

Why Black Christians Shouldn't Celebrate Kwanzaa **by La Shawn Barber**

A New Visions Commentary paper published December 2003 by The National Center for Public Policy Research. Reprints permitted provided source is credited.

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines." - Hebrews 13:8-9

America - the greatest country in the world - was founded on the concept of religious freedom. In America, you can be a Christian, Jew, Muslim, atheist or pagan without fear of persecution. While government cannot endorse one religion over the other, individuals can.

For decades, the media has shoved "Black Leaders" in the faces of Black Americans. Now they're doing the same with a pagan ritual called Kwanzaa, a so-called African-American holiday.

A made-up, anti-Christian observance, Kwanzaa is celebrated by blacks who profess Christ. In our politically-correct climate, even President George W. Bush, a believer in Christ, feels obligated to praise this ritual.

Kwanzaa was invented in 1966 by Dr. Maulana "Ron" Karenga, a former black militant, a Marxist and a convicted felon. Claiming to have the unity of black people in mind, Karenga committed most of his crimes against blacks.

Just five years after his invention of Kwanzaa, he was convicted of torturing two black women by stripping them naked, beating them with electrical cords, placing a hot iron into the mouth of one and mangling the toe of the other in a vice. During the ordeal, he forced them to drink detergent.

Observed from December 26 to January 1, this "**alternative**" to Christmas is based on a mixture of East African harvest rituals called first fruits - according to Karenga - and 1960s radicalism.

This, by the way, is despite the fact that most ancestors of black Americans were from West Africa. Participants acknowledge their African roots and promote seven harmless-sounding principles: **unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith**. While they sound commendable, the guiding principle behind Kwanzaa is based on race, not on faith in the one true living God and Savior-Jesus Christ.

Paganism is a "**religion of nature**." Those who practice it and other New Age fallacies see the divine in the created-humans, sun, moon, stars, trees - instead of the Creator. Christians who worship created beings are acting like pagans. It's that simple. Karenga and his followers worship the created-their African ancestors-in a "**libation**" ceremony and believe these dead ancestors to be spiritual intercessors between humans and God. But Christians know (or should know) that only Christ is the intercessor between man and God.

Attention Christians: Kwanzaa is a made-up creed cobbled together by a man hostile to the very God you claim to worship! According to Karenga, Christianity is a myth. He does not believe in the God of the Bible. He says this about Christianity: "**Belief in spooks who threaten us if we don't worship them and demand we turn over our destiny and daily lives must be categorized as spookism and condemned.**" He believes that the death, burial and resurrection of Christ-the whole rationale behind Christianity-is a myth.

Over the years, Karenga has altered his pagan intentions to attract more black Christians into the fold. He now claims that Kwanzaa is a time of giving "**reverence to the Creator.**"

Just what creator he refers to is unclear. Red flags should jump out at any Bible-believing Christian when someone reveres a "**Creator**" but denies the deity of Christ.

Christians must understand that Karenga intends Kwanzaa to be an alternative to Christmas so that blacks can celebrate themselves rather than the birth of Christ. Kwanzaa is not an innocuous celebration of black history. It attempts to spiritualize that history, replacing Christ-centered theology with pagan principles. For Christians, the only principles by which to live are found in God's word, The Holy Bible.

Pagans have argued that Christ was not born on December 25. Insignificant. While no one knows exactly when Christ was born, the fact remains that He was born. Christmas is a time for Christians to celebrate this joyous fact. Christ became a man to save men, not to lift up one race or culture in worship. As with any man-made religion, Kwanzaa is just another attempt to make gods of men. All Christians must be discerning when faced with these false doctrines.

The Fall of Man was the direct result of our determination to become gods. The pagan ritual of Kwanzaa is merely the old Lie wearing a new disguise.

(La Shawn Barber, a member of the national advisory council of the African-American leadership network Project 21, is a Washington, DC-based writer. Comments may be sent to barbersview@yahoo.com.)