

Worship Service: 10am, 160 Paya Lebar Road, Orion@Paya Lebar #04-06, Singapore 409022
Sunday School: 11.45am, Prayer Meeting: 8pm Wednesday
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The Christian Perspective of Halloween

Introduction

It is coming to October again this year and the all important Protestant Reformation day on the 31 October, which is to be properly remembered by God's people, but is sadly neglected or forgotten by many Christians today. Instead, Halloween has taken center stage. It was featured in advertisements in the Straits Times and on many bill boards. It is celebrated in many countries today, including Singapore, by Christians and churches alike as a fun time for kids and adults. Major supermarkets are selling these wares and people are putting on evil looking wizards or witches' costumes, cauldrons, brooms, vampires apparel, skeletons, candles, amulets, tarot cards, voodoo dolls, spells, charms, chants and other activities in horror theme parties.

In some local kindergartens, child care centres, night spots and even some condominiums, events are organised for children to go door-to-door to get candy and play ghostly tricks on others. It is also notorious as a season of witches, imps, ghouls, goblins, ghosts and spirits that will come alive and haunt the earth. Sadly some, including less discerning Christians, see Halloween as just a harmless season of fun and not a ghastly and demonically inspired night to be avoided as commanded by the Lord (Leviticus 19:27-31, Deut 18:9-14). The Harry Potter series popularized this diabolical event as J. K. Rowling wrote favorably on it as the main character, Harry was involved with Halloween as well.

As Christians, should we allow our children and ourselves to have some fun and participate in Halloween? Is it alright to go trick-or-treating? Can we dress our homes or our kids up in skeletons and witches or diabolical costumes on that day for some malevolent fun? Let us discuss from a biblical perspective.

Halloween's Origins

Some information on the objective history of the event or celebration of Halloween will help here. The word Halloween is derived from the term "All Hallows Eve" which occurred on October 31, the end of summer in Northwestern Europe. "All Saints Day" or "All Hallows Day" was the next Day, November 1st. Therefore, Halloween is the eve of All Saints Day.

According to a source, the origins of Halloween can be traced back to ancient Ireland and Scotland. On October 31st, the Celts celebrated the end of summer. This was important because it was when animal herders would move their animals into barns and pens and prepare to ride out the winter. This was also the time of the crop harvests. This annual change of season and lifestyle was marked by a festival called Samhain - pronounced 'sow-ane' and means 'end of summer'. To commemorate the event, Druids built huge sacred bonfires, where the people gathered to burn crops and

animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities. During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, typically consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other's fortunes. When the celebration was over, they re-lit their hearth fires, which they had extinguished earlier that evening, from the sacred bonfire to help protect them during the coming winter (see <http://www.history.com/topics/halloween>)

There was much superstition associated with this season including the belief in the supernatural like the fairies, and that the spirits of the dead wandered around looking for bodies to inhabit. Since the living did not want to be possessed by spirits, they dressed up in costumes and paraded around, the HDB flats and condos making noises to confuse and frighten the spirits away. The new year began for the Celts on November 1. So, the day of Samhain was believed to be a day that was in neither the year past nor the year to come. Often, many would surprise one another as a result with ghostly tricks and treats.

Later, around the 5th century, as the Catholic Church developed and moved into the area, instead of adding a new day to celebrate, it took over the Samhain celebration. November 1st became "All Hallows Eve" where all the saints of the Catholic church were honored. A later custom developed where some would go door-to-door on November 2, requesting for food in exchange for the promise of saying prayers for some of the dead relatives of each house.

This arose out of the religious belief that the dead were in a state of limbo before they went to heaven or hell and that the prayers of the living could influence the outcome. This may have been the precursor to Trick-or Treat.

Halloween Superstitions

Halloween has always been a holiday filled with dark mystery, magic and superstition. It began as a Celtic end-of-summer festival during which people felt especially close to deceased relatives and friends. For these friendly spirits, they set places at the dinner table, left treats on doorsteps and along the side of the road and lit candles to help loved ones find their way back to the spirit world. Today's Halloween ghosts are often depicted as more fearsome and malevolent, and our customs and superstitions are scarier too. We avoid crossing paths with black cats, afraid that they might bring us bad luck. This idea has its roots in the middle ages when many people believed that witches avoided detection by turning themselves into cats. Many try not to walk under ladders for the same reason. This superstition may have come from the ancient Egyptians, who believed that triangles were sacred; it also may have something to do with the fact that walking under a leaning ladder tends to be fairly unsafe. And around Halloween, especially, we try to avoid breaking mirrors, stepping on cracks in the road or spilling salt (adapted from <http://www.history.com/topics/halloween>).

So, it appears that the origins of Halloween are a mixture of old Celtic pagan rituals, superstition and early Catholic traditions. As blood bought true believers set apart for Christ, we are to be separate and to have nothing to do with anything contrary to the biblical teachings of scriptures which clearly forbid the celebration of occultic events or practices (Leviticus 19:27-30, Deuteronomy 18; 9-14).

Obedience to the Word of God and Halloween

As Christians, we are interested in what the inspired word of God has to say to guide us in the straight and narrow way and concerning such occultic events as well like Halloween. The word of God warns us solemnly against dabbling in the supernatural or the occult, like consulting witches, the star gazers (including feng shui or geomancy) or astrologers or those who read horoscopes, spiritists or necromancers in consultation

with the dead, (i.e. Halloween has to do with the spirits of the dead) with mediums, bomohs and neo paganistic worship, that are prevalent today (Jeremiah 27:9).

