What's Wrong With Halloween?



Selected Scriptures
10/31/10

Introduction: What is the origin?

**** Why Christians cannot support Halloween:***

I. Halloween <u>Glorifies</u> Satan & Death

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. ***Ephesians 5:11***

II. Halloween <u>Trivializes</u> Evil & Witchcraft

Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. ***Romans 12:9***

III. Halloween <u>Desensitizes</u> Impressionable Children

It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. ***Luke 17:2*** *(cp. Matthew 18:6)*

IV. Halloween <u>Justifies</u> Pretense & Mischief

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V. Halloween <u>Propagates</u> Pagan Culture

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. ***Romans 12:2***

What is the Believer's overall guiding principle for determining whether or not we can participate in Halloween?

The Ultimate Question is: **Does it GLORIFY GOD? (1 Cor. 10:31)**

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Introduction:

Common Halloween activities include trick-or-treating, wearing costumes and attending costume parties, carving jack-o'-lanterns, ghost tours, bonfires, apple bobbing, visiting haunted attractions, committing pranks, telling ghost stories or other frightening tales, and watching horror films. (Wikipedia)

Historian Nicholas Rogers, exploring the origins of Halloween, notes that while "some folklorists have detected its origins in the Roman feast of Pomona, the goddess of fruits and seeds, or in the festival of the dead called Parentalia, it is more typically linked to the Celtic festival of Samhain, whose original spelling was Samuin (pronounced sow-an or sow-in)". The name is derived from Old Irish and means roughly "summer's end". (Wikipedia)

The ancient Celts believed that the border between this world and the Otherworld became thin on Samhain, allowing spirits (both harmless and harmful) to pass through. The family's ancestors were honoured and invited home while harmful spirits were warded off. It is believed that the need to ward off harmful spirits led to the wearing of costumes and masks. Their purpose was to disguise oneself as a harmful spirit and thus avoid harm. In Scotland the spirits were impersonated by young men dressed in white with masked, veiled or blackened faces.[4][5] Samhain was also a time to take stock of food supplies and slaughter livestock for winter stores. Bonfires played a large part in the festivities. All other fires were doused and each home lit their hearth from the bonfire. The bones of slaughtered livestock were cast into its flames.[6] Sometimes two bonfires would be built side-by-side, and people and their livestock would walk between them as a cleansing ritual. (Wikipedia)

Halloween imagery includes themes of death, evil, the occult, magic, or mythical monsters. Traditional characters include ghosts, witches, skeletons, vampires, werewolves, demons, bats, spiders, and black cats (Wikipedia)

What is the origin?

Halloween started among the Celtic people of eastern Europe (1000 - 100 B.C.)

The Celtic priests were called “Druids” and were known for their:
Human sacrifices
Magic spells & Curses

October 31st was the last day of the year

Celebration of the New Year (Nov.1)
Baal (the Celtic god) of spring and summer ended his rule and

Samhain (the lord of death) began his reign.

To appease Samhain, the Druids would perform human sacrifices and a festival honoring him.

The Celtic Druids believed that the departed spirits returned on the eve of November 1st.

The dead souls were released from the grave by Samhain revisit their homes on one night (Oct.31) before judgment

This is how going “door to door” on Halloween began

> Trick-or-treating is a customary celebration for children on Halloween. Children go in costume from house to house, asking for treats such as candy or sometimes money, with the question, "Trick or treat?" The word "trick" refers to a (mostly idle) "threat" to perform mischief on the homeowners or their property if no treat is given. In some parts of Scotland children still go guising. In this custom the child performs some sort of trick, i.e. sings a song or tells a ghost story, to earn their treats. (Wikipedia)

The dead would play tricks on people (causing panic & destruction)

Food and drink were left out for the “ghosts” to appease them

> This is how “trick or treat” began.
>
> > Some trace the origins of present day "trick-or-treat" to Samhain, which was the supreme night of demonic jubilation. Spirits of the dead would rise out of their graves and wander the countryside, trying to return to the homes where they formerly lived. Frightened villagers tried to appease these wandering spirits by offering them gifts of fruit and nuts. They began the tradition of placing plates of the finest food and bits of treats that the household had to offer on their doorsteps, as gifts, to appease the

hunger of the ghostly wanderers. If not placated, villagers feared that the spirits would kill their flocks or destroy their property.

