

Jim Martin  
P.O. Box 291962  
Dayton, Ohio 45429

## October 2022 “HALLOWEEN: WOULD GOD APPROVE?”

Dear Friends,

Back in the 1960’s when I was a child, one of the biggest “holidays” for me – and most all kids at that time – was Halloween. Parents would take their children to stores to buy costumes or make costumes at home. The costumes ranged from angels, famous people, monsters, or even demonic-looking creatures. On Halloween night kids would put on their costumes and walk from house to house, knocking on doors and saying “trick-or-treat!” to get candy. I remember one year I used a large grocery bag to collect my bounty; the bag got so full, I took it home, got another large bag, went back out and filled it too!

Since that time Halloween celebrations have increased dramatically. The periodical *Advertising Age* revealed the following facts:

- Halloween is the second-most popular marketing activity, just behind Christmas.
- Each year, Halloween generates at least \$2.4 billion in merchandising.
- 50% of all Americans will decorate for Halloween.
- One in three adults will buy a costume for Halloween.
- The three most popular “party nights” for adults are the Superbowl, New Year’s Eve and Halloween.

According to candy industry reports, Americans purchase at least 600 million pounds of candy at Halloween. In fact, more chocolate is purchased at Halloween (over 90 million pounds) than at any other holiday, including Mother’s Day, Easter, Valentine’s Day and Christmas.

To many Christians, Halloween is just a time to have fun, attend parties (without alcohol), watch children dress up in costumes, eat candy, carve out pumpkins, and eat more candy. However, since my childhood many Believers have taken a much closer look at Halloween and what it represents. Surprisingly, it has both a good and an evil history. I’ll share just a little bit of both the good and the bad (specific dates are difficult to confirm regarding Halloween’s history; most are close approximates).

The Druids were the priestly class of the Celtic religion. The Celts were the first Aryan people who came from Asia to settle in Europe. Many similarities existed between Druidism and religions of India. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, “(the) Celtic religion, presided over by the Druids, presents beliefs in various nature deities and certain ceremonies and practices that are similar to those in Indian religion. As in Hinduism, the Druids also believed in reincarnation, specifically in the transmigration of the soul, which teaches that people may be reborn as animals.”

Celtic people lived in northern France and the British Isles. They engaged in occult arts, worshiped nature and gave it supernatural, animistic qualities. Certain trees and plants, particularly oak and mistletoe, were given great spiritual significance. Lewis Spence, a Celtic authority, says the original meaning of the term “druid” implies a priest of the oak-cult. In England, Stonehenge is considered a ruin of an ancient Druid temple.

The Celts worshiped numerous gods, but two held special significance. Belenus was the sun-god whose special day was May 1, or Beltane (“Fire of Bel”). The other god of prominence was Samhain, the winter god who was considered to be the chief Druid deity. Samhain was the Lord of Death, or Lord of the Dead. The day of the Samhain festival was October 31 and the Celtic New Year began November 1. The festivals were absolutely demonic and included human sacrifice.

Roman historian Tacitus detailed the sacrificial practices of the Samhain festivals and noted that the Druids would cover the altar with the blood of their victims, which were usually criminals. In some cases, scores of people would be put in large cages, then burned alive in the belief that the more people they burned, the greater yield of crops. If they didn’t think the gods had been appeased with criminals, it was okay to burn innocent victims.

The Druids believed October 31 was the one day of the year you could literally obtain help from Satan for divination on marriage, luck, health and death. They believed that the future could be foretold by the struggles of their dying victims. They would sneak up on someone, stab the person in the back with a sword and as he was dying, they considered the convulsive body movements as omens for the future. When a person was killed, the final position of the body and the direction the blood flowed on the ground predicted the future. Even more gruesome was the practice of sacrificing an individual and, as the person was dying, cutting open the body and using the palpitating entrails as a method of communication with the gods.

