

**X**mas

Over the years, much has been said and written about the use of Xmas in place of the full word, Christmas. Many people get upset that it's being used to replace the 'Christ' in Christmas as so many yard signs and bumper stickers remind us. "Keep Christ in Christmas!" Indeed, as a reaction to the secularization of Christmas, some Christians become as deeply offended at it, as they do the politically cleansed, "Happy Holidays" or "Winter Celebrations" so prevalent today.

But for knowledgeable Christians there's another side to this issue. The 'X' is also the first letter in the Greek language for Christ (Christos), and historically an acceptable abbreviation for Christ. During the times of the Roman persecution, the early Church had all kinds of abbreviations, symbols and signs which they used as almost a secret language to protect their members from the Romans. In those days, an 'X' was the symbol for Christ and the cross upon which he was crucified.

In fact, in the early Church, the Emperor Constantine made the Chi-Rho symbol (another Christian abbreviation for Christ) famous around the world as an anagram for our Savior's title, Ch-R-istos, when he commanded that the Chi-Rho be placed on each of his soldier's shields.



So, should we be offended at the abbreviation of Xmas instead of Christmas? I think as Christians, we should always find ways to put Christ in Christmas and every celebration and every conversation we can (within reason). And if your standard is to always write it out fully, good for you. But to be offended at the abbreviation and demand its use in every circumstance is just 'a bit over the top.' There are many more things that better deserve our attention during these Holy Days: the rampant lawlessness, the victims of our world who don't know the healing of the Gospel, the empty pews, the unfilled budgets, the seduction of commercialism, and the closing of churches and Christian schools. These are the things we should be up in arms and doing something about. When I see the word 'Xmas' I see the Cross of Jesus Christ, and the comfort in knowing that He is coming again!—but that's just me.

*Pastor Adomeit*