



"The greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he does not exist."

—Charles Baudelaire

31-Oct-08

The Glorification of Evil

Sunset on October 31 marks the beginning of All Hallow's Even, better known as [Halloween](#), the beginning of All Hallows (or Saints') Day. Many of our readers are already well familiar with the origins of this pagan celebration—a Celtic harvest festival that included spiritism and superstitious rituals, later co-opted by the Roman Catholic Church and joined with its celebration of All Saints' Day. The origins of this now-"Christian" holiday are easily researched, so they will not be detailed here. Most of those who celebrate this time see it as just a bit of harmless fun, a chance for the kiddies to be creative and stock up on candy, and for the adults to let loose and perhaps take on another identity.

Yet underneath it all, Halloween is a glorification of evil. The central figure in this celebration of the dead—recognized or not—is [Satan](#) the Devil. Not only is he named "the evil one," and his demons called "evil spirits," but the Bible also calls him "the ruler of this world" ([John 12:31](#); [14:30](#); [16:11](#)), who has "deceived the whole world" ([Revelation 12:9](#)). Since this world misunderstands *life*, it is no surprise that it also misunderstands *death* and what happens after it, believing in an unholy mixture of pagan philosophies and traditions of deceived men. The Bible strongly refutes the common understanding of heaven, [hell](#), purgatory, limbo, and the immortal souls of the departed, yet Satan's deception is complete enough *at this time* that few grasp or even bother to look into what this life is about or what the next life will be like.

CGG Weekly: The Glorification of Evil (31-Oct-08)

[God](#) did not create life just because He had nothing better to do with His eternity. God and the Word had a specific purpose for this creation of a species in their own image ([Genesis 1:26](#); [John 1:1-3](#)). Paul writes in [Ephesians 3:14-15](#), "For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord [Jesus Christ](#), from whom *the whole family in heaven and earth is named*" (emphasis ours throughout). He tells us in [Galatians 3:26](#), "For you are all *sons of God* through [faith](#) in Christ Jesus" (see also [Romans 8:14](#), 19; [Galatians 4:6](#)).

The apostle John similarly writes:

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called *children of God*! Therefore [the world](#) does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, *now we are children of God*; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that *when He is revealed, we shall be like Him*, for we shall see Him as He is. ([I John 3:1-2](#))

Finally, Asaph writes, "I said, 'You are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High'" ([Psalm 82:6](#); this is quoted by Jesus in [John 10:34-37](#)). Plainly, God is a *Family*—the terms "Father" and "Elder Brother" are not merely rhetorical devices or fancy speech! That Family presently consists of the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ, in heaven, and those on earth whom God has begotten through faith in Christ and the receipt of His Spirit.

What does this have to do with Halloween, Satan, and evil? Evil is the very antithesis of the eternal life that comes from knowing the Father and the Son ([John 17:3](#)). At the very beginning of the Book, mankind had to choose between *life* and the knowledge of good and *evil*—and he did not choose life! Witness the sorry record humanity has written ever since.

We do not hear much about evil these days, except perhaps in the titles of Hollywood productions and video games, so it is worth considering its basic meaning. In its common usage, it always describes something bad or negative. Yet, it is not just bad in the sense that a snowstorm or an accident may be bad. *Evil* contains within it malignancy—something that is purposefully injurious or intentionally unkind. It is not merely unpleasant; it is miserable by design. With regard to human behavior, perhaps author M. Scott Peck, M.D. (*The Road Less Travelled; People of the Lie*) describes it best as "that which does harm to life or liveliness."

Clearly, *evil* is not something Christians should choose to be associated with, let alone glorify, for "the face of LORD is against those who do evil" ([I Peter 3:12](#); [Psalm 34:12-16](#)).

Paul raises the bar even higher with his exhortation to "abstain from every form of evil" ([I Thessalonians 5:22](#))—from everything that is against life and especially eternal life!

It is evident that the rituals of Halloween, ancient and modern, do not promote life, but revel in the realm of trickery, sorcery, spiritism, and the many dark ways of the evil one. Christians should *not* be involved with such things. As Paul told the often-wayward Corinthians, "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons" ([I Corinthians 10:21](#)).

Just like Adam, we have to choose between life and evil; they are mutually exclusive. Jesus foretells a future resurrection, in which all will be divided into two groups that represent what they chose during their lifetimes:

. . . for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done *good*, to the resurrection of *life*, and those who have done *evil*, to the resurrection of *condemnation*. ([John 5:28-29](#))

Eschewing the evil of Halloween is the easy part. The far greater challenge is to combat the evil that resides inside us ([Mark 7:20-23](#))—evil that is promoted by Satan, evil that reached out in the Garden of Eden, and has permeated the world ever since. It is seen in the way *we* do harm to life or liveliness *in others*—in cutting words, in deception, in attempts to manipulate, in self-centeredness that wounds those who encounter it, and in countless other ways. The manifestations of evil in mankind seem to be limited only by the length of his days.

However, those in whom God dwells have the means "not [to] be overcome by evil, but [to] overcome evil with good" ([Romans 12:21](#)). The means is the eternal life available through our relationship with God. Eternal life is not merely length of days, but length of days *without evil*—that is, life of the highest quality, life as God lived it while a human. When we emulate the Life-giver, we *are* choosing life—and condemning evil.

- David C. Grabbe

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Satan \(Part 1\)](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

John Ritenbaugh explains the origins of our foremost adversary, Satan the Devil, and his host of fallen angels or demons (Revelation 12:3-12; Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-19). In our precarious situation of sharing a prison cell with these formidable wicked spirits, we need to take heart in: 1) the tremendous numerical advantage of the good over the evil angels; 2) the hopeless division in the demon world, preventing them from "getting their act together"; 3) as with Job, God has set limits on Satan's ability to harass us (Job 2:6); and 4) God has provided us with adequate spiritual armor to withstand the wiles of the Devil (Ephesians 6:10-12). Even though with our own limited strength, we could be easily annihilated, God has promised us protection if we yield to Him and keep His commandments.

From the Archives: Featured Article

Halloween

by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

Halloween has become the second-most popular holiday on the calendar in recent years—even to the point that Christian churches sponsor parties on it. Richard Ritenbaugh shows, however, that this night of ghouls not only lacks biblical foundation, but the Bible warns us against participating in such activities.

If you would like to subscribe to the C.G.G. Weekly newsletter, please visit our [Email Subscriptions page](#).
