

Origin and Meaning of HALLOWEEN

After searching the origin of Halloween, historical meaning behind Halloween and the Halloween of today, I have found various viewpoints on the subject. But even though there are slightly different view points there is a common message throughout it. Here are three statements from people in different walks of life really sum it up. All of them have studied this topic extensively (refer to main stream reference material – like Encyclopedia Britannica for a surface reference. It ties back to their statements). One is from an Agnostic, the other from a certified Witch and the other from a Christian. Can I go participate? What are the repercussions if I do? Bottom line, Is it good or bad for me and my family? The world paints a pretty picture of Halloween, it looks harmless, but is it?

There are many that claim to have the starting point but many of their stories vary from one another. So in searching for the truth I used the first principle of law, i.e. the truth will be revealed by looking at what is constant in all the messages. The people I chose come from completely different personal backgrounds in order to aid an unbiased viewpoint. This is what I have found: The views vary but even though it varies there is one thing that is consistent - An Evil spiritual thread woven throughout all the rituals disguised under the banner of “Fun”, in order to trick people into it. No matter which way it is dress up it is centered on 2 fundamentals – invoking Fear in others (not from God) and coming from or driven by Evil. The worst of it is we as parents encourage our Children to participate. Many of these rituals and playful events like, “Trick or Treat” is still performed today. It is a pagan festival that will not be celebrated in the 1000 years reign with Christ. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), **finding out what is acceptable to the Lord** (Eph 5:8-10). Celebrating a pagan festival (it is not a superimposed Christian Holiday like Christmas) is not acceptable no matter how much fun it is. Christians know the answer deep down but do they want to obey.

Actual Extracts:

HALLOWEEN from an Agnostic

The word itself, "Halloween," actually has its origins in the Catholic Church. It comes from a contracted corruption of All Hallows Eve. November 1, "All Hollows Day" (or "All Saints Day"), is a Catholic day of observance in honor of saints. But, in the 5th century BC, in Celtic Ireland, summer officially ended on October 31. The holiday was called Samhain (sow-en), the Celtic New year.

One story says that, on that day, the disembodied spirits of all those who had died throughout the preceding year would come back in search of living bodies to possess for the next year. It was believed to be their only hope for the afterlife. The Celts believed all laws of space and time were suspended during this time allowing the spirit world to intermingle with the living. The thrust of the practices also changed over time to become more ritualized. As belief in spirit possession waned, the practice of dressing up like hobgoblins, ghosts, and witches took on a more ceremonial role.

The Jack-o-lantern custom probably comes from Irish folklore. As the tale is told, a man named Jack, who was notorious as a drunkard and trickster, tricked Satan into climbing a tree. Jack then carved an image of a cross in the tree's trunk, trapping the devil up the tree. Jack made a deal with the devil that if he would never tempt him again he would promise to let him down the tree. According to the folk tale, after Jack died, he was denied entrance to Heaven because of his evil ways, but he was also denied access to Hell because he had tricked the devil. Instead, the devil gave him a single ember to light his way through the frigid darkness. The ember was placed inside a hollowed-out turnip to keep it glowing longer. The Irish used turnips as their "Jack's lanterns" originally. But when the immigrants came to America, they found that pumpkins were far more plentiful than turnips. So the Jack-O-Lantern in America was a hollowed-out pumpkin, lit with an ember.

HALLOWEEN from a Witch

In recent years, there have been a number of pamphlets put out by various Christian organizations dealing with the origins of modern day Halloween customs. Being a Witch myself, and a student of the ancient Celts, from whom we get this holiday, I have found these pamphlets woefully inaccurate and poorly researched. In an effort to correct some of this erroneous information, I have spent several months researching the religious life of the ancient Celtic peoples and the survivals of that religious life in modern day times. Listed below are some of the most commonly asked questions concerning the origins and customs of Halloween.

Where does Halloween come from? Our modern celebration of Halloween is a descendent of the ancient Celtic fire festival called "Samhain".

