

Halloween

The Most Un-Christian Holiday

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Every year it seems we come home from the Feast exhilarated and rejuvenated from our eight days of both physical and spiritual fulfillment. Yet in the back of our minds we experience a feeling of dread, or at least a feeling of resignation.

You may think that this feeling comes because we know that we have to experience one more year of this world before we can all come back together again in one place. Surely that's only one part of it. The other part of this illusive dreadful feeling—this feeling of unease—is that we must begin to endure another holiday season from Halloween to New Year's Day, and even beyond.

It used to be that we had a little bit of a break between the Feast of Tabernacles and the annoyances of the Christmas season. We had time to prepare ourselves for it, to brace ourselves against the onslaught of incessant "Jingle Bells" and "Silent Night," which is the worse one. Maybe "The Little Drummer Boy" is even worse than that. It gets into your head and you can never get it out. It takes till at least March until you're normal again.

There is not only that, but there are constant advertisements on the radio, on billboards, and in magazines. It's everywhere. It's in movies that come out around that time. There are decorations and well-wishers from the checker at the grocery stores who says "Merry Christmas," and you wonder how are you quite supposed to answer that wish of good cheer. Manger scenes and everything like that are there.

In the past we could ignore Halloween, enjoy Thanksgiving, and then worry about Christmas and New Year's—but not anymore. Lately people are making quite a bit out of Halloween. Decorations and that sort of thing have been going up earlier and earlier every year.

For instance, Hallmark, the greeting card company—the one who steals all of our money when we want to say something nice to someone else far away—recently developed a line of Halloween and Thanksgiving décor. Not only that, but other items and cards. You go into a Hallmark store and they just deluge you with gifts and things that they design for these times of the year.

I want to quote here from the San Jose Mercury News, on October 23, 1998 about this

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line of Halloween and Thanksgiving décor items.

The underlying marketing strategy is to use Halloween as the kick-off of our rolling holiday season that has an autumnal mood filled with images of Americana. The National Retail Federation projects that, industry-wide, 50 million Halloween cards will be sold this year.

That's about seventy-five cents, or \$2.25 or whatever per card, unless you go to Win-Dixie where you can get them for 20% off every day. That's a local joke for those people around here.

Somewhere between 65% to 70% of adults plan to participate in Halloween activities this year, including wearing a costume. In 1996, 78% of households distributed treats to an average of 37 "trick or treaters," and 58% of children have caught adults stealing their candy. At least one-third of children hide their candy from others, because they found adults stealing their candy. And sadly, despite their best intentions, 7% of children eat all their candy on the first night.

Well, there's more! As a party day, Halloween is third behind Christmas, obviously, and Super Bowl Sunday. And bottlers (people who sell alcoholic beverages mainly, and also sell soft drinks) sell more beer around Halloween than around Saint Patrick's Day when the beer flows like water.

As far as retail sales go, Halloween is second only to Christmas. I bet you didn't know that, did you? This year a conservative estimate is that Americans will spend \$3 billion on Halloween items and activities. Today I heard an updated stat on that which said it was \$3.3 billion. As much as \$1.8 billion of this \$3 billion goes to buy candy, and \$1 billion is spent on costumes. All the other decorations and things make up the other hundreds of millions of dollars. The average household will spend an average of \$81 apiece on Halloween. Most of this is spent on candy and decorations. I heard that up to \$50 a house will be spent on decorations alone.

Because today is October 31—Halloween, which is also called All Hallows Eve, or All Saints Eve—I thought I would speak on Halloween, this witches' sabbat that defiles God's holy Sabbath, which is today. This would be "meat in due season" if we refresh ourselves on why Christians should not observe this most un-Christian of holidays.

Still recognized is the greed, the envy, the keeping up with the Joneses, and the rank consumerism that infests each worldly holiday. Halloween however, which is almost

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impossible to miss because it's glared at us all the time, is combined with out-and-out paganism, spiritism, vandalism, hedonism, and demonism, in an eerie, spooky and playfully horrific mix. It's a mix that human nature takes great pleasure in. It appeals to human nature for some reason, and a growing number of people say that it is their favorite holiday of the year. It's catching up with Christmas in a big way.

Before we go into Halloween's origin, let's start in the Bible in Jeremiah 10 to lay the groundwork of a few principles that we need going in here. We'll read the first five verses of Jeremiah 10. The context of this is idolatry, and what the heathen do.

Jeremiah 10:1 Hear the word which the LOORD speaks to you, O house of Israel.

