

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **1Samuel 28:7-19**.
- B. Special days are a real part of Americana. The Xian needs to know how and how not to observe them.
- C. I have an article taken from *Pulpit Helps* which is quite informative on some of the traditions and historical events surrounding the celebration of Halloween.
- D. Today's lessons deals with some historical info, the effect of Roman Catholicism, some of the customs, and the Xian's response to Halloween.

## I. AN HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ABOUT HALLOWEEN.

- A. The Druid religion was that of Celts. This religion is little known but has very strong ties to the beginnings of Halloween.
- B. To the Celts, New Year is Nov. 1st, and they had special festivals for that day. It was the beginning of their religious year. It was their belief that the Lord of Death would call together the spirits of all the dead on Oct. 31st.
- C. The Druids called Nov. 1st, All Saints Day (by the 9th C.), and Nov. 2, All Souls Day (by the 11th C.). Therefore, Halloween traditions come from beliefs about evil things, sinful souls, and death.

## II. THE MEDIEVAL INFLUENCE OF ROMAN CATHOLICISM.

- A. In 601AD, Pope Gregory I (no relation!), appeased the pagan rituals of Halloween and All Saints Day, by issuing an edict in favor of the traditions, practices, and beliefs of the Druids. All Saints Day and All Souls Day were to be adopted as "holy days."
- B. Roman Catholicism is not to be blamed for all the modern practices of Halloween, but their acceptance of pagan rituals and observances is not in keeping with the spirit of Xianity.
- C. Many traditions have come about because of the observance of Halloween. In Europe, it was believed that elves, fairies, and witches would fly around on Halloween, so camp fires were lit to ward off the evil spirits.
- D. Other traditions surrounding these evil elves, fairies, and witches were to try and appease these spirits by feeding them. People would leave food outside their doors and hope that no evil would come to their lives. It is from such a practice that we have our modern day trick-or-treating.
- E. In Ireland, it is believed that on Halloween the evil spirits played tricks on people whether they were fed or not. Unfortunately, this tradition has degenerated into many doing great damage to personal property.
- F. The jack-o-lantern was originally a turnip. In America, it became the pumpkin and has quite a story behind it. More on this later.

## III. SOME HALLOWEEN CUSTOMS.

- A. We have already mentioned the customs of trick-or-treating and destroying property.
- B. The jack-o-lantern has an interesting history:
  - 1. A blacksmith named Jack sold his soul to the devil in exchange for becoming the very best blacksmith for seven years.
  - 2. Jack placed a sign at his shop that read, "Here lies the Master of Masters."
  - 3. JC and Peter visit Jack, disturbed by the sign; Jesus does some miracles to no avail, but Jack does accept 3 wishes from Peter.
  - 4. But Jack does not wish for eternal life, rather, that someone gets stuck in his pear tree, in an arm chair, and in his coin purse.
  - 5. After seven years the devil returns for Jack but is tricked three times--ending up in the pear tree,

- then in the arm chair, and finally in the coin purse. Jack is granted seven more years in exchange for the devil's freedom.
6. After having outwitted JC, Peter, and devil--death comes to Jack but no one wants him. He is not allowed into heaven due to his refusal to accept X, and is thrown down to hell.
  7. But Satan doesn't want Jack either, still mad at being held captive three times. As the gates of hell close against him, Jack takes a burning coal from the lake of fire, and places it in a turnip.
  8. With this burning coal in a turnip, Jack uses it as a lantern (a Jack-o-lantern) as he roams the earth as a departed spirit waiting for the judgment.
- D. Therefore, the jack-o-lantern is a light used to show departed spirits the way as they roam the earth on Halloween night.
  - E. The witch is also characteristic of Halloween. Witches are beings that get their powers from the devil (so tradition says). In the 10th C., they were thought to be cannibals, eating babies' flesh, and making potions of obscene and blasphemous materials.
  - F. The Bible mentions witchcraft as something to stay away from. It does not work (Deut. 18:9-13; 1Sam. 28:7-19).
  - G. Other Halloween customs include:
    1. Apple peelings thrown over the shoulder will spell the initials of one's spouse.
    2. The burning of nuts in a fire, will bring ashes and these ashes are used to spell the initials of one's future spouse.
    3. The throwing of a ball of yarn into a barn, house, or cellar at midnight (on Halloween) and the saying of some secret words, and your future spouse will appear that night.
  - H. Of course, Xians need to remember that the Bible is how we discern God's will for our lives. It tells us all the future we need to know (2Tim. 3:16-17).

#### IV. THE XIAN'S RESPONSE TO HALLOWEEN.

- A. As with any "holiday" that Americans observe there are some good things that may be enjoyed and some things to be avoided.
- B. May we consider the following:
  1. In the Xian age there are no special days other than the Lord's Day (Gal. 4:10-11; Col. 2:16-17).  
**(Gal 4:10-11)** You observe days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.  
**(Col 2:16-17)** Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day--things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.
  2. To violate one's conscience is sin, and we do not want others to sin (Rom. 14:23; 1Cor. 8:13).  
**(Rom 14:23)** But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.  
**(1Cor 8:13)** Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, that I might not cause my brother to stumble.
  3. The practice of witchcraft (wicca) is condemned by the Bible as practiced today, and glorified on Halloween. It is anti-God, anti-sin, and anti-eternal punishment (Ac. 19:19; Gal. 5:20; Rev. 21:8).  
**(Ac 19:19)** And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of all; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.  
**(Gal 5:20)** idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife,...  
**(Rev21:8)** But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.
  4. The practice of Satanism and devil worship is condemned by the Bible as practiced today, and glorified on Halloween. It is anti-God, anti-sin, and anti-eternal punishment (Rev. 12:9).  
**And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.**
  5. Superstitions hinder the progress of the truth. Even if you use the legends and customs of Halloween as meaningless and powerless superstitions, be careful with such practices because

Xians are not to have anything to do w/myths, and fables (1Tim. 1:4; 4:7; Ac. 17:22; Jn. 8:31). (1Tim 1:4) nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.

(1Tim 4:7) But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;

(Ac 17:22) And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects.

(Jn. 8:31) Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;

6. Destructive practices do not promote X. To soap windows, T.P. trees, and other such pranks cannot be done in the name of Jesus. Would Jesus deal in fright and terror? (Col. 3:17). And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

### CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. The practice of Halloween is neither approved nor condemned in the NT.
- B. Each Xian should decide how to observe this day, even if at all (Rom. 14:5-7).  
One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God. For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself;
- C. If we choose to esteem a day as being special, be sure it is done unto the glory of God. How cannot that be done with Halloween?
- D. Ghosts, goblins, elves, and faries are not real but SATAN IS!
- E. Making Halloween safe and fun is difficult, but let us be very alert to the needs of our children and others. Be sure your children know that these things of the occult are believed by many but are not real.
- F. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.