

Halloween

A BRIEF STUDY (REVISED)

Is It For Us?

Every year at this time, many people, especially parents, go through a decision making process, to decide whether or not they will continue to participate in Halloween. They wonder whether to let their children go out to “trick or treat”, or should they even answer the door with candy. Then believers struggle with whether to participate in a Halloween alternative. The problem I see as a Pastor is that many do not have enough information on the subject. The scriptures tell us that we perish for lack of knowledge (**Hosea 4:6**). Let us briefly look at this subject called Halloween.

Hundreds of years before the time of Christ, the Celts of Britain, Germany, Ireland, and France observed a festival on October 31st called the Vigil of Samhain, Lord of the Dead. It was the duty of the Druidic Priests (the religious leaders of the Celts) to lead and keep this festival going. This was the time of year when the fall harvest was complete and the cold winter loomed ahead. This festival was to honor the gloom and cold of the coming season. It was for the next several months that Samhain would prevail.

The Celts believed that Samhain assembled all the dead on October 31st (which was the eve of the Celtic New Year) and “loosed them” to go back to their families, who were supposed to entertain them. If the family did not entertain them, they would cast spells on them to give them bad luck during the coming year. This could take the form of failed crops, sick live stock, poor family health, stolen babies, etc. etc. Thus the beginning of “Trick or Treat”.

The Vigil of Samhain was to appease the supernatural powers (spirits). The Druids believed that the veil that separated the spirit world from the physical world was at its thinnest. Thus the sending of spirits to the families by Samhain. The Druids were in charge of this “appeasement”. This

was both a frightening and an exciting time for them.

So to prepare for the arrival of the spirits, the Druids built large bonfires, sacrificing animals, crops, and humans in them. They believed that by watching the way they burned, the Druids could see into the future. Also during the Vigil, many rituals were observed to tell the future. Their young people were very involved in this festival (children too!).

Young people would roast nuts in the bonfire, and by watching the way the cracked, they could tell who they would marry. The person (Young, or old) who could retrieve an apple from a barrel of water with their mouth would have a lucky year. But the ritual (custom) that has been passed down unchanged is dressing up in costumes.

During the celebration, the people would dress up in costumes (then made up of animal heads and skins) to “fool” the spirits into thinking they were in the wrong place. Thus, trying to get them to leave and not trick the people, or harm the crops. The Celts believed that when the spirits came to your house, if you did not treat them they would trick you.

As time passed and the Christianization of Britain happened, the vigil of Samhain continued in spite of its new found spirituality. So in 834 AD Pope Boniface IV moved All Saints Day (also known as All Hallows Day) from May 1st to November 1st. Thus making October 31st all Hallows Eve (later shortened to Halloween). This festival continued in spite of the counter or alternative. In fact in medieval times, the witches took Halloween as an opportunity to mock the saints of the church commemorated on All Saints Day. The witches supposedly flew on broomsticks and were accompanied by black cats (also believed to be witches). And in later years the poor in England went door to door for food on November 2nd All Souls Day. Beggars received “soul cakes” in return for their prayers for the dead of the household.

In America, however, because of the strong religious convictions, the early settlers refused to have any Halloween celebrations. But in 1846 as more immigrants of Celtic origin arrived (because of the Potato Famine), Halloween celebrations became the normal activity on October 31st, complete with bonfires, bobbing for apples, roasting nuts, and trick or treat. This "Holiday" (which means Holy day) is now an American Tradition, celebrated with great fervor.

Today, Halloween is still considered the best time in the occult to cast spells and do magic. It is still the "High" holy day of the year with the highest rate of occultic crime committed. This is still a satanic holiday, even though it is masked in "Good Clean Fun".

Again, this is a very short study on this subject. But, this gives us some "knowledge" so we can make an intelligent decision.

Our Response

The Bible sheds much light on this subject. Let us look at a major verse on it. Deuteronomy 18:9-12

"When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD, and because of these detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you." (NIV)

God clearly tells us here to not have anything to do with practices from the evil one. 1 Peter 4:3 tells us "For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do -- living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. (NIV) We are to stop these types of practices, not having anything to do with them.

Romans 12:2 tells us we are not to "masquerade as the world": "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is -- his good, pleasing and perfect will." (NIV) The word

conform in the Greek means masquerade. We are not to do this!

1 Peter 1:14-15 calls us to holiness and not conformation to the world's ways. "As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;" (NIV)

We are to imitate God and our Church leadership not anything else. **Ephesians 5:1** "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children" **Hebrews**

13:7 "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith." (NIV)

We are to expose the ways of darkness and not participate in them. Ephesians 5:11 "Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them." (NIV)

The choice is ours. We are the ones who are held responsible for what we chose to do. We are also held responsible for what we allow our children to do and what we encourage. But again, we need information to go by. I hope this has helped. My desire is to inform. I had to make a decision for my family and myself. After dealing with many who have come out of the occult, I have seen much and been exposed too much information. I pray this little study will help as you make a decision for this night and the future. Please, do not take this as judgment or condemnation. When God puts His finger on something in our lives, it is then that we must make a decision. So, pray hard and seek His face on this time.

This Halloween pray and praise! Pray for the enemy to be bound and for the safety of the children.

As for questions on distributing candy on Halloween, again that is our decision. God will instruct as we seek Him. Remember that we are on a journey with Him. He is not a God of guilt but of love.

Blessings as we show forth His light on a night full of darkness.



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