It was during this festival that the Druids believed Samhain gathered the souls of the evil dead and decided what animal form they would have to live in the next year. They believed punishment of the evil dead could be lightened by sacrifices, prayers and gifts to Samhain. They also believed the souls of the good people who died were reincarnated as humans. Furthermore, they believed Samhain allowed the spirits of people who had died during the past 12 months to return to Earth and visit their former place of habitation for a few hours to once again associate with their families. Therefore, the belief existed that ghosts, evil spirit and witches roamed the countryside the night of October 31.

In order to avoid a terrible experience with one or more of these evil spirits, the Celts would do a number of things. For one, they would honor the sun god Belenus and light huge bonfires on hillsides to frighten away the evil spirits, who were allegedly afraid of fire (Note: this practice is not the same as people today who have bonfires for cookouts). Sometimes people in villages would light brands, or torches, from these bonfires and walk through the towns and fields to expel the spirits. Another thing they would do is put on costumes and masks, some of which were hideous and grotesque, in order to confuse the spirits: they believed the spirits wouldn’t recognize the living, thinking they were looking at other spirits. Some people would set food, fruit or other treats outside their houses so when the spirits came to the front door, they would be

appeased and not pull any pranks or mischievous tricks. In some cases, groups of people or even entire villages would hold an outdoor banquet: tables would be pushed together, and a huge spread of food would be laid out. The people would put on their costumes and masks for the banquet and when it was over, they would parade out of town, believing the spirits would follow.

The practice of carving out a pumpkin and putting a candle inside is interesting as well. As the legend goes, there was a man named Irish Jack who had a reputation as being a stingy drunk. He tricked the devil into climbing an apple tree to get an apple. While the devil was in the tree, Irish Jack carved a cross in the tree trunk which prevented the devil from coming down. In order to get out of the tree, the devil reluctantly agreed to Irish Jack's demand that he never come after his soul.

Eventually, Irish Jack died but was turned away at the gates of Heaven because he had been such a selfish drunk. He was also rejected at the gates of Hell because of the devil's agreement not to go after his soul. Since Irish Jack had no place to go, he was condemned to wander the Earth. As he was leaving Hell, he was eating a turnip and the devil threw a live coal at him. Irish Jack put the coal inside the turnip and has been roaming the Earth ever since looking for a place to rest. The people referred to him as "Jack of the Lantern," which was shortened to "Jack-o-Lantern." To celebrate Irish Jack's plight, people began putting candles in pumpkins in lieu of turnips because of their larger size. (FYI: there are several variations of this myth.)

What makes all this so ironic is that the term "Halloween" – now associated with darkness, demons, witches, and Satan – actually has its origins in a holy celebration. In 837 AD, Pope Gregory IV designated November 1 as All Saints Day, also called All Hallows Day. This was a day to remember (hallow) saints – and other Christians – who had dedicated their lives to serving Christ and had now passed away. Special attention was given to those who were martyred. The day before All Saints Day was a time of feasts and was called All Hallows Eve, or "Halloween," for short. The reason for creating this holiday appears to be an attempt to counter – even overshadow – many of the pre-existing pagan celebration that took place on October 31<sup>st</sup>.

By now, it should be plainly obvious how so much of what people do on Halloween is totally pagan: parties specifically designated as Halloween celebrations; dressing up in costumes and masks, then walking door-to-door looking for treats; Halloween bonfires; jack-o-lanterns, etc. All of this has its origins in Satanic rituals and involvement with demons. No matter what people today claim – including Christians – there is absolutely **NOTHING** innocent about being involved with any of these activities. When, as a Christian, you know that something is associated with Satan, why would you get involved? Consider what God has said in His Word:

***Exodus 22:18 Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.*** (Why would anyone want to dress like one or decorate with their images?)

***Deuteronomy 18:10-12 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.** (Have you ever noticed how so many Halloween decorations reflect what God prohibits in this passage?)

**2Chronicles 33:6** *And he [Manasseh] caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.* (Why would you want to do anything that provokes God to anger? That is not very smart.)