What about the aspects of "evil" that we associate with the night today? The fairies, however, were often considered hostile and dangerous to humans because they were seen as being resentful of men taking over their lands. On this night, they would sometimes trick humans into becoming lost in the fairy mounds, where they would be trapped forever. After the coming of the Christians to the Celtic lands, certain of the folk saw the fairies as those angels who had sided neither with God or with Lucifer in their dispute, and thus, were condemned to walk the earth until judgment day. Many followers of various pagan religions, such as Druids and Wiccans observe this day as a religious festival.

What about "trick or treat"? During the course of these hijinks, many of the people would imitate the fairies and go from house to house begging for treats. Failure to supply the treats would usually result in practical jokes being visited on the owner of the house. Since the fairies were abroad on this night, an offering of food or milk was frequently left for them on the steps of the house, so the homeowner could gain the blessings of the "good folk" for the coming year. Many of the households would also leave out a "dumb supper" for the spirits of the departed. The folks who were abroad in the night imitating the fairies would sometimes carry turnips carved to represent faces. This is the origin of our modern Jack-o-lantern.

Was this a religious festival? Yes. Celtic religion was very closely tied to the Earth. Their great legends are concerned with momentous happenings which took place around the time of Samhain. Many of the great battles and legends of kings center on this night. Many of the legends concern the promotion of fertility of the earth and the insurance of the continuance of the lives of the people through the dark winter season.

What about sacrifices? Animals were certainly killed at this time of year. Most certainly, some of these would have been done in a ritualistic manner for the use of the priesthood.

Were humans sacrificed? Scholars are sharply divided on this account, with about half believing that it took place and half doubting its authenticity.

HALLOWEEN from a Christian

What is Halloween not? It is not Satan's birthday nor is it a good celebration.

What is Halloween? It is a pagan festival started in the British Isles with the Druids. And Satanists most solemn ceremony of the year. It is the celebrating of the spiritual forces of darkness. The ancient Celtic festival called Samhain is considered by many to be a predecessor of our contemporary Halloween. Samhain was the New Year's Day of the Celts and was celebrated on November 1st (5th Century BC). It was also known as the "day of the dead", a time when it was believed that the souls of those who had died during the year were allowed access to the land of the dead. It was related to the season, when the crops and the animals were to be brought in from the distant fields. It

was also the night of the wandering dead, the practice of leaving offerings of food and drink to masked and costumed revelers, and the lighting of bonfires, continued to be practiced on October 31, known as the Eve of All Saints, the Eve of All Hallows, or Hallow Even. It is the glossing of the name Hallow Even that has given us the name Hallow e'en. Come evening, evil spirits were everywhere. Charms and spells were said to have more power on the eve of Samhain than any other time. The spirits of Samhain, once thought to be wild and powerful, and also evil. People maintained that the spiritual beings people had experienced during that day were real, and later on the Church said it was the manifestations of the Devil, the Prince of Liars, who misled people toward the worship of false idols. Thus, the customs associated with Halloween included representations of ghosts and human skeletons--symbols of the dead--and of the devil and other malevolent, evil creatures, witches etc.. People went on expecting the arrival of ghosts on Oct. 31st. Halloween was brought to the US in 1840 by Irish immigrants.

In exchange for the victim, they left a Jack-O-Lantern with a lighted candle made of human fat. Which was supposed to prevent those inside the home from death demons that night. When some unfortunate person couldn't meet the demands of the Druids then it was time for the trick. A symbolic hex was drawn on the front door for later that evening. That night evil spirits would visit the homes that have the symbolic hex. Some people in the home were killed or tormented. Does this festival sound good to you?

Why do people keep Halloween going? Kids love Halloween because it is both fun and scary, and of course free candy. But they have no idea what's behind this celebration. As we get closer to the Second Coming of Jesus, Satanism will increase.