This is interesting, because much of the origins of our Halloween come from the Celtic people, which as we know are Israelites.

Jeremiah 10:2-5 Thus says the LOORD: Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; Do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the Gentiles are dismayed at them, for the customs of the people are futile [vanity, vain, worthless]; for one cuts a tree from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They decorate it with silver and gold; they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it will not topple. They are upright, like a palm tree, and they cannot speak; They must be carried because they cannot go by themselves. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, nor can they do any good.

Notice that he says, "Don't learn the way of the Gentiles." The old King James, I believe, has the word heathen there. "Don't learn the way of the heathen." This is the word *gowy*, or *gowyan*, and it's rightly translated "Gentile." It's the people or the nations around who do not have the revelation of God. The Israelites were different from all the *gowyan*, because they had God's revelation of Himself, and God's law. These people have invented their own ways of worship, because they have not had God's revelation.

Jeremiah says that these customs that they've invented to fill this void of the need to worship, I guess you would say, are futile, vain, meaningless. That's what that word futile means—a breath, a vapor, like in Ecclesiastes when Solomon says, "Vanity of vanities. All is vanity." It's the same word. It's but a breath. It's nothing. It has no meaning. It has nothing good in it.

This is the first reason why we shouldn't keep Halloween. It adds nothing good to our character. It's simply a waste. It's worthless.

Let's go back to Deuteronomy 12:29-32 and we'll pick up a second reason. This is what God said to Israel just before they were going to go in and take the land.

Deuteronomy 12:29-32 When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise. You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.

The second reason why we need to avoid Halloween like the plague is that God Himself calls it an abomination. It's something He hates. It is one of the customs of those nations that Israel has adopted. If you strip everything away from it, it is idolatrous false worship. As much as people say that they are not worshipping anything on it, when you strip away all the mask—all the veneer of fun, the feasting—it is really a type of idolatry. God never told us to do it. He adds right at the end, "Don't do anything that I haven't told you to do. Don't add to it. Don't take away from it. I've told you the way that I want to be worshipped, and it is not the way that the heathen have chosen."

Notice also in the first part of verse 30 He says, "Take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them." A snare is a trap designed to catch an unwary animal. The trap itself is hidden, like under some pine straw, or there is a hole where the trap is, and it's covered over so that an animal would drop into it and be trapped. There could be some type of lure or trick involved in the trap, that if the unwary person goes after the lure, he's caught. The gate comes down, a hook comes out, the spring closes on a limb and traps them.

What God is saying here is that heathen or ungodly practices—customs, ways of worship, tradition, whatever—usually have some or many characteristics that appeal to us. That's the lure. There is an appeal somewhere to human nature, and we get caught up in them before we're aware of it. We get sucked in. We don't see the trap, and we fall into the pit. We don't see that when we reach for the goodie, the spring is going to close

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on our wrist. So God says we are to watch out for the hidden dangers and the appealing entrapments that are designed right into the holidays. We have to keep this in mind.

Down a little bit further, in verse 30, He says, "Do not inquire after their gods." We could even say, "Don't inquire after their practices, and how they worship."

"Inquire" here has the sense of to endeavor to know more, so as to have a deeper understanding or a relationship. It's a search that we make so that we understand better.

It can be used positively. The verse in Amos 5 that says, "Seek the Lord"—it's the same word. In Isaiah 55:6 it also says "Seek you the Lord while He may be found." That's the same type of inquiry. It's a turning back and trying to follow.

It can be used negatively—inquiring after, let's say a medium, to have some sort of divination done, or inquiring, like it says here, how people practice their false beliefs. In effect, here God is saying that ignorance is bliss when it comes to moral and spiritual matters of other people that are not following the revelation of God. Making in-depth studies into this world's way may well draw us into the trap, so He says, "Don't even try to inquire about what they're like, and how they do things, because it is far better to leave the world's ways alone and be ignorant of them."

This is kind of interesting, because it is diametrically opposite to the modern notion that one should look at all the alternatives and judge them on their merit. You hear people talk about this all the time. "Well, if you just see my side, and you'll see somebody else's side, you'll be able to judge it on its merit." You would do that if there was a decision to be made, or you had to make a judgment between two people.

When it comes to moral, ethical, spiritual matters, it's better not to even know about anything other than God's way of life. It's better to know just the one right way to do it. That really keeps the confusion out of it. It helps to keep our minds pure and untouched by sin and evil. It really reduces the sense of "missing out" that some people have. I know a lot of second-generation Christians think they've missed out on this world's pleasures because they've been in the church. They haven't missed a thing. God says it's far better not to ever get into those things.

