

SOUTH HEIGHTS BAPTIST'S WEEKLY

REMINDER

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Number 43

HAPPY HALLOWEEN?

Pastor's Note: Every year, Christians ask the question (if they think of it), "WHAT'S WRONG WITH HALLOWEEN?" And, every year, pastors and church staff members spend time explaining the obvious to the oblivious. So, here is our annual explanation of the subject, for those who don't already know.



1. ORIGINS - October 31 was celebrated as a holiday long before the Christian era. It marked the end of the Celtic calendar year. The Eve of Samhain, Lord of the Dead, started a three day festival for the dead. On this night, the Celtic pagans (known as "Druids"): (1) Believed the Dead rose from the grave and wandered about; (2) Practiced divination and soothsaying; and that (3) Fairies, witches, and goblins harassed the people of the countryside.

The Samhain festival was also celebrated by dressing as evil spirits. The people roamed from house to house demanding food (treats) in exchange for the "spirits" leaving the home unharmed.

Roman Catholic Pope Gregory IV attempted to "Christianize" this holiday by calling the first day of this three day festival "All Saints Day." he hoped that the human and animal sacrifices would end by his doing so. They did not.

In the American Colonies, observance of Halloween was against the law. It reappeared after the inrush of Irish immigrants to the United States that followed in the wake of the great potato famine in Ireland in the 1800's.

Satanists and practicing witches take Halloween *very* seriously. Satanists believe that this is a day when Satan himself fellowships with his followers. In all likelihood, this is probably true. Human and animal sacrifices are demanded of them during this time. To them, it is a high holy day.

It seems that as our world sinks deeper into New Age paganism, this heathen, high holy day of the occult has zoomed nearly to the top of the holiday charts. Today, Halloween is the second most popular party night of the year (after December 31) for "baby-boomer" adults. These days, witches and Satanists are, of course, a small minority. Few people who celebrate the holiday in our day ever think about the darkness that underlies most Halloween practices.

A beaming child dressed in a black pointed hat and matching gown - with a wart carefully drawn on her nose and a trick-or-treat bag held tightly in her hand - is hardly thinking of death or the spirits of departed relatives. Nor should she be.

She's thinking of candy and fun. She's glowing because of her delight in her special costume. And she's anticipating the adventure of her house-to-house pilgrimage.

2. BUT WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

The Bible addresses the subject of Halloween and the practices it represents very specifically. In *Deuteronomy 18:10-12*, God specifically says, "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 (fortune telling), or an observer of times (horoscopes), or an enchanter (one who casts hypnotic trances), or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits (a medium - one who channels with spirits), or a wizard, or a necromancer (one who consults with the dead). For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD..."

3. BUT WHAT IS WRONG WITH ALLOWING THE CHILDREN A LITTLE HARMLESS FUN?

"It's just for the children," goes the rationalization. "we really just do it for them."

What our children practice they also learn from. Why would we want to introduce them to pagan falsehoods? How can we instill in them righteousness if we allow them to revel in ancient customs of evil on Halloween? How can we promote healthy, decent values while allowing them to don hideous masks of vile creatures or deformed humans - with the underlying themes of murder, mayhem, and death?

(continued inside)

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. *Admit that you are a sinner.*
2. *Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.*
3. *Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.*
4. *You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).*
5. *By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.*



Please Remember To Be Faithful To Give!

As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go *up*. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start *today* - OK? Thank you.

Church Directory

Todd W. White ----- Pastor
 Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist
 Dickie Eberle ----- Greeter, Custodian
 Shayne Hooper, Caryn Quinnelly, Todd W. White ----- S.S. Teachers
 Larry & Mary Byars, Brian & Charity Crawford,
 Dwayne English, Shayne Hooper ----- Outreach
 Flowers ----- Shirley White

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Shirley White
 Cradle Roll 2: Charity Crawford
 6:30 p.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Kristi Hooper
 Cradle Roll 2: Kelsey Gibson
 Wed. Evening Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: VOLUNTEER NEEDED!
 Cradle Roll 2: VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of September 23, 2012

Sunday School ----- 18
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 28
 Sunday Evening Service ----- 23
 Wednesday Evening Service, 09/26/12 ----- 15

