitor!

People PRAY 'ROUND-THE-CLOCK' for ALL who VISIT THIS PAGE! We BEG of YOU - TODAY - to "M-E-M-O-R-I-Z-E!" this SCRIPTURE!

"These things have I written unto you who BELIEVE, THAT YE MAY KNOW That ye HAVE ETERNAL LIFE!" 1 John 5:13
Let's Break it Down!

"These things have I WRITTEN" (Absolute, Unchanging)
Unto You who BELIEVE, (BELIEVE! Plus Nothing! Minus Nothing!)
That ye HAVE! (NOT "WILL HAVE"...SOMEDAY! But HAVE NOW!)
Eternal Life!" (You “Receive” Christ, He comes into Your HEART PROMISING!
"I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU!"  Heb 13:5

YOU invite Christ in; HE GUARANTEES: "I WILL NEVER LEAVE!" IT’S SETTLED!

FACT!
You know..."IF" you believe...that Jesus Christ died on the Cross:
For sins of all humanity! (Including your own!)

FACT!
Do you BELIEVE, You have ETERNAL LIFE NOW, for SURE?

PLEASE CLICK...IF YOU BELIEVE WE CAN "KNOW"
I BELIEVE, ETERNAL LIFE CAN BE KNOWN FOR SURE, IN THIS LIFE! 1 John 5:13

Web's Largest MEDICAL Site with "INERRANT BIBLE" Approach!

Welcome To!

MEDIPEDIA™

An Online Biblical Medical Encyclopedia,
God's Word "INERRANT!" Even In Medicine!
By NewtonStein Academy of Scholars
From 50 Nations Throughout the World!
What Happens?

GOD SAYS: "The SOUL that sins shall AGE, DECAY and DIE!"

Genesis 2:17
Ezekiel 18:4
13
18
20

(Hebrew word for "dying" includes: aging, decaying, expiring;)

BUT ... GOD ALSO PROMISES:
"Thy YOUTH shall be RENEWED like the Eagle!"

Psalm 103:5

Did You Know That God Promises"

"YOUTH RENEWED!"
Psalm 103:5

"NONE of These DISEASES"
Exodus 15:26

"NO SICKLY OR FEEBLE AMONG YOU"
Psalm 105:37

"UNLIMITED ENERGY, EVEN WITH AGING!"
Isaiah 40:31

Worth Studying For? Believing For? Eating For? Obeying For?

"YES!"
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"MEDIPEDIA™" – ANTI-AGING SECRETS: Dietary-Secret-to-ANTI-AGING-HORMONE(Very Brief!)
"MEDIPEDIA™" – Why Do MEDICAL DOCTORS DIE YOUNGER?
"MEDIPEDIA™" – BIBLE HEALTH: ANTI-AGING SECRETS: Moses Said His "Natural Force" was NOT Abated!

"MEDIPEDIA™" – BIBLE HEALTH: ANTI-AGING SECRETS: Moses Said His "Natural Force" was NOT Abated!

"CHURCH U S A ! TM"

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Could you please share your State of Salvation that we may better know and serve you, our readers?

At this time, I do NOT believe Jesus is the Saviour!
I DO believe Jesus is the Saviour; I know I have Eternal Life!
I do NOT believe it is possible to 'Know in this life': IF one has Eternal Life:
In 'THREE MINUTES'...you can "Know for Certain!” if your NOW HAVE Eternal Life! (or not!) 1 John 5:13
I want to know with CERTAINLY what God’s Word declares:

A Second Most Important Question!
Can you explain to a Spouse, a Child, or a Friend, **HOW “Eternal Life as God’s FREE GIFT” (Rom 6:23)**, Unearned and Undeserved? Eph 2:8-9

If not, please read "Eternal Life as God’s FREE GIFT!" Eph 2:8-9, Tit 3:5

Please, will you name "Ministers-Best-Friend.com" aloud . . . . in Prayer Daily, or as often as you think of us? PLEASE?

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Ministers-Best-Friend.com is an Absolute, Bible-Believing, Christian Ministry, seeking to serve the Ministers - and dedicated Christians who serve the LORD JESUS.

As such, we provide web-space to a number of Ministries - notably "NewtonStein!" (a Creation-Based Science Research Group), as well as AMERIPEDIA, BIBLIPEDIA, CHRISTIPEDIA, CATHOLIPEDIA, HISTIPEDIA, ISLAMIPEDIA, JUDAEOPEDIA, POLITIPEDIA, TEA-PARTY-UNITED, MEDIPEDEIA, etc.;

All Absolute-Bible-Believing, and each has their specific calling and ministry to reach Muslims, Jews, Scientists, teach Biblical Medicine and Health, Godly Government, Church Leadership, sharing American Godly History, and the HAND OF GOD in World History over the Ages!