Let's check Titus 1 for a moment and see what Paul said to Titus about this sort of thing. He's talking about some of the Jews who had come into the church there on Crete where Titus was the pastor. They had been telling the people in the church some very untrue things. They were mostly trying to draw them back into Judaism, which in itself is

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a mixture of paganism and God's ways by this time.

Titus 1:10-15 For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. One of them, a prophet of their own, said, Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons. This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. To the pure all things are pure, ...

That is the way we're trying to become. If we can keep from being defiled, so much the better.

Titus 1:15 . . .but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure;

They have been damaged. They're cynical. They see things from a very twisted point of view.

Titus 1:15-16 . . .but even their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.

When I was doing research on the Internet about Halloween, I did a simple search on Alta Vista, and I got nearly half a million hits on just the word Halloween. That doesn't mean there are that many web pages out there on it, but Halloween is a big topic. So many of them say that Halloween is a "Christian" holiday. I just thought of this—they profess to know God, but in their works they deny Him, and the things that they do are abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work, just as this verse said.

I just wanted to use this verse to shore up this idea that if you haven't become involved in the ways of this world, leave them alone. Don't get involved in them at all. Don't even inquire after those practices. Just trust what God says. I know that's hard for human nature to do, because we've just got to know. There's the old commercial about the National Inquirer—"We've just got to know." It's better if we don't know the things that are evil—the things that God disapproves of that He calls abominable and detestable.

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Unfortunately very few of us are in that perfect position of purity though. Most of us have been touched one way or another by this world. We can't seem to escape the knowledge of Halloween in a culture that blasts it at us so much, so loudly, and incessantly.

Since we know of it already, and so many of us have practiced it in our lives before conversion, it's a good idea to review why we rejected it in the first place. I'm going to give you now the origin of Halloween, just so we know from whence it came. Many cultures have a form of Halloween in their tradition. It seems to be something that all the peoples of this world desire—a kind of ninth or time period where things are turned upside down, and the dead take on more important than the living.

The holidays, or feasts, may vary from place to place. They might fall on different days. They might have different customs, but the common denominator in all of them is that they have set aside time to honor or remember the dead, or the unseen spirits.

Mexico has its "Day of the Dead" where they do very many things similar to our Halloween. They give out little candies in the shape of skeletons. They go to graveyards and try to commune with the dead somehow. They leave them food and things like that.

In Japan there is a similar type of thing where they honor their ancestors. Different African tribes have Halloweenish type of days where they honor the unseen spirits. They ward off the evil spirits. They try to placate the good spirits. There are many other places. It's all over the world. In Europe it's in Germany, Scandinavia, Spain, and Italy. They all seem to have some Halloween type of holiday.

Halloween in English-speaking countries derives primarily from the Celtic festival of Samhain. This word is spelled "S-a-m-h-a-i-n," but it is pronounced "sow-in," because in Gaelic the diphthong "MH" is pronounced like a "W."

Samhain was a kind of New Year's celebration and harvest festival all rolled up into one. It was held on the three days around November 1. November 1 was Samhain, but October 31 and the 2nd of November were all rolled up into that holiday.

The Celts believed that these days of transition from the old year to the new year were special. They were special because they felt that the boundary between the physical world and the spiritual world relaxed or lifted. The veil was lifted between the two worlds, allowing spirits to cross over into our world more easily. This idea of course terrifies superstitious people, that among us could walk all the departed spirits of days gone by, but especially those who died in the past year because people thought these spirits

wanted to come back. So they had to appease them somehow, and make them go into the spirit world and stay there.

To appease them, the Celts put out food and treats so that when these spirits came walking by their house they would pass on. They would eat the treats or whatever, and they would say, "These are good guys. Let's go on to the next guy who doesn't have treats out in his yard." They thought that if they didn't appease the spirits, these spirits would play tricks on them—things like ghosts would do, whatever that is. I don't know. The people thought that the spirits would put curses on them, or on the whole village. Whole villages got into the act to make sure that their upcoming year was a good one by driving away the evil spirits.

Others would hold seances. They would conduct other kinds of divination, however divination was done, so that they could contact their dead ancestors. Remember that the veil was much looser at the time. If they wanted to go the other way—that instead of the dead spirits coming back into the physical world—they felt if they used divination, they could cross over and contact their dead spirits themselves. So they would go both ways.