**1Peter 5:8** *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour* (Do you not realize that willing participation in activities which focus on the things of the devil opens a door for him to attack?)

**Ephesians 4:27** *Neither give place to the devil.* (It should be obvious that participating in today's Halloween activities is giving place to the devil.)

**Romans 14:16** *Let not then your good be evil spoken of.* (Though you may consider being a part of society's Halloween celebrations to be innocent fun, what you are calling good is truly evil.)

**1Thessalonians 5:22** *Abstain from all appearance of evil.* (The decorations, costumes, haunted houses, and so on are unquestionably an appearance of evil. Why would a Christian want to celebrate the things of Satan?)

As I previously mentioned, when, as a Christian, you know that something is associated with Satan, why would you get involved? Furthermore, **WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU ALLOW YOUR CHILDREN TO BE TRAINED TO CELEBRATE THE THINGS OF DEATH AND SATAN?** So many Christians have been raised in a world where the evil practices of Halloween festivities are accepted as innocent fun. Get this straight: there is **NOTHING** innocent about Satan, demons, witches, magic spells, death and so on. Do you honestly think God approves of the way Halloween is celebrated? Do you honestly think He sees it as innocent fun, especially when His own children are involved?

Some might ask, "But Pastor Jim, how do I tell my children they can no longer go to Halloween parties or go trick-or-treating anymore?"

That is a very fair question. Why not share with them what I've written in this letter? Why not tell them the truth about all the festivities? Don't you think they deserve to know?

To counter the wickedness of the commonly accepted activities surrounding Halloween, some churches have taken a Romans 12:21 approach: ***Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*** They do this by hosting harvest parties to celebrate God's blessings and the harvest of crops taking place during the fall of each year. Some people might claim this is nothing more than a "Christianized" way to have a Halloween party. However, a harvest party is not too

dissimilar to feasts celebrated by the Jews: Leviticus chapter 23 and Deuteronomy chapter 16 both describe festivals and feasts pertaining to harvest.

Another approach could also be taken. Remember that Halloween is a shortened version of All Hallows Eve, a time when Christians from the past were remembered for their commitment to serving Christ. Churches could hold fellowship dinners and acknowledge the lives of Believers who have gone before them. This is not a form of worshiping dead saints, but a time of recognizing how they dedicated their lives to Jesus as an inspiration for us to do the same. After all, in Philippians 3:17 the Apostle Paul wrote, ***Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example.***

A modern version of All Hallows Eve could be something like this: Churches could have fellowship dinners during which presentations are given on the lives of Christians such as Billy Graham, Oral Roberts, Charlotte “Lottie” Moon, Jonathan Edwards, Fanny J. Crosby, the Wesley brothers, Charles Finney, Evan Roberts and so many more. Members of a church youth group could be assigned to give a short report on various Christian trailblazers; the research they complete could help motivate them to stay on the path of serving Jesus. In other words, celebrate Halloween the way it was originally intended.

When it comes to celebrating Halloween, Christians should follow the advice the Apostle Paul gave the Corinthians: ***Come out from among them*** (the world) ***and be ye separate.***

In His Grace,

*Jim*

P.S. – Did you know some Christians seem to believe that buying Halloween candy is inviting demons into your home? I have a sermon addressing that belief, as well as other Halloween teachings. It’s titled, *Would Jesus Eat Halloween Candy?* and you can receive a copy by using the order form below.

-----  
\_\_\_\_\_ Check here to receive a CD of a sermon that accompanies this letter, *Would Jesus Eat Halloween Candy?*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to make a donation to this ministry, make checks payable to “Jim Martin Ministries” or use the ‘Make a Donation’ feature at our website to give through PayPal.

JIM MARTIN MINISTRIES • P.O. Box 291962 • Dayton, Ohio 45429 • USA

www.jmmgrace.com • PastorJimGCC@gmail.com