Week of September 30, 2012

Sunday School ----- 16
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 31
 Sunday Evening Service ----- 16
 Wednesday Evening Service, 10/03/12 ----- 16

Week of October 7, 2012

Sunday School ----- 19
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 37
 Sunday Evening Service ----- 25
 Wednesday Evening Service, 10/10/12 ----- 21

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of September 23, 2012

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 853.00
 Insurance Fund ----- \$ 53.00
Total Received for Week of 09/23/12: \$ 906.00

Week of September 30, 2012

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 1,046.00
 Insurance Fund ----- \$ 53.00
Total Received for Week of 09/30/12: \$ 1,099.00

Week of October 7, 2012

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 1,319.45
 Insurance Fund ----- \$ 53.00
Total Received for Week of 10/07/12: \$ 1,372.45

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed to operate the church EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00

INSURANCE FUND REPORT FOR OCT., 2012:

Monthly Requirement ----- \$ 273.08
 Amount Received thusfar in October, 2012 ----- \$ 159.00
Amount Still Needed by Nov. 5, 2012: \$ 114.08



Can we live a lie? Can we mix the holy with the profane and expect to be blessed us? **"Learn not the way of the heathen!"** He thunders in **Jeremiah 10:2**. **"Come out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing!"** Paul writes in **II Corinthians 6:17**.

If our children dress as witches and sorcerers, if we hang cardboard ghosts in our windows, if we entertain with tales of ghouls and haunted houses - **what are we doing but imitating that which is evil** - something that God's Word clearly forbids us to do?

We need to make it clear as Christians that witches and evil spirits are **not** funny and are **not** harmless, even if the people in witch costumes are only play-acting.

During Halloween, little children in particular are the weak ones. On TV, in movies, in school, and with their playmates, many children today are exposed to occult influences. We open our children up to these influences if we approve of these things in Halloween fun.

We adults may be fully aware that we are only spoofing witches and ghosts, but the young many not be so sure.

If we have given our lives to Jesus Christ, then our eternal destiny is safe in the hands of Almighty God. But that's not true of most of the people around us.

There is a valid reason for most people to fear a "lord of death" - even if they don't take him seriously on Halloween. We who have found life in Jesus should be careful that our freedom in Him doesn't keep others from finding that same eternal life.

In Halloween there is a participation - not just in the date, but in the specific **FORMS** of the occultic enterprise. Virtually all the ghoulish kinds of things that happen on Halloween that we playfully celebrate with the particular forms **represent** something that is occultic and should be avoided.

One wonders why it is that many people in our culture simply do not take the occult seriously. If we spend one evening a year going out of our way to make fun and light of the occult. Then, when we ask someone about Satan, they think, "That's the guy with the red tights and the pitchfork." They don't realize that Satan is a real, powerful, spiritual force that interferes in the lives of people and nations. It's hard for someone to take him seriously when he is pictured in a lighthearted way.

The celebration of Halloween makes light of the occult, and results in causing the lost not to take Satan and his realm seriously, which is a dangerous thing.

4. **"BUT I'M NOT CELEBRATING SATAN!"**

Someone might say, "Well, I'm not carving up a pumpkin and putting a candle in it to ward off the evil spirits with the flame on that night. I don't believe they all

come out of their graves because winter is upon them and it pushes them out of the ground. I know better than that!"

True - **but the form is the same!** And the Bible says to, **"Abstain from all APPEARANCE of evil"** (I Thess. 5:22).

5. **"IF IT'S SO BAD, THEN WHY DO SO MANY CHRISTIANS PARTICIPATE IN HALLOWEEN?"**



The reason why so many professing Christians participate in Halloween is simple:

Spiritual ignorance, apathy, and listlessness (which are the spiritual roots of atheism and turning away from God) are running rampant in those who name the name of Christ today!

In today's society, one is continually urged to disregard the spiritual roots and origins of secular practices under the guise that he outward customs, practices and forms are cute, fun, entertaining, and harmless.

But, behind this attitude lies the dogma of atheism, which denies the existence of both God and Satan and can therefore conclude than these activities, despite their obvious pagan and idolatrous origin, are harmless and of no consequence. It is the doctrine of anti-Christ.