The problem was... if the souls of dead loved ones could return that night, so could anything else,human or not, nice or not-so-nice. The only thing the superstitious people knew to do to protect themselves on such an occasion was to masquerade as one of the demonic hoard, and hopefully blend in unnoticed among them. Wearing masks and other disguises and blackening the face with soot were originally ways of hiding oneself from the spirits of the dead who might be roaming around. This is the origin of Halloween masquerading as devils, imps, ogres, and other demonic creatures.

Others trace "trick-or-treat" to a European custom called "souling". Beggars would go from village to village begging for "soul cakes" made out of square pieces of bread with currants. The more soul cakes the beggars would receive, the more prayers they would promise to say on behalf of the dead relatives of the donors. At the time, it was believed that the dead remained in limbo for a time after death, and that prayer, even by strangers could guarantee a soul's passage to heaven. (www.JeremiahProject.com)

Anyone who died the previous year had been transformed into an animal.

To welcome the dead on this sacred night the Celts dressed as animals.

This is the origin of Halloween Costumes

> Costumes are traditionally those of monsters such as vampires, ghosts, skeletons, witches, and devils, or in more recent years such science fiction-inspired characters as aliens and superheroes. There are also costumes of pop culture figures like presidents, athletes, celebrities, or film, television, and cartoon characters. Another popular trend is for women (and in some cases, men) to wear sexy or revealing costumes (Wikipedia)

When the Roman Empire took over the Celtic homeland new rituals were added, such as the worship of Pamona, the goddess of harvest.

Apples were sacred fruit of this goddess (bobbing for apples started from this)

Pope Gregory the Great incorporated the Druid's holiday into the Catholic church.

Nov. 1 - Became "All Hallows Eve" or "All Saints Day"

Carved potatoes and turnips with lamps inside to scare off "Jack" (a wicked Irish villain who died and was thought to return)

In 1848, Millions of Irish emigrants came to the USA due to the potato famine

America possessed a new crop, the pumpkin

The carved pumpkin (Jack-o-lantern) replaced the old Irish version.

Colors:

Orange - the color of autumn
Black - the symbol of death

Halloween is born out of Pagan Superstition

Haunted places, Haunted trails, and Haunted houses are common features of Halloween with human subjects dressed up to resemble mummies, vampires, werewolves, ghosts, zombies and various other scary characters.

Questions:

Does the devil (Baal or Samhain) control the seasons?

Can the dead come back to haunt people?

Should we participate in the Devil's holiday?

**** Why Christians cannot support Halloween:***

I. Halloween <u>Glorifies</u> Satan & Death

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. ***Ephesians 5:11***

While you may have participated "all in fun," be assured, Halloween is serious business for Satanists and witches. Those who oppose Christ are known to organize on Halloween to observe satanic rituals, to cast spells, to oppose churches and families, to perform sacrilegious acts, and to even offer blood sacrifices to Satan. While some may say, "But we only do this in fun...we don't practice witchcraft," those things that represent Satan and his domain cannot be handled or emulated "for fun". Such participation places you in enemy and forbidden territory and that is dangerous ground.
Tom Sanguinet, former high priest in the Celtic tradition of Wicca (witchcraft) said "The modern holiday we call Halloween has its origins in the full moon closest to November 1, the witches' New Year. It was a time when the "spirits" (demons) were supposed to be at their peak power and revisiting the earth planet." He went on to say, "Halloween is purely and absolutely evil, and there is nothing we ever have or will do that would make it acceptable to the Lord Jesus." [The Dark Side Of Halloween] (www.JeremiahProject.com)

Multitudes are enamored with the theme of "death" today (movies, video games, even "death" education in schools)

De 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore **<u>choose life</u>**, that both thou and thy seed may live:

God is Pro-Life in every way!