If they could do this somehow, one way or another, by use of some sort of incantation, or potion, or meditation, that they would then receive guidance and inspiration. Of course the Druids would do this, and the Bards would want inspiration from the other world so that their poetry and all that would be that much the better.

Another interesting thing about this transition time—these three days of Samhain—was that it was considered to be "no time." What I mean by that, is since this three-day period really wasn't part of the old year, and it really wasn't part of the new year, then it was a time unto itself. They called it "no time." Thus they felt (it became a tradition) that the strictures, the order, the rule by which people lived, were held in abeyance for those three days, and people pretty much did anything they pleased.

All the laws were stopped. All the normal order in society—let's say the chief versus the servant—would get turned all upside down, and the servant could run the town for those three days because the chief wasn't himself. He would go do something else wild and crazy, because this is "no time."

What you had then was men dressed as women, and women dressed as men. People took on different personas. They put on disguises and acted like whatever they thought was fun. They took gates off pastures and let the domesticated animals roam free, because they weren't held to the law of being domesticated animals. They were allowed

to do whatever they wanted to do.

They would take doors off houses. They would climb in windows instead of doors, because things were different during these three days. It sounds weird to us. They didn't do any work. It was generally a time of total abandon. It was a time for revelry, drinking, eating, taking dare, disguising oneself and acting like somebody else. In a word, it was chaos. It was chaos time—those three days.

Then Roman Catholicism arrived on the scene and converted the pagans. Now it itself had a day for the departed saints, but it fell on May 13—All Saints' Day. The pagans were told that this is when they should honor the departed saints—May 13. But these newly converted pagans held on to their rite of the celebration of Samhain, because it was a whole lot more fun than going to church and praying for those hallowed saints of yesteryear. They couldn't do anything that was fun. Say a few "Hail Mary's" I guess, and that was about the extent of it.

To hold them in the fold, Pope Gregory IV, in 835, officially authorized All Saints Day to be moved to November 1, when all the pagans were celebrating Samhain. He did that specifically to coincide with Samhain. Thus he allowed the pagans to keep their old customs as long as they put a gloss of Christianity on them, that they were doing all these riotous things in the name of Christ, and that they were supposedly doing these things in honor of all the saints who have gone on before. So this All Saints Day began the evening before. This celebration was no longer called Samhain, but All Hallowed Eve, or Halloween. That was more than eleven centuries. Since then Halloween has evolved into its present form in which nothing remotely Christian has stuck in it. It's known for all its pre-Christian Celtic practices, believe it or not—the recognition of the spirit world in form of fairies, witches, ogres, goblins, evil spirits, demons, ghouls, goats, vampires, and other spirits that you'll probably see parading up and down your street.

Today "trick or treating" is recognized, which is simply a form of extortion. Divination and seances is supposed to be the time when the spirit world is closest, and so people decide if they want to contact somebody, it's best to do it on Halloween.

There is hooliganism. Remember that in Detroit for many years—maybe even now—they have what they call "hell night." The young people in Detroit pretty much trash the place. They set fires. Hooliganism and vandalism.

There are drinking parties. Remember I said this is the big time for drinking. More beer is sold on Halloween than on Saint Patrick's Day. Total chaos again.

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The Celtic's feast of Samhain still survives in our Halloween. It doesn't have a shred of Christianity in it. We've just reverted back to our old Celtic practices.

With all that, where do I start in disproving all of this? There is so much obviously wrong, that I could spend all day just going from verse to verse saying, "Look, God says this isn't right, and this is evil, and this is abominable, and this is detestable," because it's all plainly there in the Bible.

We're going to get to the "spiritism" of Halloween. Let's start in Deuteronomy 18:9. This is only six chapters after He said pretty much the same things to Israel before. Remember, we went to Deuteronomy 12. Six chapters later He repeats Himself, so it must have been something that the Israelites tended to want to do.

Deuteronomy 18:9-14 When you come into the land which the LOORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations [the detestable acts] of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead [a necromancer]. For all who do these things are an abomination to the LOORD, and because of these abominations the LOORD your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless [perfect] before the LOORD your God, for these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LOORD your God has not appointed such for you.

This is quite a list—all the soothsayers, sorcerers, omen interpreters, spiritists, mediums, necromancers. As I said, you'll probably see some of them in your neighborhood as people pretend to be these things. He calls these abominations, or detestable things, things that He hates. What He says here is very interesting. He says they are a reason why He is sending Israel in to dispossess these people. These practices cause ultimately dispossession. They cause destruction in the end, and these people have to be given the heave-ho from the land. We'll see that in Leviticus 18:24-30. This comes at the end on sexual practices, but the principle holds.

