



Decisions to Make

Halloween

[La Vista church of Christ](#)

By Jeffrey W. Hamilton

IN MATTHEW 5:14-16, JESUS tells his audience that we are to be lights that shine forth in a dark world. Letting our lights shine lets the world see what it is like to be a follower of God. Paul said we hold out the light of the gospel to a lost and dying world (**Philippians 2:15-16**).

To reflect God's glory properly, we must walk as children of light (**Ephesians 2:8**). We need to be careful that our action does not to smudge

God's reputation. Christians can't just participate in any activity and conclude that it will do no lasting harm. Our actions affect the reputation of every other Christian, plus God's and our own reputation.

I bring this up to discuss the holiday that falls at the end of the month of October. I have been asked a few times about what I think about Halloween; especially whether we should let our children participate in the celebration of Halloween. Now, I readily admit that I am not the final source on this matter and I don't expect this small article to settle the problem in everyone's mind. However, I would like to present some information that

each should consider while deciding for their own family.

Halloween originated as the Druids' autumn festival in olden England. The holiday honored Samhain, lord of the dead. The Celts believed that Samhain called all the wicked souls, who had been condemned within the last year to live in bodies on the last day of October. He released these wicked souls in forms of spirits, ghosts, fairies, witches, and elves. Huge bonfires were lit to guide the way of these spirits and various sacrifices were done on October 31 to assure a good coming year.

When the Catholic church moved into England, it sought to counter the various pagan beliefs by giving the converted pagans alternative practices. To counter Samhain's feast day, it created a holiday known as "All Saints Day" or "All Hallowed Day." It was a day to venerate the good people who had died. The holiday was placed on November 1. Soon, October 31

became known as "All Hallowed Day Eve" and the name was eventually shortened to "Halloween."

Despite the intentions of the Catholic church, the festival that took place on Halloween remained popular with the common people. Many customs of this festival remain with us today.

October 31 is still believed, by those who practice witchcraft, to be a special day when evil powers are at their greatest potential. Many Satanists hold special rites on this day.

Even among common people, who give no thought to Druids

or Satan worship, various customs keep the memory of the festival of Samhain alive. As children go from house to house, they are encouraged to yell "Trick or Treat" at each doorstep. In ancient England, children would act out the part of the evil spirits that Samhain released on the world. These



**“As we shine
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spirits would have to be appeased with treats. If the children did not receive a treat, they would perform an unwelcomed trick. The shadow of this practice continues today. Children dress up as various creatures, especially ghoulish ones, and demand treats at neighborhood homes.

The question that Christians need to answer is whether there is any harm in celebrating Halloween. After all, few children know the history of the holiday or what their actions represent. To them, it is just a day when they get tons of candy just for the asking. On the other hand, many things associated with Halloween are things that society holds as evil: darkness, witches, evil spirits, and even death. Should Christians connect themselves to these practices? Paul tells us in **I Corinthians 6:14-22** that righteousness is not to be associated with evil. Consider the actions of the older children, who are too big to ask for candy. They often roam the neighborhoods playing pranks as the children in old England once did. Houses are egged, lawns are rolled with toilet

paper, and sometimes even more serious damage is done. I think all of us would agree that these are definitely things our children should not be involved in or associated with.

Whether our younger children should participate as well is something that each family must decide for themselves. Some will object to any association with Halloween. Some will treat it solely as a child's holiday, though they will draw the line at dressing up in ghoulish costumes. Still others find no harm in the imaginary play of things that do not exist.

Be sensitive, my brothers, to the decisions and beliefs of your fellow Christians. Consider your options carefully, but respect the decision of your brethren. Remember the warning in **Romans 14:10-13** and resolve not to cause a brother to stumble.