6. **"WHAT ARE WE TO DO?"**

True Christians must stand against this because we are taught by Christ that one day we will all give an account of every thought, word, and deed (II Cor. 5:11), and, therefore, everything we do is either for God or against Him.

The customs of Halloween are not innocent practices with no relationship to the spiritual world. But, rather, they are demonic practices - precisely as an examination of their origins prove.

Instead of adorning our homes with witches, scarecrows, hobgoblins, jack-o-lanterns, and such, we Christians are specifically commanded to be **DIFFERENT** from the rest of the people in the world.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean..." - II Corinthians 6:17

Philippians 4:8 says, **"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, THINK ON THESE THINGS."**

The Christian Is to Think on These PURE Things.

What is pure about witches, black cats,

jack-o-lanterns, skeletons, graveyards, monsters, coffins, ghosts, and such like? **NOTHING.**

Christians are ambassadors for Christ (II Cor. 5:20). As such, we are to always remember that each of us is the best Christian somebody knows. If they see us acting like they do - especially on a day that has so obviously retained its meaning, then why would they want the Christ that we say has changed us and made us a NEW creation?

May every member of our church who is truly saved take this matter seriously, and act appropriately.

"LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE BEFORE MEN, THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS, AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN" (MATT. 5:16).

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN WHAT IS RIGHT!

- Teach them that, as Christians, we celebrate Jesus Christ, not Satan and his un-holy day.**
- Tell them why your family will not be going trick-or-treating this year.**
- Pass out Christian tracts to children who come to your door Halloween night. Have plenty of tracts ready for them when they arrive.**
- Pray for every person you give a tract to Halloween night, and their families.**

Ten Reasons Christians Should Not Celebrate Halloween

Many in our secular society believe Halloween is nothing more than a harmless festival that allows kids to collect candy. But is it? Its origins lie deeply rooted in the occult, and Christians should stay away. Here are ten reasons why.

1. October 31st has long been known as "The Festival of the Dead." The Celtic tribes and their priests the Druids celebrated this day as a marker for the change from life to death.

2. Halloween today is performed usually by adherents of witchcraft who use the night for their rituals. Witches celebrate Halloween as the "Feast of Samhain," the first feast of the witchcraft year. Being a festival of the dead, Halloween is a time when witches attempt to communicate with the dead through

various forms of divination.

3. Christians should not be involved with occultic practice or divination. Note God's command against divination in **Deuteronomy 18**.

4. Occultists believe Halloween is a time of transition between life and death. Some occult practitioners practiced divination and believed you could learn the secrets of life and wisdom by lying on a grave and listening to the messages from the long-departed.

5. Occultists also taught that spirits and ghosts left the grave during this night and would seek out warmth in their previous homes. Villagers, fearful of the possibility of being visited by the ghosts of past occupants, would dress up in costumes to scare the spirits on their way. They would also leave food and other treats at their door to appease the spirits so they would not destroy their homes or crops but instead move on down the road. That is the real reason why kids dress up in costumes today and go door-to-door seeking treats.

6. Occultists also would try to scare away the spirits by carving a scary face into a pumpkin. This horrible visage would hopefully move the spirit on to another home or village and spare that home from destruction. Sometimes the villagers would light a candle and place it within the pumpkin and use it as a lantern (hence the name, Jack-o-Lantern). This is the origin of carving pumpkins at Halloween.

7. In some witchcraft covens, the closing ritual includes eating an apple or engaging in fertility rites. In the Bible (Genesis 3), eating a piece of fruit brought sin and death into the world. In witchcraft, eating an apple is symbolic of bringing life. The practice of bobbing for apples brings together two pagan traditions: divination and the fertility ritual.

8. Schools are removing any religious significance from Christmas (now often called Winter Break) and Easter (Spring Break). Isn't it ironic that most public schools still celebrate Halloween even though it has occultic (religious) origins?

9. Participating in Halloween gives sanction to a holiday that promotes witches, divination, haunted houses, and other occultic practices.

10. Christians should avoid Halloween. They should not endorse or promote Halloween!

- Kerby Anderson, author, broadcaster, CEO of Probe Ministries, a Christian think tank in Richardson, Texas



CHICK TRACTS AVAILABLE ON TABLE IN FOYER