Who is the motivating force behind it and why? Satan's greatest desire is to hurt and destroy people. He promotes Halloween because it glamorizes the powers of darkness thus drawing little children and ignorant parents into his realm. Parents who are allowing their children to participate are causing their children to stumble. The children respect and believe what the parents are telling them. When the children interact with other children who are dressed up as the devil, witches they come to accept it as "Fun" and nothing that should be shunned. They establish strongholds in their mind like, "There are good and bad witches" (that's a lie from hell because all witches are bad) another is the dark forces of this world have fun (that's another lie). But it is paying off, witchcraft is exploding among teens today under the banner of "innocent fun" and films, e.g. Harry Potter. If Satanists can establish strongholds in the minds of young children, then it will be harder for good to break them when they are older. People hold onto their traditions and die defending it then even if it was based on a lie they will still defend it to their destruction. Therefore knowing or ignorant parents are setting their children up for failure. Now they may find moments of pleasure but later live in hardship unless they repent.

What do Satanists do leading up to this day? They celebrate it and interact with the spiritual forces. They brain storm ideas to impact the roots of future generations, i.e. Children. They want people to say, "It is fun and therefore it cannot be bad." So whatever evil core they use they seek for avenues to coat it with elements of "Fun" thereby disguising the evil properties. Parents will start saying, "It cannot be bad, look how much fun and joy the children are having." Darkness needs an avenue through which to enter people's lives, Halloween is just one avenue.

What should Christians do? Use it as an opportunity to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Share the gospel but don't participate. Sharing the gospel will bring people out of the spiritual darkness. But if we are not bringing the lantern of the gospel then don't participate. Then we are hurting ourselves and others. An increasing number of people are seeing the dangers associated with celebrating Halloween. Wise parents are replacing Halloween with family night activities. Others are having "Glory Gatherings" where all references to Halloween are removed and wholesome games are played, Christian songs are sung and Christian videos are shown. While others pray that God shows mercy on the people.

What happens if Christians don't believe it is Bad and continue to participate? God said that my people perish because of their ignorance, lack of knowledge (Hos. 4:6). If the Christians truly want to know the answer they would seek God for the answer. But the reason many don't seek God on this is because deep down they know it is bad and if they ask God and He reveals it to them then they have to obey. The fact is they don't want to obey this. Because once they know then they cannot hide behind the curtain of ignorance. But ignorance is not an excuse, "*If a person sins, and commits any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD, though he does not know it, yet he is guilty and shall bear his iniquity*" (Lev. 5:17). God will hold us accountable for the way we bring up our children. As "*there is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death. Even in laughter the heart may sorrow, and the end of mirth may be grief. The backslider in heart will be filled with his own*

ways, but a good man will be satisfied from above. The simple believes every word, but the prudent considers well his steps. A wise man fears and departs from evil, but a fool rages and is self-confident” (Prov. 14:12-16). Once we come to Christ Holy Spirit is on the inside of us speaking to us. The only reason some cannot hear Him clearly is because they are not spending time in His Word and not praying. He continues to speak but the strongholds of tradition cover His voice and many ignore it (Eph. 4:17-19). So find out what is acceptable to the Lord (Eph 5:8-10).

God will speak through His Word and will confirm it with a sense of knowing in the heart. *“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables”* (2 Tim. 4:3-4). *“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth....Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work* (2 Tim. 3:1-7, 12-17). *“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap”* (Gal. 6:7). People give out candy and join it with “Trick or treat”, thereby participate in the pagan ritual. The things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons. Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? (1 Cor. 10:20-22). *“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places”* (Eph 6:12). So ask yourself, “What is the probability of Halloween being celebrated in the 1000years reign of Christ and why?” If it is not God's Will to celebrate it then why are you participating in it now? Is it to bring God Glory or Satan glory?

HALLOWEEN from another Christian

In order to understand Halloween, it is important to understand the history of this fall holiday. Halloween, which directly stems from Irish, Scottish, Welsh and British folk customs, was celebrated as the Druids' autumn festival. The Druids were an order of priests who worshiped nature. They were accomplished magicians and wizards at the height of their influence some 200 years before the birth of Jesus.