II. Halloween <u>Trivializes</u> Evil & Witchcraft

Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. ***Romans 12:9***

That which you can laugh at is not taken seriously.

Harry Potter Series

III. Halloween <u>Desensitizes</u> Impressionable Children

It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. ***Luke 17:2*** *(cp. Matthew 18:6)*

As evil prevails, Americans have embraced an evil day of Satan, with the pranks of 'would be' hoodlums, combined with 'demon faces' on pumpkins, clothing of 'death' being worn, and calling it fun. When Christians participate in Halloween, it sends a message to children that witchcraft, demonism, Satanism, and the occult are something fun, entertaining and harmless.
Many years ago, C.S. Lewis wrote that one of Satan's most deceptive tactics is to convince people that he doesn't exist. Apparently he has done a good job in his deception. Sadly, many people think of the devil as no more than a symbol of evil: like Santa Claus, he is just a fictional symbol. Many people today also do not think of witches as real people who practice magic, but simply as imaginary figures who represent the supernatural world and everything that is 'spooky.'

Recognizing this pagan holiday gives the false impression that what is actually lethal is innocuous. Some children develop a fascination with the supernatural which leads them later into more sinister occult practices. It's the spiritual equivalent of painting a loaded gun to look like a toy and giving it to child to play with. (www.JeremiahProject.com)

Satan's goal is to deceive man by blinding him to the truth of the gospel and to receive worship for himself (Matt. 4:9; Isa. 14:12-14).

It has become clear that the primary goal is to alter an individual's values and turn him against himself, his beliefs, family, God and society.

> *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter 5:8)*
>
> Young satanists believe the strong will rule with Satan. Once an individual becomes involved, they often make a pact with Satan. They commit themselves to a future date when they will take their own lives by suicide. They believe if they submit themselves to Satan in death, they will come back in another life as a stronger being and rule with him forever. According to recent statistics, fourteen young people a day take their own lives.
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> Recently, a California skateboard manufacturer used a package enclosure similar in appearance to a gospel tract to encourage purchasers to sell their souls to the devil. The brochure titled, "Let's Make a Deal" has a smiley-faced devil who explains to Flame Boy what happened in heaven after he was banished: "First off, they set up a bunch of dumb rules, and then they imposed a really strict dress code. I'l wager that people must be quite bored up there, but hey, that's what they get for being good." He contrasts this with, "Flame Boy, even a dimwit like you can see that hell is by far the best place to retire. Just look at all the fun to be had." Children are asked to sign and return a contract, by which they give possession of their souls to the devil for eternity. (www.JeremiahProject.com)

IV. Halloween <u>Justifies</u> Pretense & Mischief

It is as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom. ***Proverbs 10:23***

Is Halloween just another innocent holiday that doesn't harm anyone? Is it really just childish fun? Vandalism and wanton disregard for the property of others is common on Halloween night. Even normally well-behaved children are driven by unseen forces to destructive behavior. Police officials everywhere report a great increase in such activities on Halloween. Worse yet are the horrifying accounts of poisoned candy and fruits booby-trapped with razor blades and needles. Such threats are so real that many hospitals offer free X-rays of Halloween treats in order to prevent children from being harmed. Who but Satan could inspire such monstrous actions?
Should the church be compromised by accommodating itself to the culture?
(www.JeremiahProject.com)

V. Halloween <u>Propagates</u> Pagan Culture

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. ***Romans 12:2***

Deuteronomy 18:9-14

When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee. Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God. For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.

2 Corinthians 6:14-17

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

When facing a decision about whether or not we should do some thing we need to ask ourselves the right questions!

Some General Guidelines for determining our actions & attitudes from 1 Corinthians 10:

1. *If I do this...* Will it ASSOCIATE me with evil? (vv.16-22)

What's the point of verses 16 - 22? It is simply this: Just as sharing in the Lord's Supper associates the eater with Christ, and just as sharing in the meat on the Temple altar associates the eater with the Temple -- in the same way one who shares in eating things from a pagan altar is associating with that demonic altar and all it represents.