Leviticus 18:24 Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you.

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The situation is the same. God says He's casting these nations out before Israel, and He's warning Israel not to make the same mistake.

Leviticus 18:25 For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants.

This is a judgment from God. He's punishing these people for their wicked practices, and the land itself helps God in getting rid of them.

Leviticus 18:26-29 You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, either any of your own nation or any stranger who sojourns among you (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled), lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit them shall be cut off from among their people.

They will be killed.

Leviticus 18:30 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 LOORD your God.

This is scary, isn't it? But people do these detestable things, which in chapter 18 of Deuteronomy include spiritism, occultism, necromancing—all that type of stuff. The land is defiled. Not just the people are defiled, but the land itself becomes defiled, and it reacts and throws the inhabitants out by means of natural disasters, unproductiveness, famine, disease, war, and things of that nature. The land simply has it up to here, and throws the people out.

God's creation all works together. It's all based on living the righteous way of God. The land can only take so much before God uses it to punish the nation that does these things.

Let's go now to Leviticus 19:31.

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Leviticus 19:31 Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them.

This is the second time it says that. Remember, in Deuteronomy 12 it says don't even inquire after them. Here it says, "Do not seek after them."

"Do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the LOORD your God" (verse 31). This is interesting because these three Scriptures that I am going to go to all occur within what is called "the holiness code." The holiness code begins in Leviticus 19:2: "You shall be holy, for I the LOORD your God am holy." That's the holiness code. God wants us to be just as holy as He is, and so He gives us a code—the ordinances here—to help us to do that. I picked these Scriptures out of here because they have to do with this idea of holiness, and of course spiritism and occultism.

Leviticus 20:6-7 And the person who turns after mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people. Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the LOORD your God.

These are getting very interesting, and very serious. First we find that it's defiling. Then we find out that God compares it to prostitution.

Leviticus 20:26 And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LOORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples [the *gowyans*], that you should be Mine.

They are a different people and they need to be holy, like God.

Leviticus 20:27 A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood shall be upon them.

Notice within the holiness code that spiritism and consulting with mediums is relegated to things level of badness, of evil, as fornication-prostitution. In the one verse there in Leviticus 19, it's right between keeping the Sabbath and honoring the elderly. In chapter 20 it comes right after idolatry.

This is a very interesting way these things work in the Bible—the way God inspired them to be set in here. This returns us to the notion of purity. Remember we talked about that before when we went to Titus 1: "To the pure, all things are pure." The spiritism defiles. The occultism of Halloween defiles. It makes us impure. Like I said, God calls it prostitution, which is the physical counterpart to spiritual prostitution—idolatry .

It seems to me here that we're seeing that abominable sexual practices are to God the same as witchcraft and demonism. One is physical, and the other is spiritual. Remember, He says directly that whoever turns after mediums and familiar spirits to prostitute himself with them, that this spiritism, which is nothing more than idolatry, is spiritual prostitution.

Which is worse—the physical prostitution, or the spiritual prostitution? Both defile the purity God wants in our flesh and in our spirit. I bet you thought we never looked at spiritism in quite that way. God did. He put it here in the Bible.

Go back to Exodus 22:16-20 and let's see that it's in the Old Covenant this way, which is interesting. Look at the way God lists these things. This is Israel's part of the covenant that they had to do.

Exodus 22:16-17 And if a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the bride-price of virgins.

We have fornication happening here

Exodus 22:18 You shall not permit a sorceress [or a witch, as it says in the King James] to live.

We have spiritism.

Exodus 22:19 Whoever lies with a beast shall surely be put to death.

We have sexual sin again.

Exodus 22:20 He who sacrifices to any god, except to the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

Look at the class of sins witchcraft or sorcery is included with—sexual sins and idolatry. This kind of ranks it up there fairly high. Maybe other than murder, there is nothing of the physical commandment that does more to hurt a relationship than any kind of sexual sin. And idolatry—you can't do worse to destroy a spiritual relationship with God. Witchcraft is ranked right up there with them, because it in itself is both prostitution and idolatry, because it's actually recognizing a false god. Halloween isn't just good clean fun, is it? There's more to it than meets the eye.

Maybe we can understand I Samuel 15:22-23 better now. Once I saw this relationship between spiritism, sexual sin, and idolatry, this became much clearer. This is the occasion when Saul was told by God to go and to utterly wipe out the Amalekites, but Saul did not, and he blamed the people.

