

What Do I Think About Halloween?

written by Randy Starkey | 10/21/2015

In having a discussion about Halloween, I'll say first of all that I find, as in many other topics related to God and His Word, that there are often extremes in people's views on the topic, and that a lot of it is due to bad information, lack of research, fear, self-righteousness, judgmentalism, and even conspiracy mentalities. Balance seems to be very hard for many Christians! Proverbs 11.1 says "*A false balance*" is not good! This verse has to do with weights and measures, but it applies anytime we give something NOT ENOUGH weight, or conversely, TOO MUCH weight. Paul told Timothy in 2 Tim. 2.15 to "*STUDY to show yourself approved unto God... RIGHTLY DIVIDING the word of truth.*" In other words, Timothy, when studying any topic, look at both sides of the coin. Learn how to balance the various truths in God's Word when studying any subject. Don't fall into the ditch on either side of the road.

So, how does this apply to Halloween? Well, I see two extremes among Christians on Halloween...

- 1) Some people are so secular that they are not aware that Halloween has some pagan and occult background, and they just celebrate it without thinking about that. That's not really wise.
- 2) People on the other extreme get paranoid, and they think any child walking out the door on Halloween night in a costume of any kind is in danger of becoming demon possessed or that they are participating in satanic things!

Both extremes are wrong!

Here's a few points that I think are worthy of being said and that can bring some balance...

1) Halloween's origin and development...

Halloween was originally a Gaelic holiday called "Samhain" that was a celebration of the autumn harvest, before the coming of winter, but was a time where the Celts felt the barrier between the natural world and the spiritual world was "thinnest" (which is not really true as there is no such "barrier" to be "thin" or "thick", the spiritual world is simply another "dimension"), and so they needed protection against evil spirits at this time. Originating in Ireland, the land of the Druids, it definitely had some pagan practices similar to some things that are still done today on Halloween. (Today's practices are similar in look, but not normally in intent).

However, many of the practices also originated from purely secular sources, and actually some were from religious sources related to helping poor people and saying prayers for relatives who had passed away (not saying that's good theology ☹). The church celebrated "All Saints Day" and "All Souls Day"

and “All Hallows Day” on Nov. 1, and “All Hallows Eve” the night before on Oct. 31st (The actual name “HALLOWEEN” came from the “hallow” terminology, NOT from anything occultic), as a Christian fall celebration of great past saints. Some of this they did to try to put a Christian emphasis on these days and to eliminate the pagan aspects. (Oct. 31st is also now a celebration of Reformation Day, which came much later, commemorating the anniversary of Martin Luther’s famous 95 theses.)

So, both Christian and pagan celebrations were going on together, and over time they have more or less become one holiday with a big mixture of customs and practices, with no one really paying much attention to or specifically celebrating either saints or pagans or anything occultic! For the general public, it’s turned into basically a modern Americanized secular cultural kids candy-fest with both occult and secular characterized costumes, carved pumpkins, bonfires and parties with generally no intended or practiced religious or spiritual aspects. (However, it should be noted that some occult groups DO use this day as a celebration for their black arts, and that is something to be sure you avoid, as that is spiritually dangerous.)

2) So, how did I respond to Halloween first of all with my own kids...?

Due to the pagan and occult aspects of it (I came out of the occult when I was saved), we did not “celebrate” Halloween, or go door to door, (candy that way can be unsafe and unpredictable especially today), and if my kids were to ask me *“what’s Halloween and why do we celebrate it?”*, there would be no good answer! I don’t really agree with or follow either the pagan OR religious aspects of the history of the holiday. Actually, telling them some of the occult roots is a good idea to answer their “what and why” questions. However, we always did do something fun and glorifying to God in place of it! This day, October 31st, and EVERY DAY is GOD’S day! I REFUSE TO CEDE ANY DAY TO THE DEVIL! Psalms 118.24 says *“This is the day that the LORD has made and I will be glad and rejoice in it!”* I think that includes EVERY Day!

The Fall harvest season is God’s and NOT the devil’s! The devil does not own costumes (never use occult ones), candy, pumpkins or bonfires!! I will use any of those at any time on any day I want to for the glory of God! They belong to HIM and not to the devil! The devil is a THIEF! There is nothing demonic about pumpkins for heaven’s sake! God created them! Just because I carve a cool one (make it smile!) does NOT mean I’m trying to scare away demons (what the pagans envisioned). It wouldn’t work anyway! No, they can just be fun to make and they can look cool! ☐ The devil CANNOT have my pumpkin LOL! He also can’t have my candy! (I do recommend on the candy front however, that you ONLY find a SAFE CIRCLE of friends to share candy with! Fentanyl pills are produced on the street in various colors that can look like candy, but are lethal!)