This holiday was originally celebrated to honor Samhain, lord of the dead, on October 31 (the end of the summer). The Druids believed that on this date, Samhain called all the wicked souls that had been condemned within the last year to live in animal bodies. He was believed to have released them in the form of spirits, ghosts, fairies, witches and elves.

According to Druidic tradition, these souls of the dead roamed the city on Halloween night and returned to haunt the homes where they once lived. The only way the current occupants of the house could free themselves from being haunted was to lay out food and give shelter to the spirit during the night. If they didn't, the spirit would cast a spell on them. That is where the phrase "trick or treat" comes from: They would be tricked if they didn't lay out a treat.

The jack-o'-lantern was also a part of this belief system. The carved pumpkin symbolized a damned soul named Jack. According to the tale, Jack was not allowed into heaven or hell. So, he wandered around in the darkness with his lantern until Judgment Day. Fearful people hollowed out turnips (and later pumpkins in the United States), carved an evil face on them, and a lit candle inside to scare him and other evil spirits away.

The Druids had other outlandish beliefs which have since turned into tradition. For example, they were afraid of black cats because they believed that when a person committed evil, he would be turned into a cat. Cats were thus

considered to be evil. To scare them away, the Druids decorated their homes with witches, ghosts and the like. They also decorated with cornstalks, pumpkins and other goods in offering of thanks and praise to their false gods.

In addition to being Halloween, October 31 was also the New Year's Eve of the Celts and Anglo-Saxons. To celebrate, they built huge bonfires on hilltops to frighten away evil spirits, and often offered their crops and animals to them as a sacrifice - sometimes they even offered themselves or others.

The Romans began the conquest of the Celts around A.D. 43 and ruled much of what is now the United Kingdom for about 400 hundred years. During this period, two Roman autumn festivals were combined with the Celtic festival of Samhain. One of them, called Feralia, was held in late October to honor the dead. The other festival honored Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The practice of bobbing for apples became associated with Halloween because of this festival.

Some people have thought that Halloween's only significance was as the evening before All Saints' Day, a festival of the Catholic Church honoring all Christian saints. The Mass said on All Saints' Day was called Allhallowmas. The evening before became known as the Eve of All Saints, the Eve of All Hallows, All Hallows' Eve, or Hallow Even, which has given us the name Hallowe'en.

Although All Saints' Day contributed to the naming of Halloween, All Saints' Day itself did not exist until A.D. 700 when it was instituted by Pope Boniface IV. Originally it was celebrated in the spring on the first Sunday after Pentecost. Its date was changed to November 1 by Pope Gregory III (reigned A.D. 731-741) in an attempt to add a Christian influence to the traditional pagan customs still being celebrated on October 31 by Celtic converts. When sending missionaries to convert native peoples, the Catholic Church encouraged the redefinition of local customs into Christian terms and concepts. Therefore, All Saints' Day and Halloween became unified, because of the same ties to reverencing the dead.

The combination of these customs eventually became the traditional celebration we call Halloween. It is important for parents to consider these "harmless gestures of enjoyment" and the distorted images they make in a child's heart. We must realize Halloween is a holiday centered around fear and death.

Modern day witches and wizards believe this night to be the most suitable night of the year for magic and demonic activity. In Deuteronomy 18:10-11, God forbids us to participate in any kind of occult practices or witchcraft. Further, in the New Testament, we are told to abstain from the appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

As Christians, we should not celebrate Halloween, rather we should recognize October 31 as the day the Lord has made - a day we can rejoice in (Psalm 118:24). And we don't need to be fearful, for God has not given us a spirit of fear (2 Timothy 1:7).

Parents should teach their children faith in God. Children can have just as much fun on a Halloween centered around the Word of God and family fellowship. Make a commitment today to give your children the Word of God instead of the fairy tales the world offers - it will help them grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).

