

# HALLOWEEN—

## Do YOU Know the Truth?

Costumes, carved pumpkins and “trick or treating.” Many participate in Halloween—an American and English tradition. But is this day truly hallowed? Where did it originate?

ACG Staff

Canvassing the neighborhood, costumed as ghosts, monsters, fairies, vampires and superheroes, shouting “trick or treat!” and watching their bags fill up with all kinds of goodies. The typical childhood American tradition on October 31. A distinguished yearly event—over \$5 billion in annual spend on Halloween since 2005!

Is Halloween just another childhood tolerance? Much the way Christmas and birthday parties are viewed, “they are just having fun.” Right? “Trick or Treat”, or in other words, “give me a treat or I’ll play a trick on you” teaches children that it is okay to beg for something instead of working for it. This quasi-Christian holiday may look clean on the surface, however, its customs and practices are rooted in a past that prove otherwise.

This article will provide the TRUTH of Halloween: where it came from, it’s origin, how it became so widely observed and how the God of the Bible views this day!

### The Origin of Halloween

The customs of this evening began in Northern and Western Europe with the Celtic people. This area is now known today to be Ireland, Great Britain and Northern France. The Celts were pagan nature worshippers (Druidism) and all their main festivals related to the sun’s progress throughout the year. There were four main points

throughout the year: spring and autumn equinoxes and winter and summer solstices.

The end of harvest and summer—the season of the sun; was observed as a new year by the Celts. This time also marked the beginning of the cold and dark winter months—the season of cold and darkness. This was observed as Samhain (pronounced sow-in), beginning on October 31 and ending on November 2, a 48-hour festival.

Samhain — “summer’s end” — designated both the name of the “Lord of Death” and a time of year. *The Encyclopedia Britannica* says the following:

*“Samhain (Celtic: ‘End of Summer’), one of the most important and sinister calendar festivals of the Celtic year. At Samhain, held on November 1, the world of the gods was believed to be made visible to mankind, and the gods played many tricks on their mortal worshippers; it was a time fraught with danger, charged with fear, and full of supernatural episodes. Sacrifices and propitiations of every kind were thought to be vital, for without them the Celts believed they could not prevail over the perils of the season or counteract the activities of the deities. Samhain was an important precursor to Halloween.”*

The Celts believed that Samhain gathered the souls of those that died the year prior and chose what

form they would take the following year. These souls would either pass on to human bodies or be condemned to live within animals (the most evil of souls or spirits were in the form of black cats). Gifts and prayers were given to Samhain, the lord of the dead, in an effort to bribe for lighter sentences.

The Druids observed Samhain with many customs that relate to today. They would light massive bonfires and tell of supernatural sightings and sounds they encountered. Today many, on Halloween, continue this pagan tradition by telling ghost stories. Such stories pointing back to the pagan beliefs that the souls of good people enter other human beings at death, and the souls of evil people enter the bodies of animals.

### The Lord of the Dead— Who was He?

Samhain was also named the lord of death or the lord of the dead. Again, the Celts believed that souls were set free from the land of the dead during the eve of Samhain and that the lord of the dead released these souls and sent them to their new physical incarnations. The wearing of costumes signified this release into the physical world.

In the book of Hebrews, Paul spoke of “him that had the power of death, that is the devil” (Heb. 2:14). Here we see that Satan was the master or lord of the dead! The Druids and Celts served Samhain—Satan. Even today

many people throughout the world will celebrate, with scampering fun, a demented night in honor of the devil. Those that thought they were worshipping the true God were actually serving demonic spirits (Gal. 4:8).

It will be of great value to understand who became the lord or master of the dead *after* Satan. While interacting with the Sadducees, Jesus answered a question about the resurrection. His answer proved that there would be a resurrection from the dead: “But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living” (Mat. 22:31-32).

Take note of Jesus’ simple answer. God is only the God of the living— why?—because the dead serve not the Lord (Psalms 6:5; 115:17). Since the patriarchs are dead, then there must be a resurrection of the dead in order to live again and serve God.

