

HALLOWEEN TRICK OR TREAT?

Halloween, first called All Hallows' Evening, was a holy (or hallowed) evening observed on October 31, the eve of All Saint's Day. It was a time for family in preparation of the feast on All Saints Day to honour all saints, known and unknown.

This date was also the eve of the New Year in both Celtic and Anglo-Saxon times and for one of the ancient fire festivals when huge bonfires were lit to frighten away evil spirits. The souls of the dead were supposed to revisit their homes on this day, and the autumn festival became sinister, with ghosts, witches, goblins and demons of all kinds said to be roaming about. It was the day thought to be the most favourable to invoke the help of the devil for the purpose of foreseeing the coming year concerning marriage, luck, health and death.

The pagan observances influenced the Christian festival of All Hallows' Eve, and gradually, Halloween became a secular observance and many customs and practices developed. Immigrants to the United States of America, introduced secular Halloween customs that became popular in the 19th Century.

What do you think about the pagan beliefs related to Halloween?
Do you think fires could frighten away evil spirits? Why/Why not?

Do you think we should try and foresee the year ahead?

“Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.” Phil 4:8

FROM SCRIPTURE

As Christians we believe that evil is a real, but defeated power and that Jesus is the Light of the world. Look up these scriptures and summarise their message:

John 8:12

Timothy 1:17

Romans 8:35-39

2 Timothy 1:7

I John 5:18

Matthew 5:13-14

LIFE APPLICATION

In recent years, Halloween celebrations on 31 October have become increasingly popular due to commercialism. What problems do you see with celebrating Halloween?

Are you surprised Halloween is the shortened name of All Hallows Eve which was originally a Christian celebration?

What suggestions do you have to change the image of Halloween as it is today, and make it a Christian celebration again?

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

You've been invited to a Halloween Party by a friend at school – it's a dress up party and sounds really cool. What should you do?

1. Pretend you've got something else on
2. Go, but dress up as Jesus, preach to everyone and hand out gospel tracts.
3. Go, but dress up as an angel or butterfly and pray everyone will 'get the message' that good is better
4. Explain to your friend you don't like celebrating Halloween and suggest you do something else.
5. Other

Consider each of these options and discuss their consequences. Use scripture to try and decide what Jesus would do.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

You're at home on Halloween, and a group of children come to the door in dress ups calling out 'Trick or Treat'. What should you do?

1. Hide and pretend no one is at home
2. Answer the door and give lollies only to children wearing 'nice' costumes
3. Answer the door and hand out gospel tracts
4. Pray with them and invite them all to Sunday School
5. Put a banner on the gate to scare away evil
6. Take their names and numbers and ring the parents to complain
7. Answer the door and smile at everyone and give away lots of lollies.
8. Other

Discuss the consequences of each of these options, and use scripture to try and decide what Jesus would do.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

John 8:12

"Jesus said, 'I am the Light of the world. He who comes to me shall not live in darkness, but have the light of life.'"

ACTIVITY

Your choice:

1. Colour in and make the little booklet on Halloween
2. Make a banner that summarises what Jesus might say on Halloween
3. Do the word find activity to find the secret message
4. Write out John 8:12 or Phil 4:8 on a card and give it to someone.
5. Write a report for the rally magazine, church newsletter or school on what Halloween is about and how a Christian should respond.
6. Talk in groups about things that scare you and how God can help you deal with these things.

PRAYER

Thank you Jesus that you came to earth and that your light is stronger than any darkness.

Thank you Jesus, that because of you I can confidently approach God and not be afraid of evil.

Thank you Jesus that you are always with me and want to surround me with your love, please help me to show others your love.

Lord, the Bible says that you are the Light of the world and that if I come to you I can walk in the light and live a new life. Please help me to do that.

Lord, thank you that we don't have to be afraid of evil, please help us to focus on good things, especially all You have done for us.

Lord, I know nothing can separate me from your love, thank you that you are more powerful than any bad thing.

*Wendy Reid
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