Here is a prayer of safety you can pray for your family on Halloween:

Father, in the Name of Jesus, I thank You that You watch over Your Word to perform it. I thank You that my family and I dwell in the secret place of the Most High and that we remain stable and fixed under the shadow of the Almighty, Whose power no foe can withstand.

Father, You are our refuge and our fortress. No evil shall befall us - no accident shall overtake us - nor any plague or calamity come near our home. You give Your angels special charge over each one of us, to accompany and defend and preserve us in all our ways of obedience and service. They are encamped around about us.

Lord, I will train my children in the way they should go; and according to Your Word, when they are old, they will not depart from it. And I bind the devil from trying to influence them in any way this holiday.

Father, You are our confidence, firm and strong. You keep our feet from being caught in a trap or hidden danger. When we lie down, You will give us peaceful sleep. Father, You give this family safety and ease us - Jesus is our safety!

Here are all the verses typed out at least one should hit home.

James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Deuteronomy 18:10-11 There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, 11 or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead

Ephesians 5:8-10 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.

Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

Ephesians 4:17-19 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of [a] the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

1 Thessalonians 5:22 Abstain from every form of evil.

2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

2 Tim. 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

2 Tim. 3:1-7, 12-17 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.... Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Lev. 5:17 If a person sins, and commits any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD, though he does not know it, yet he is guilty and shall bear his iniquity
Eph 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Act 19:19-20 Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

Discussion with Christians – Christian talking with a Christian

Hi All,

I have broadened my email on the eve of Halloween. My previous Halloween email sparked quite a bit of response to those who are passionate about Halloween :). And many provided the same rationale of why they do based on scripture which I do appreciate so thank you. I think everyone is prepped with those same verse to justify participating in Halloween - which is out of context but I do see how people could use it. So instead of me responding to every individual here is the typical conversation that is had. Again not targeting anyone but I do hope everyone prays about it - seriously. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against - Eph. 6:12. So no more responses, just focus on Jesus.

Andre

Ps. You are allowed to forward this onto whomever you desire.

Andre: Are you telling them about Jesus?

Mr X: No, not directly.

Andre: Are you being an example of the freedom we have in Christ so that they will want to be a Christian?

Mr X: Yes, exactly, look at Rom. 14:14, I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

Andre: So you are saying that this scripture gives you the right to participate because of the freedom you have in Christ?

Mr X: Yes just like eating food sacrificed to idols are okay (except if causes your brother to stumble), it is our freedom in the LORD.

Andre: So you are the mature one in Christ because you know how to wheel your freedom?

Mr X: Basically yes

Andre: So you are admitting this act is evil, because you know it is wrong regarding the rest of scripture, but you use this one to highlight that you are free to do this evil because of the Freedom we have in Christ?

Mr X: No it isn't evil we are making evil good like Christmas.

Andre: How is it like Christmas, because Christmas was placed on an Idol holiday so you say Christmas is evil? And forget about the focus of Christmas is on Jesus, is Halloween act focused on Jesus or evil?

Mr X: Then Why is one who eats things sacrificed to idols stronger than one who abstains?

Andre: Because he is eating it to sustain himself as the primary purpose, to fill his stomach. As Rom. 14 says, in his heart he isn't purposefully participating in the ritual of idol worship; he knows that God knows his heart Rom 14:2. The Kingdom of God is based on the things we say and things we do to bring others to Jesus... it is not about eating and drinking (Rom. 14:17). But on a side note you can eat things that are not good for your body but it doesn't impact your salvation, but will impact your body.

Mr X: Yes and God knows my heart.

