

HALLOWEEN DOESN'T HAPPEN AT OUR HOUSE

by David E. Moss

October 31 brings visions of pumpkins with distorted faces, costumes of many and varied types, candy and apples and school parties and those immortal words, "Trick or Treat." But none of this take place at our house. We do not decorate for Halloween or even think of it as anything worthy of our attention. We acknowledge that it takes place, but only as something "they" do and not us.

Some think that we are silly for such an attitude, that we are depriving our children of an innocent time of fun. While opportunities of fun may abound at Halloween time, I, for one, do not believe it is an innocent "holiday." Consider the following documented information:

1. "The American celebration {of Halloween} rests upon Scottish and Irish folk customs which can be traced in direct line from pre-Christian times. Although Halloween has become a night of celebration to many, its beginnings were quite otherwise. The earliest Halloween celebrations were held by the Druids in honor of Saman, lord of the dead, whose festival fell on November 1st." (Halloween Through 20 Centuries by Ralph Linton)

2. "It was the Druids belief that on the eve of this festival, Saman, lord of the dead, called together the wicked souls (spirits) that within the past 12 months had been condemned to inhabit the bodies of animals." (Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 12, pages 857-858)

3. "The Druids, an order of priests {not Christian} in ancient Gaul and Britain, believed that on Halloween, ghosts, spirits, witches, and elves came out to harm people. They thought the cat was sacred and believed that cats had once been humans, but were changed as a punishment for evil deeds. From these Druidic beliefs come the present-day use of witches, ghosts, and cats in Halloween festivities." (World 1 Book Encyclopedia pages 3245-3246)

These pagans believed that on one night of the year the souls of the dead returned to their original homes. These wandering spirits were in the habit of haunting the living, but there was a way in which these ghosts might be exorcized. To exorcize these ghosts, that is to free yourself from an evil spirit, a person would have to set out food, give the demons a treat, and provide shelter for them for the night. If you didn't, they would "trick" you by casting a spell on you or hurting you.

"It was the Celts who chose the date of October 31 as their New Year's Eve and who originally intended it as a celebration of everything wicked, evil, and dead. Also, during their celebration they would gather around the campfire, and offer their animals, their crops, and sometimes themselves as a sacrifice. The celebration remained much the same after the Romans conquered the Celts around 43 A. D. The Romans, however, added a ceremony honoring their goddess of fruit and trees and thus the association with apples, and the custom of bobbing for them." (World Book Encyclopedia pages 24-25)

5. "The apparently harmless lighted pumpkin face of Jack-O'-lantern" is an ancient symbol of a damned soul. They were named for a man called Jack who could not enter heaven or hell. As a result, he was doomed to wander in darkness with his lantern until Judgment Day. Fearful of spooks...folks began to hollow out turnips and pumpkins and placing lighted candles inside to scare away evil spirits from the house." (The Book of Festive Holidays, page 125)

The above information clearly shows the roots of Halloween. The symbolism represents pagan and occultist practices and is nothing in which a Christian should desire to participate. Having children dress up as ghosts and witches and devils encourages them to take lightly a matter that Scripture considers to be very dangerous. Even the attempt to side step the issue by having our children dress up as some “acceptable” characters such as animals, cowboys and Indians, doctors and nurses, or even Bible characters, sends a faulty message to impressionable young minds. As far as they are concerned they are still participating in Halloween.

When I was a kid, adults consistently told us that “there was no such thing as ghosts.” Today, not only is it widely accepted that there is a mystical world of spirits out there, it is also widely respected. Witches have come out of the closet. They openly peddle their wares. Even Malls allow them to have shows in their corridors. Ouija Boards are popular games. Dungeons and Dragons is a luring activity. Just watch the newspapers when October 31 rolls around this year and you will see the reports of occultists openly and unashamedly observing this most sacred day in the year for these evil practitioners.

Thomas W., Wedge, a former deputy sheriff from Logan County, Ohio, is convinced that the occult is alive and well. He spent 14 years investigating crimes that appeared to be occult related. One case involved 16 year old Sean Sellers, who ended up on death row in Oklahoma. “At midnight on March 5, 1986, Sean donned black underwear and, standing before a makeshift altar in his Oklahoma City bedroom, performed a ritual summoning demons to enter his body. He then took a .44 magnum pistol and killed both of his sleeping parents because, as he told police, ‘they interfered with my religion’.”

Officer Wedge now presents seminars to policemen around the country on how to deal with the occult. He says, “It does not matter what you and I believe. It’s what they believe that makes them dangerous. **We might laugh, and you might think it’s funny, but it can cost you your life...**Police traditionally are trained to deal with things we can lay our hands on,” he said. “For the first time, we in law enforcement are dealing with something we can’t shoot at, can’t handcuff. And it is very dangerous.” (The Buffalo News)

In Deuteronomy 18:9-13, God says, “When thou are 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.**”

In the New Testament, God says, “Abstain from all appearance of evil” (I Thessalonians 5:22).

Please distinguish between human wisdom and godly counsel in this matter. Think seriously about the reasonableness of Christians participating in a holiday that has never had any other association than the celebration of evil. Do not even be concerned about providing an alternative. Many times, Christian alternatives to pagan ideas only serve to give attention to the pagan ideas and the intent of the alternative is lost.

As Christians, we do not observe, in any form, Hindu holidays, Buddhist holidays, Islamic holidays, etc. **Why should we give any recognition to a holiday that honors the enemy of Christ.** It is my conviction that no Christian home should be decorated for

Halloween, that no Christian children should go “trick-or-treating,” and that October 31 should be just another day on the calender for we who follow Christ.