So as we see, a resurrection will occur and in order to make this possible “Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living” (Rom. 14:9). Jesus gained the keys of the grave and death through His resurrection and became master and lord of the dead (Rev. 1:18). He will soon resurrect the dead back to life so they may live to serve Him and God the Father!

### **Further Influence from the Romans**

Although the Celtic civilization was destroyed when the Romans invaded Northern and Western

Europe, its beliefs and customs survived and *blended* with the traditions of the Romans.

Feralia, which was held on February 21, was a Roman holiday designed to honor the dead with much drunkenness and orgies, a day unlike any other Roman holiday.

New customs were heavily influenced from certain Roman feasts, such as Pomona Day (celebrated on the eve of November 1).

Pomona was the goddess of fruits and during the Halloween season people would eat apples (Pomona’s sacred symbol) to drive away evil spirits. Another tradition or belief was that if a girl ate an apple in front of the mirror she would have the power to see a facial image of her future husband.

Over the next three centuries, the customs of Samhain become completely mixed with the practices of Pomona Day and Feralia.

But another movement immersed in north-western Europe, *Christianity*. A natural assumption would be that the Christian religion would have eradicated all remnants of *paganism*. A practice later sanctioned by the Catholic Church!

### **The Catholic Church and Its Power**

For quite some time—a period of almost three centuries—the Roman Empire banned any form of Christianity. In A.D. 313, The Roman Catholic Church found favor in the sight of Emperor Constantine. For the very first time in Roman history, the pope was backed with *ironclad* civil authority and was granted the power to freely determine what

was “Christian” — and what was not.

This *professing* Christian church believed that those who lived an “exceptional” life and did good deeds were considered and recognized as “saints” (yet the Bible shows that every true Christian is a saint). Some of these saints were martyrs. Each well-known saint or martyr was given a special day to honor and remember their works, however, this number grew and eventually became one day in the year.

*“In the fourth century, neighboring dioceses began to interchange feasts, to transfer relics, to divide them, and to join in a common feast; as is shown by the invitation of St. Basil of Caesarea (A.D. 397) to the bishops of the province of Pontus. Frequently groups of martyrs suffered on the same day, which naturally led to a joint commemoration... [T]he number of martyrs became so great that a separate day could not be assigned to each. But the Church, feeling that every martyr should be venerated, appointed a common day for all” (Catholic Encyclopedia).*

The Catholic Church recognized its authority even more, yet more importantly desired more converts, so as an excuse to honor the dead they changed Feralia to be “Christian.” Instead of honoring *all* of the dead, they would simply venerate the dead saints. The date of Feralia was moved from February 21 to May 13.

Shortly thereafter, Pope Boniface IV received the temple of the Roman pantheon of the gods as a fief from the Emperor in or around the year A.D. 610. He dedicated it to the Virgin Mary and all the martyrs on May 13. This is

supposedly the first official date of All Saints' Day (or Feast of All Saints).

May 13 was eventually changed to November 1. Notice this in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* which states: "Gregory III (731-741) consecrated a chapel in the Basilica of Saint Peter to all the saints and fixed the anniversary for November 1".

Furthermore: "A basilica of the Apostles already existed in Rome, and its dedication was annually remembered on May 1. Gregory IV (827-844) extended the celebration on November 1 to the entire Church. The vigil seems to have been held as early as the feast itself" (Ibid.).

So Feast of All Saints or All Saints' Day became known as All Hallows Day and the eve of November 1 (All Hallows Day) was All Hallows Eve.

### **All Hallows Eve and All Souls' Day**

With All Hallows Eve celebrated on October 31, it is of no question that Halloween comes from the Eve of All Hallows. Although Halloween was considered a "Christian" term, it is *absolutely* celebrated in a pagan manner.