Andre: Firstly you are not in the same position as Rom. 14- that you have been forced indirectly to eat food offered to idols or eat vegetables (it is not about the freedom to eat pork or eating blood in meat - because in Acts 15:26 it refers to not eating meat with blood). Anyhow, why do you even use it - it's not the same context. Can you find another few scripture that support this, if what your saying is true - Col and 1 Cor also refer to the necessity of food, to fill the stomach but not at the expense of someone falling. You always talk about context, let's talk about context. Show me in the scripture where we can participate in idol worship if we want to. You are participating in a pagan festival, being part of it. Why do you think the early Church in Acts 19:19 did this "Many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver." Note what they didn't do - they didn't sell it to get a profit to give it to the church which may sound very Holy and wise (that would have not shown love to those who would have received the books and fallen into the same trap they did). Do you have to participate in Halloween to feed your family, probably not. Didn't Paul say in 1Co 6:12 that "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." Why do you need to participate in Halloween? Rom 6:1-2 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or Peter 1Pe 1:15-16 "but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."?

Mr X: But what I'm doing is helping the children and the neighbors and shedding light in a dark place

Andre: How by participating? Haven't you read Deu 18:10-11 "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead." Notice speaking to the Jewish who followed God - the term MAKE your children do ... Halloween makes children participate in a Pagan festival.

Mr X: But they get dressed up like bunnies and giving out candy, how is that bad?

Andre: But when they get older, the costumes and the rituals become more evil... moving from bunnies to witches and devils, and from trick or treating to horror movies and ouija boards? There is no such thing as good and bad witches. The Law says it is bad no matter how attractive it looks outwardly.

Mr X: That is the Law and we are not under the Law.

Andre: The law was given as a tutor so we know how to be Holy Paul wouldn't have known not to envy unless the Law said do not envy (Rom. 7:7). But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in

sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. (Rom. 6:22). Deep down you know Halloween is wrong but the freedom in Christ supercedes it for you. You know what I find amazing about this. Most of the people that participate do you believe we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph. 6:12). But they don't put two and two together because they haven't witnessed or been involved in exorcism or understand HOW demons possess or oppress people. So how do demons possess and oppress people, what avenue do they come it?

Mr X: Through witchcraft or opening themselves up by the things they say, but Halloween isn't witchcraft or evil.

Andre: You are contradicting yourself. You know it is evil but you tell yourself no it isn't because freedom in Christ. However you acknowledge that it is something we do that brings them on?

Mr X: But Halloween isn't evil, it depends how you see it. Anything can be evil then.

Andre: Who deceived you? Why are you falling into the Relative Truth trap and don't see it. You should know better, it is not how we see it, but how God sees it. Aren't you participating in an act based on sight, instead of based on the spiritual world impact to your children? Aren't you leading them down a slippery road? I'm in marketing and if I wanted to get someone into a brand I look at the point of market entry. Where they enter the brand - the first time they use say "X", at school, college. Start with fancy packaging things that make them tick, make it fun and then this drives respect, loyalty for X so now that they are using it, how do we trade them up to something "better". What form is Halloween in and what is next, first it is a butterfly next it is a witch - this is the natural progression. Or being a medium or using a medium? We are not loving them to the Lord but putting a stumbling block in their and others path, causing them to fall... the verse immediately preceding Rom 14:14 says "to not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way." We do that when we open, encourage, the way for children to play with witchcraft.

Paul did walk around with idols around his neck to win the lost. Nor did Jesus or Paul participate in the sinners activities but shared the truth with them in order to bring them to God. It isn't relationships that bring people to Jesus but it is living the Word of God. Being an example, being Christ like - Christ's One - Christian.

Discussion with another Christian (Black and Purple is one person and Blue is another person)

"I said I would go back and study Romans 14:14, and I kept my word. I understand what you're saying about "conscience sake," from verse 14, but I don't think it applies to Halloween. Here's what I mean... v13 says to "not put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way" and v21 reinforces it with "it is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak." When we as parents allow our children to participate in Halloween, we give the holiday acceptability and endorsement, but that could start our children on a path that could lead them to fall badly. While they're young, we deliver the message that Halloween is "ok," and we manage to protect them from the "evil" aspects of it, by doing things like limiting what types of costumes (bunnies & butterflies) and activities they're involved in. But as they get older (teens, 20s), they begin to make their own choices grounded in the belief we've instilled that Halloween is "ok." Those choices are the dangerous ones, and can begin to get them involved in séances and ouija boards and occult practices that seem "fun" but are harmful. And because they have no reason to believe that there is something wrong with Halloween in general, they have no reason to believe any of these practices are wrong.