Anything which would associate me with the world (or worldliness), evil, rebellion, etc., is wrong for me to be involved with.

"You are known by the company you keep." You become associated with them.

We guard our language, dress, appearance, diet, recreation, etc., because we don't want to be associated with the world or evil.

Our identity is with Christ; therefore any behavior, attitude, activity, or place which would detract from our Christ-likeness should be shed like a leprous garment.

2. *If I do this...* Will it BUILD ME UP in the Faith? (v.23)

"Lawful" - Perhaps referring to Roman law; the laws of the land may allow something, but this does not make it right. (There is no civil law against foul language, adultery, pre-marital sex, viewing x-rated videos at home, being arrogant, etc., but none of these things are profitable for the Christian.)

"All things are lawful" - If the reference is to God's Law, Paul is saying, "In the realm of non-moral issues, all things are lawful."

"Expedient" - beneficial, advantageous, profitable, useful.

If it does not benefit us spiritually, physically, or emotionally, and/or if it does not benefit the cause of Jesus Christ, it is not for us to waste our life on!

--The question is not merely "How does it hurt me?" The question should be "How does it help me?"

--Our concern is not merely whether or not it is negatively sinful, but we should consider whether or not it is positively good.

Whatever we spend our time on, we are actually exchanging a part of our life for. We are actually giving part of our life up for it. What we live for, we are actually dying for. So if it isn't worth dying for, it isn't worth living for.

"Edify" - (akin to "edifice") - speaks of that which builds one up.

--If the practice will not advance my life spiritually, I should not spend my life on it.

--If the practice will not enhance my walk with Christ or draw me closer to God, perhaps I should reconsider doing it.

The question is not merely "Does it tear me down?" The question is: "Does it build me up?"

3. ***If I do this...***
Will it <u>HELPFUL</u> to others or purely <u>SELFISH</u> for me? (v.24)

Is what I am doing purely <u>self-centered</u> or <u>selfish</u>? Or did I consider the ramifications my choices and decisions will have on <u>others</u>? Will my decision have a positive impact on my spouse, children, fellow-Christians?

Phil. 2:4 - *"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."*

(SEE Romans 15:1-3)

4. ***If I do this...***
Will it <u>CONFUSE the CONSCIENCE</u> of others? (v.25-30)

V. 25
"Shambles" - meat market

"Asking no questions" - Such as, "Do you know if this meat was ever offered to an idol?" (what you don't know won't hurt you or anyone else in such cases)

V. 26

What exactly might have happened to the meat between the cow and the market was not to be a fussy matter to be over-scrupulous about. The point is, it has its source in God and is okay to eat. If God gave it to you, eat it and give Him thanks (cp. I Tim. 4:4).

V. 28

"For the earth is the Lord's. . ." - Paul repeats this truth for the second time (cp. v. 26) to show now that, if anyone chooses not to eat (for conscience's sake) he will not starve, for God has much more to give to him ("He owns the cattle on a thousand hills, the wealth in every mine").

The point is this: Whatever you choose to give up for the sake of others, God is sure to replace it, because he owns all.

V. 29

We should never knowingly do anything that would violate the conscience of another [i.e. something that might be construed as sin in us might lead them to sin and violate their conscience.]

Areas of Christian liberty should never be abused so as to violate the conscience of another believer.

V. 25-30

If an unbeliever or weak brother sees in a strong believer's actions a moral or doctrinal compromise, such may lead that person to justify his own deviant actions.

Paul is not calling on us to project false appearances. He is <u>not</u> saying that we should appear to be something we are not (Jesus rebuked this hypocrisy - Mt. 6:2-16; Mt. 23:2b). Rather, Paul is saying we should <u>not</u> appear to be something that we are <u>not</u>. We should not convey a false impression.