In the late 10th century, the Catholic Church introduced yet another day that is connected to Halloween. This day was glossed-over as All Souls' Day. It was instituted by St. Odillo, abbot of the Cluny monastery to memorialize "all the faithful departed, those baptized Christians who are believed to be in purgatory because they have died with guilt of lesser sins on their souls. It is celebrated on November 2. Roman Catholic doctrine holds that the prayers of

*the faithful on earth will help cleanse these souls in order to fit them for the vision of God in heaven...The date, which became practically universal before the end of the 13th century, was chosen to follow All Saints' Day. Having celebrated the feast (All Saints' Day) of all the members of the church who are believed to be in heaven, the church on earth turns, on the next day, to commemorate those souls believed to be suffering in purgatory"*

(*Encyclopedia Britannica*).

All souls were now recognized, by the Catholic Church—a separate day of worship.

The Catholic believers celebrated with huge bonfires and costumes, masquerading as angels, demons and dead saints. Sounds familiar? Recall earlier the customs of the Druids!

Nevertheless, All Saints' Eve (October 31), All Saints' Day (November 1), and All Souls' Day (November 2) combined into Halloween—emulating the Celtic Vigil of Samhain!

### **Pagan Customs Entering America**

It is worth noting that most of these customs heavily infiltrated the American society. 1846 was the year of Ireland's potato famine. Millions of Irish settlers immigrated the U.S. after fleeing this devastating famine. The biggest influence in America came from Ireland. A country drenched in the customs and practices of their ancestors, the Celts! Very soon, Halloween was declared a secular holiday—along with its festivities: parades, parties, mischief, treats and costumes.

According to: <http://www.history.com>, "Taking from Irish and English

traditions, Americans began to dress up in costumes and go house to house asking for food or money, a practice that eventually became today's "trick-or-treat" tradition. Young women believed that on Halloween they could divine the name or appearance of their future husband by doing tricks with yarn, apple parings or mirrors."

### **Worshipping the Creator— Not the Creation!**

In light of Halloween's historical pagan origin, can you honestly view this day as some innocent time to have fun with your children? As today's Halloween customs (tricks, mischievous pranks, parties, dressing up as witches and monsters, parades, bonfires and black cats) point directly back to paganism and Samhain, the false lord of the dead, should we truly follow suit?

When you understand the origin of these traditions it leads you to question the validity. The originators chose to worship the creation as opposed to the *Creator*—who created nature and all that surrounds it!

The root cause has always been the same: "for although they knew God they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the [eternal] God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the

[creation] rather than the Creator.” (Rom. 1:21-25, RSV).

God’s viewpoint has always been to seek and trust Him! (Read: 1 Chron. 22:19; Psalm 14:2; Isaiah 55:6-7.)

### **How God Sees It!**

As you reason with yourself, you may argue, “Wait a minute, I nor my family worship the sun or pray to some pagan ‘lord of the dead.’ Halloween is celebrated just to have a little fun. How could that be wrong?”

Notice what God says! “Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain” (Jer. 10:2-3, KJV).

The Israelites, God’s desired model nation, was commanded not to defile themselves with the

customs, traditions, beliefs and practices of surrounding nations (Lev. 18:3, 24- 29). But rather to keep His ordinances! “Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that you do not commit any of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I am the LORD your God” (Lev. 18:30).

God desired for them to be happy, produce peace and prosperity—the abundant life that He wants to share with all of mankind (John 10:10). A life that can only be fully fulfilled when God’s laws are kept (Lev. 26:3-13).

God warned time and again, yet, because of their spiritual adultery and affinity for pagan traditions, calling them holy when God calls them profane (Ezek. 22:26), He had no choice but to punish Israel (Lev. 26:14-39, most of this yet to be fulfilled).

Sadly, the modern-day descendants of Israel—United States, Britain, Canada, Australia and others will be reminded of God’s promised cursing through soon and swift punishment (Jer. 30:4-7; Ezek. 24:13-14).

To learn more about the true identity of Israel, you may read the book: [The United States and Britain in Prophecy](#).

Halloween as with all pagan practices is punctured with lies and deceit! The ultimate perpetrator who deceives and lie—in an attempt to call evil good and separate man from the true God—is Satan the devil, the god of this world. (II Cor. 4:4; Rev. 12:9; II Cor. 11:14-15)

Who will you follow? Now that you have been given this eye-opening truth, it’s up to you to act on it. The choice is yours! □