You make an assumption here that we are not teaching our children that there are many aspects of Halloween that are wrong and discuss with them why we have made the decisions we have made. I agree that mindless participation could be detrimental in the long run but I think it can be a great catalyst to enter into discussions on why we do what we do and why we don't. on the Ouija board thing I think it is a stretch and assume zero spiritual input from a parent. It is like the Baptist church I grew up in saying that if you go to a dance you will have sex.

You already know how much I respect you guys. It's not your boys I'm concerned about. Many Christians (I would say most) have never thought about Halloween and don't put guidelines around what their kids can & can't do. By holding a church Halloween party, we reinforce there is no harm in Halloween, when that's not what either you nor I believe (I'm assuming this because you don't want your boys wearing devil, witch, or ghost costumes... that there must be something wrong with this then). Since no one in our church is explaining the dangers of Halloween, we are seen to only be promoting it (i.e. zero spiritual input from the church)... and we do the opposite of our job of equipping Christians (Eph 4:11). By the way, there's plenty of testimonies online of how good kids have gotten involved in the occult through things like ouija boards.

Similarly, when the church itself participates, we cement the perception that Halloween is "ok." You've made the decision to limit what your kids wear for Halloween, because costumes of witches and devils are wrong & evil... but the new Christian families / seekers in our congregation don't see that... they don't know that your kids aren't allowed to wear those scary costumes, nor do they know why. All they can see is that other Christians, further along in their walk with God, participate in Halloween. So when they participate, they don't understand this idea of protecting their kids from the evil parts of Halloween, because no one has explained. We risk them getting involved in things that could really hurt them. Add in Jesus' Words about one "who causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin", that "it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and drowned in the depth of the sea," and we need to be very careful with what message we deliver to new Christians through everything we do.

On this point I agree very much and we have used this event to explain our faith many times so that people don't get confused. Having said that if I sensed that our family decision was causing someone to question their faith I would certainly reconsider what we did. At this point however as I said in my office we have found that we are actually able to use this event to connect with non believers rather than locking ourselves in and alienating them. Jesus was always criticized for being with prostitutes, tax collectors and sinners but he knew the most important role for us here on earth is to show god's love to those who are far from him.

Christ preached the kingdom wherever he went and to whomever he spoke... he never just "hung out" with anyone. Even when invited to dinner, He made a point to talk the kingdom message, and He was very direct. If you're telling people about Jesus and the gospel on Halloween, great! If not, there are 364 other days to build relationships... be honest with yourself on this... you wouldn't alienate anyone by not handing out candy. Far more importantly, if Christians are too concerned about this small alienation, how will they ever have the boldness to tell someone they're a sinner, and that they need Jesus.

Separately, in my studies of Romans 14, I'm not convinced we can apply the "conscience' sake" argument to Halloween. Paul was talking about people who were eating food sacrificed to idols as a source of sustenance (i.e. for food), **because** it was unclear whether the meat they bought was sacrificed to idols or not. He explains it further in 1 Cor 10:25 with "eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake." Those who were weak and couldn't "risk" possibly eating meat sacrificed to idols ate only vegetables (Rom 14:2). But he was not suggesting that Christians should use their freedom in Christ to participate in idol worship and then eat the meat. God expressly prohibited the worship of idols and anything occult multiple times in the bible. Yet, in Halloween, we are not just getting the "meat," we're participating in the idol worship in order to get the meat.

Firstly the principle in not just on issues that are a "source of sustenance" I understand that you can read that implication into the text but it is not the focus of the point Paul is making. When you study scripture you need to be careful not to allow implied perspectives to shape the intended purpose. This can side track you from the main point which is Christians having a lot of freedom but needing to be sensitive to others no matter what the issue. On your other point I agree we are not to use our freedom to be involved in idol worship and I certainly would not do that. I disagree totally that going from one house to another to get candy is idol worship! This is a huge stretch and I am curious to understand how you think we are worshipping idols that way?