So, I have had fun with my family and kids at many fall and harvest autumn events like celebrating at “Hallelujah Parties”, “Harvest Parties” (our church had one for years until we got too big to handle the crowds), bonfires, “Treats in a Trunk” (safe candy), our own candy collecting, etc. etc. We simply did

something fun for fall to the glory of God and used whatever we wanted (NOTHING was occultic) and told our kids GOD CAN DO BETTER than the devil! We don't need to "celebrate" Halloween the pagan way, which was occultic.

3) So next, what about relating to kids going out on Halloween who are not your kids? How should we respond...?

Love them! Give them some candy if they come to your home! Give them an invite or flyer to your church's kids ministries too! Add a few gospel thoughts on it. Be FOR Christ, FOR your church, and not on a "hobby horse" AGAINST Halloween! Just "being against" Halloween is a terrible evangelistic entry point as they will not understand what you are talking about with Druids, pagans, the occult, etc. Invite them to church and God can take it from there!

As I mentioned in my intro, Halloween is now an Americanized cultural secular holiday with basically no religious or pagan overtones. Kids are just having fun. So unless they are purposely or inadvertently delving deeper into witchcraft or the occult (it does happen – see my next point), most of it is basically harmless. If they come to your door in some demonic costume, what better thing to do than to show them the love of Christ! OUTREACH can be a great thing to do on Halloween!

If you are not comfortable doing all that, or you want to do something fun with your kids, then take your family out to eat or to a good movie or to some other Christian Fall Harvest non-occultic function or party or candy share that's on that night.

4) I will also say it is GENUINELY IMPORTANT to stay away from occult things...

DON'T dress your kids up in some demonic, witch or horror costume! Are they going to get demon possessed? No. But a continual practice of or participation in that sort of thing can begin to open unwanted doors. When I first got saved, I had been involved in the occult, and I had a lot of occult paraphernalia I had to get rid of! Harry Potter has made witches "cool", but there is in true spiritual reality *no such thing as a "cool" witch!* Witchcraft is forbidden in the Scriptures. Also, things like Ouija Boards, Charlie Charlie, seances, etc. are even more dangerous and can open doors to the spirit world and bring people into spiritual oppression for sure. Witches do operate on Halloween, it is THEIR "high holy day", and I have often prayed on that night to bind their work. Crime statistics are known to rise on that night. However, the power of God is GREATER than the power of the devil, and I WILL CEDE NO DAY to the devil, nor will I have anything to do with the devil! Here's what Christians did with occult stuff in the book of Acts...

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

5) Lastly, I never preached sermons on the “topic” of Halloween.

It was low on my list when I was actively pastoring, and it still is. With only 52 weekends a year to preach the Word, there are far more important topics to cover on vision for the Kingdom of God and for people to be saved! I simply refer people to things like this blog I’ve written here ☐

6) My SHORT SUMMARY!

Don’t CELEBRATE Halloween, either pagan, occult or religious. EXPLAIN to your kids the occult part of it’s origins and why you don’t participate in that, and then REDEEM THE DAY for the Lord and DON’T LET THE DEVIL HAVE THE DAY! Do some FUN things with your kids using whatever you want to that is not occultic, consider reaching out to others for Jesus, THANK GOD for His care and provision in this Fall season, and then FOLLOW THIS VERSE... 1 Cor. 10:31 *“whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God!”*

Thanks for listening! (reading ☐)

God bless!

-Ps. Randy

Sidebar (this is from 2017) – not on the occult, but on sexuality:

There is something more recent in the realm of costumes that I also think needs to be mentioned, and that is the sexual lewdness that has crept into costumes. Pastor James Emery White points out... *In an article in the New York Times titled, “Good Girls Go Bad, For a Day,” Stephanie Rosenbloom writes of the changing nature of women’s Halloween costumes in the last several years. Little Red Riding Hood, in her thigh-highs and miniskirt, does not seem en route to her grandmother’s house. Goldilocks, in a snug bodice and platform heels, gives the impression she has been sleeping in everyone’s bed. And then there is the witch wearing little more than a Laker Girl uniform, a fairy who appears to shop at Victoria’s Secret, and a cowgirl with a skirt the size of a—well, you get the point. As Rosenbloom notes, the images “are more strip club than storybook.” No wonder Halloween costume stores have signs out front that say: “No one under 18 allowed without a parent.” Parents beware!*