John in Revelation 21:8 says, *'But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, **and sorcerers**, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.'*

Moses in Deuteronomy 18:10-12 warns, *"Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD..."*

The Word of God clearly admonishes us against occultic practices like necromancy, astrology, spirits consultation, and witches. God condemns not only the practice but also the [people](#) who are involved in it (Isaiah 47:12, 13, Jeremiah 27:9, Galatians 5:20 and Revelation 21:8).

As Christians, we are sanctified and set apart for and by God. We are to have nothing to do with the occult like Halloween, [tarot Cards](#), yoga, horoscopes astrology, contacting the dead, séances, lucky charms, talisman, amulets and diabolical supernatural powers. These are all anti biblical and diabolical and can harm a Christian's effective witness and fellowship with God and open the Christian to demonic oppression and even satanic entanglement for some (Philippians 5:1-5; James 4:7, 8). Most Christians should know this and make an effort to avoid all these unedifying activities (including our children). But some are still ensnared by these **ancient pagan connections and present occultic practices** (as seen in some churches and kindergartens and childcare centres who organized Halloween parties and trick and treats for the children) and need to be **delivered from this spiritual bondage and slavery of the evil one** (1Thessalonians 5:21, 22).

Biblical Separation and Holiness

The Christian is consecrated for God and he is holy and as commanded by our Lord (2 Corinthians 6:14-18, Leviticus 19:27-31, Jeremiah 27:9, Isaiah 47:12,13) is to be separated from evil and is not to be involved with or support the occult, witchcraft, demonism, or any other thing that uplifts the occult. **To do so is to contradict God's word, dabble in demonic spirits, and invite entanglement with satanic forces and judgment from God.** As the Halloween celebration has to do with malevolent games and evil practices, we are to take stand, warn and admonish others of its dangers and compromise.

On the other hand, some are willing to compromise and have said that it is not wrong to dress up in a costume and go door-to-door saying 'Trick or Treat'. It is just fun for the kids. The answer to that is found in 1 Corinthians 6:9-12 and 1 Corinthians 10:23, 31 which tells us all things are lawful but all things are not profitable nor expedient according to God's will for us. Halloween is neither edifying nor glorifying to God. This is a very clear matter. It is totally forbidden for us to participate in it. We are to obey the Lord and not satisfy our kids whims at the expense of God's holy word.

It is a proven historical fact that Halloween has pagan origins that are an abomination to God, therefore a Christian who wants to honour and please God should not follow the world in allowing our kids to dress up in malevolent costumes and go door-to-door for the fun of Halloween. On another note, for conscience's (not just yours but others as well) sake and our obedience to God, one should not as a Christian cause others to stumble by our approval or participation in it or tacit approval of it (1 Corinthians 8:13) but should warn them instead of its compromise and dangers.

Conclusion

The fallen and depraved world today is greatly influenced by the seduction of the occult and many are not aware of its grave perils to their souls eternally. It is like playing with fire or venomous snakes and scorpions and not knowing the serious consequences that they can have on us. The world of entertainment, night spots and even some churches and schools have become so desensitized to the subtle and insidious invasion of the occult and the diabolical holiday of Halloween that many secular (and even Christian) kindergartens and preschools have even embraced it as a fun time of parties and games for the children. **Even some Christian parents have unwittingly or knowingly embraced it and encouraged their children to participate in this malevolent entertainment as well.** 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 say that we should be separate from the world and spiritual corruption of the world.

Though some Halloween fans say the occasion is only harmless fantasy or fun, and Halloween is perceived as a child's fun holiday, many are oblivious that there is a darker side to it. It displeases and offends God when we rejoice in evil and entertain Satan and his devices. We need to pray for wisdom and courage to stand up to the pressures of friends, neighbours and even some school teachers, notwithstanding the fun and parties and costume selection for our children. Dutifully seek out the will of God and obey it. Honestly examine the issue before the holy and just God.

We should **educate our children and churches on the importance of remembering the 16th century Protestant Reformation (i.e. there is the Reformation video cum message in SHBPC on 12 Oct at 3 pm) instead as a biblical substitute** for this event and teach them about the reformers and their teachings and stand. We need to make a clear stand against it, before it adversely affects our children's spiritual well-being and our family, Christian school or church. **Believers are to be discerning and to separate ourselves from the compromise of sin and evil, for the devil is a roaring lion** seeking any that he may devour in these last days. We are not to be contaminated and compromised by promoting or participating in this diabolical celebration which is a serious affront and abomination to the most holy God (Lev19:27:31).

Let us heed this sober warning from his word, fear God, reflect on and take the advice of James seriously:

James 4:7-8: *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*

Jack Sin

(Works consulted include <https://answersingenesis.org/holidays/halloween-history-and-the-bible/> and "Day of the Dead," *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2008) and Wikipedia, "Day of the Dead and <http://www.bibleinfo.com/en/questions/it-wrong-celebrate-halloween> and <https://www.charismanews.com/opinion/52738-why-christians-absolutely-should-not-celebrate-halloween> and <https://standupforthetruth.com/2012/10/halloween-what-are-we-celebrating/>)



Pray for the newly elected deacons and co-labour with them



Thank God for 50 participants from 14 churches who attended the reformation seminar



Pray for the spiritual growth of Abishek who is in India for a month with this family



Thank God for the exemplary testimony of Mrs Lim (third from right) who has gone home to be with the Lord

Memory Verse

1 Thess 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

Announcements

1. Rev Jack Sin speaks next Sunday on “The Partnership in the Gospel” (1 Thes 3:1-13)
2. Weekly Prayer meeting will be held on Wednesday 8pm at the home of sis Han Kin Kheng
3. There will be the inaugural meeting of the Young Peoples Fellowship this Saturday 26 Oct at 3pm and Pastor will be sharing on the theme, Creation Science and the Bible. All are welcome.