Obviously, all branches of Christianity do not agree doctrinally - or politically - and sometimes even disagree on the actual facts concerning a particular scripture, event, leader, nation or situation: Thus there are well over 10,000 denominations in the world!

*(THAT’S WHY JESUS WARNED US AGAINST “GNAT STRAINING!” - and "CAMEL SWALLOWING!”)*

We neither claim nor present ourselves as having perfect knowledge in all things. . . or anything!

Thus views and articles posted on this website are those of their authors – who often insist their identities, denominational, and/or doctrinal persuasion NOT be made known for various reasons.

These are offered to you as wise people of God - True Christian Patriots - WHATEVER YOUR NATION - to discern for your own judgement and edification unto Our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Finally, we trust, hope, and pray, that ALL BELIEVERS who look to the Lord Jesus ONLY, to the Word of God ONLY, to “God’s WILL ONLY, being done on this Earth AS IN HEAVEN!” (Matt 6:10, Luke 11:2), . . . (IS THIS YOUR PRAYER, DAILY GOAL FOR YOUR CHURCH, CITY, STATE, NATION, and THE WORLD???)

In the NAME of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour, KING of all Kings, LORD of all Lords, REIGNING SUPREME, COMING AGAIN!

Be Blessed!

Ministers-Best-Friend!

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[4] “BIBLIPEDIA™” – Jesus said: “I WILL Build MY Church!” (But Did He Really Mean It?)
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. . . we at "CAMBRIDGE in the USA!" are carrying on their "Christian Values of nearly 1,000 Years!" . . . as they have long since become secular humanists, agnostics and atheists: "Anti-Christ" in almost every way, and contrary to every Scripture.

Cambridge Theological Seminary USA, with the tremendous growth in Global Ministry has had to undergo radical restructuring - as China, alone - swallows up time and resources helping start 400 Churches a month, plus India, and even hostile Muslim Nations!

Under re-construction and growing greatly, we plan to have the full program in operation again in 2014; 

Pray for us, please!

MBF

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FACT! Jesus Christ only claimed ONE INSTITUTION as His Own, HIS

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*Cambridge Theological Seminary is a “Church” and recognizes no agency or religious institution apart from the local Church.
CHURCH! (Matt 16:18); Thus Scripturally, we recognize no religious institution apart from Christ's Church, be it a SEPARATE Bible College, Seminary, University, Mission Board, TV-RADIO Media Ministry, etc., etc.,

**JESUS ORDAINED NO ORGANIZATION-INSTITUTION EXCEPT HIS CHURCH, ESTABLISHING ITS PURPOSE, GOVERNMENT and AUTHORITY!**

And any Christian Day School, Christian Bible School, Seminary (training Ministers), that is NOT CHURCH is NOT SCRIPTURAL.

FACT! Jesus - as leader of His Church here on Earth - **TRAINED MINISTERS as part of HIS CHURCH** . . . Jesus did NOT ordain a "separate" institution, or set up a "different" way, with "other" goals, and it's "own" authority, to train-educate Ministers!

FACT! If a Bible School or Seminary is NOT a Church, **it is NOT Scriptural School, and has NO RIGHT to train-educate Ministers, Christian School Teachers!**

FACT! If a Church is NOT Teaching Doctrine, **Training and Ordaining Ministers**, it is **NOT a Scriptural Church - NOT a True Church - regardless what the IRS declares according to 501-C-3!**

(PS. Church is also NOT a Singing-and-Entertainment Center!);

FACT! "Doctor" has **NOTHING to do with medicine** (except in modern American slang and pop" culture;)

FACT: "**Doctor" in the Greek is "Master Teacher" ** and was used by Jesus many times!

FACT! Old Testament Scholars were "Doctor's of the Law" over 3,000 years BEFORE modern Schools "copied" the word "Doctor" from the Bible!

FACT! Likewise the word **"Degree!"**

FACT: Thus "Doctor" and "Degree" are **both Scriptural Concepts and words of Doctrine** preceding the MODERN STATE UNIVERSITIES by millennia!

FACT: That Harvard and Yale, Cambridge an Oxford CHOOSE to copy these terms from the Holy Scriptures, **DOES NOTE preclude Christ's Church from retaining - and using - what has ALWAYS been ours!**

**Go thou and teach likewise!**

The Christmas tree today is a common custom to most of us. There are many interesting connections to ancient traditions such as Egyptian and Roman customs, early Christian practices, and Victorian nostalgia. However, most scholars point to Germany as being the origin of the Christmas tree. One of the earliest stories relating back to Germany is about Saint Boniface. In 722, he encountered some pagans who were about to sacrifice a child at the base of a huge oak tree. He cut down the tree to prevent the sacrifice and a Fir tree grew up at the base of the oak. He then told everyone that this lov