Paul distinguished between "attending idol worship service" and "eating the meat sacrificed to idols." The freedom was to eat the meat, not attend the worship service. Today's Halloween activities are what the ancient druids, satanists, and wiccans practiced. Here are three examples of how they ascribed power to inanimate objects, which is idol worship: #1. Trick or treating originated with the druids who believed that on Halloween night, the souls of the dead returned to the homes where they once lived. The way to free themselves from being haunted was for home owners to lay out food and provide these spirits with shelter for the night... if they did not, the spirit would cast a spell or worse on the home... hence, the expression "trick or treat." #2. Jack-o-lanterns follow a similar pattern. According to tradition, Jack was a damned soul prohibited access to either heaven or hell. Fearful people carved out turnips

(pumpkins in North America) with an evil face on them to scare him and other evil spirits away (hence the name Jack-o-lantern). #3. The tradition of dressing up in scary costumers again originates in trying to scare away evil spirits.

There is no stretch between the stuff people do at Halloween and the worship of inanimate objects, let alone glorifying the powers and principalities. Just because we don't understand the origin and the intent of the activity doesn't mean that it's not real. The only difference between the ancient practices and the Halloween practices of today is that corporations have lent credibility to the event with Halloween promotions and sales and making it seem like innocent "fun".

One last thought and the one that stands out most for me is that the origins and practices of Halloween are evil and glorify the "devil, the principalities and the powers, the rulers of the darkness of this age." We are told by Paul to "therefore take up the whole armour of God" against the evil in the spiritual world, and to "flee from the devil" by James. Never in history did ordinary people, nor witches / satanists, see trick or treating, carving jack-o-lanterns, and dressing up in scary costumers, as fun. They were driven by fear and their desire to appease evil spirits and demons. Both groups believe these spirits / demons have real power and in doing these activities, they actually worship and give praise to the "power and principalities." Why would we want to participate in this at all? God's very clear through-out Scripture that any of these practices are detestable... (I've included the scriptures from my studies below)

People use cars to kill and steel and rape, they use computers to distribute the worst kinds of child pornography, the use hotel rooms to have affairs but we would not consider stopping the use of all of these things. Just because other people have abused or done evil in and through a certain area does not automatically mean that Christians can not even associate with them. The point of the gospel is that we can be diffident in how we live our lives according to God's principles as we eat with sinners tax collectors and even children dressed up in costumes.

I understand your metaphor, but it doesn't apply. Cars, computers, and hotel rooms were all designed with good purposes, and people sometimes pervert them. This simply isn't true for Halloween, which didn't start with good intentions. The holiday was created by a pagan religion to worship pagan fairies, demons, and satan. It's grounded in fear and the occult. It has nothing to do with what we believe in, God calls these types of practices abominations, and He warns against them. So, no, Christians should not associate with them.

And yes, Christ ate with tax collectors, prostitutes, and the worst kind of sinners. But He never slept with the prostitutes, He never cheated people out of money, He never participated in sorcery to be relevant to the witches... Christ didn't participate in the sin in order to associate with the sinner. By this reasoning, our church should participate in the gay pride parade, should frequent brothels to witness to the prostitutes, and volunteer at abortion clinics.

At the core, kids are the root of future generations. Satan would love to poison this root (John 10:10). Our role is to protect them from evil, not purposefully expose them to it. Halloween is a clever event satan uses to connect the positive attributes of candy and fun with the negative elements of fear, with satanic imagery (upside down hexes, evil costumes) and with ghosts, witches, demons, etc. Even if kids don't get involved in anything dangerous when they're young, satan has established that Halloween is at best a neutral and has layed the groundwork for future schemes. In the profession of marketing, we call this "seeding" and it is highly effective at predisposing our target consumers to be purchase-intent-positive to later marketing messages.