As Paul said to the Romans, *"Let not your good be evil spoken of"* (Rom. 14:16).

5. *If I do this...*
Will it <u>STUMBLE</u> any non-believer or Christian? (v.32)

"Give none offense" - Don't do anything which will hurt, harm, cause injury, or stumble anyone else.

If one person falls into sin or descends into hell because they stumbled over some inconsistency in your life, you will answer to God for that!

"Jews" - national Israelites

"Gentiles" - Greeks

"The church of God" - believers

No matter what nationality or ethnic background, no matter what religious background, no matter whether lost or saved -- we should never be a stumbling block to them.

May nothing in our lives ever be an <u>obstacle</u> to the salvation of any sinner or to the edification of any saint!

Jesus paid taxes so as not to offend the tax collectors, though He is Lord of all the earth and people should have paid tribute and taxes to Him (Mt. 17:27 - *"Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.)*.

Jesus said: *"And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."* (Mk. 9:42).

6. *If I do this...*
Will my <u>EXAMPLE</u> be one that others can follow? (v.33,11:1)

V. 33

Although Paul did not accommodate his message to please men (cp. Gal. 1:10), he did seek their spiritual pleasure or welfare (Gromacki, p. 130).

Although most people live for selfish pleasure (regardless of what their actions might do to others), Paul's life was one characterized by unselfish love for others.

He lived in such a way so as to never do anything which might hinder the Gospel.

What are you willing to change about your life that others might be saved?

11:1

This verse is really the conclusion to chapter 10.

Paul sought to pattern his life after Christ's earthly example, Who relinquished His rights to certain privileges so that He could never be misunderstood or held in contempt.

Paul says model, mimic, imitate, or copy me to the degree that I model Christ. Is your life truly Christ-like? Are you worth modeling?

Titus 2:7-8 says that you young men should *"In all things [be] shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing incorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."*

What kind of example are you setting?

Do you want your kids to follow in your steps?

What is the Believer's overall guiding principle for determining whether or not we can participate in Halloween? The Ultimate Question is: **Does it GLORIFY GOD? (1 Cor. 10:31)**

"The glory of God" - We ought to do everything so that God would shine; that He would be magnified; that His principles, precepts, and program would be credited, praised, and honored.

What does it mean to glorify God?
Does He shine (in the minds of men) as a result of my attitudes or actions.

What is so often man's guiding (motivating) factor?
--What will bring me the most pleasure, in the quickest way possible, for the longest duration.

The sole purpose for man's existence is to glorify God.

"To know God and to glorify Him forever"

You were created to glorify God.
You were saved to glorify God.

The degree to which we glorify God reflects the degree to which we fulfill God's purpose for our lives.

**** The overruling principle that should guide our attitudes and actions must be: "Do all to the Glory of God"***

Halloween

What is the origin?

Halloween started among the Celtic people of eastern Europe (1000 - 100 B.C.)

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Magic spells & Curses

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To welcome the dead on this sacred night the Celts dressed as animals.

This is the origin of Halloween Costumes

When the Roman Empire took over the Celtic homeland new rituals were added, such as the worship of Pamona, the goddess of harvest.

Apples were sacred fruit of this goddess (bobbing for apples started from this)

Pope Gregory the Great incorporated the Druid's holiday into the Catholic church.

Nov. 1 - Became "All Hallows Eve" or "All Saints Day"

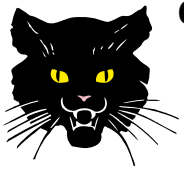
Carved potatoes and turnips with lamps inside to scare off "Jack" (a wicked Irish villain who died and was thought to return)

In 1848, Millions of Irish emigrants came to the USA due to the potato famine

America possessed a new crop, the pumpkin



The carved pumpkin (Jack-o-lantern) replaced the old Irish version.



Colors:

Orange - the color of autumn

Black - the symbol of death



Questions:

- Does the devil (Baal or Samhain) control the seasons?
- Can the dead come back to haunt people?

- **Should we participate in the Devil's holiday?**