I Samuel 15:22 Then Samuel said: Has the LOORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LOORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.

God really wants us to obey, because that's our part in the relationship in the covenant that we've made.

I Samuel 15:23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft [sorcery, divination], and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LOORD, He also has rejected you from being king.

This really began to make a lot more sense once I found this relationship between these three things—physical sexual sin, idolatry, and witchcraft. The key word in this whole passage is "rejected," because that's the gist of all these sins. It's a rejection of the way that is right, the way that God said we should order our lives.

What do we call it when a woman, let's say, spurns the advances of a man? Rejection. Rebellion and stubbornness, which are the two subjects here, like witchcraft, iniquity, and idolatry, are simply forms of rejecting God. It may be a little bit different in the way they're done, but all of them are basically forms of rejection. Rejection causes separation. We know what separation does to a relationship. If there is not something done to make the separation go away, eventually you have total divorce, and there can be no reconciliation.

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Under our covenant with God, obedience, as Samuel points out here, is our part. That's what we've been given to do. Obedience brings us closer to God. That's what the sacrifice is. Remember, you bring a sacrifice before God in order to open the way. Remember, Christ Himself is our sacrifice. His blood covers all our sins. By Him, and through Him, the veil is rent, and we are allowed to approach God.

Obedience here is parallel with the sacrifice, with the offering that is made in order to approach to God. When we meddle in spiritism of any kind, whether it's witchcraft, sorcery, divination, going to a medium, going to a fortune-teller of one sort, or even reading a horoscope in astrology, what we're doing is undermining the relationship with God. We're putting someone else between us and God and causing separation to occur. It's rejection. It's disobedience. Or you might say it's rebellion, or iniquity.

He considers these things to be just as bad as idolatry or adultery. It's part of the relationship, and if we allow any kind of spiritism to get in there, we're actually putting a wedge between us and God. We might as well go down and bow to an idol. It's going to work the same thing to drive us apart from God.

Go now to the New Testament to Galatians 5:16-21. We will find here that the New Testament takes the same exact approach as the Old. This is interesting too. This is the prelude up to "the works of the flesh," and including "the works of the flesh."

Galatians 5:16-19 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are:

Listen to this list and see if they remind you of Exodus 22:16-20.

Galatians 5:19-20 Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery . . .

Galatians 5:21 . . . of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

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They won't inherit the Kingdom of God because they're not fulfilling the covenant.

Did you notice this, that first we had adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and licentiousness? They all have overtones of sexuality in them, or direct sexuality in them. Next comes idolatry. And the one right after that is sorcery.

Paul knew his Old Testament very well. He was trained in the law by Gamaliel, and knew his Old Testament backwards and forwards. I'm sure he probably had the whole thing memorized, as people of those times did. He must have known how abominable sexual practices—idolatry and witchcraft—are connected. This seems that way. It hardly seems to be just a coincidence that they would all land in that order again—all connected somehow to each other.

And then he says of course that those who do such things will not enter God's Kingdom. That's how serious spiritism is. That's how much it affects the relationship we have with God.

Some might contend that this word sorcery is *pharmakeia*. That's the word from which we get our word pharmacy and pharmaceutical. They might say, "This means drugs." Well, think again. The reason why Paul used the word *pharmakeia* is that enchanters, or wizards, or witches, or sorcerers of any ilk, used drugs and other medicine to put them "in the spirit" so they could do their enchantment. Or if they were working with someone else, they would give them the drug so that they would have hallucinations, or see a vision.

That is where these medicines, or drugs, or potions, work with the sorcery. These people were not licensed, we would say, to use these drugs medicinally. They used them to help them in their magic. Use that term loosely.

It's interesting that among the more serious of Halloween devotees, drug use is part of the celebration, because it helps put them "in the spirit" and helps to make them closer to the spirit world. And then they have their vision.

Let's go to II Corinthians 6:14-18. I want you to notice the contrast here between God's way and an ungodly way.

II Corinthians 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.
For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness?

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Didn't I say one of the big things about Halloween is chaos, lawlessness—law is suspended?

II Corinthians 6:14 And what communion has light with darkness?

What is the theme of Halloween? Darkness, and things that go creepy-crawly in the night.

II Corinthians 6:15 And what accord has Christ with Belial?

This is an interesting word. Belial, in the Old Testament, is a Hebrew word, or an Aramaic word, and it means worthlessness. It later became equated with wickedness. By the time the Old Testament ended and the New Testament began, it had changed into a proper name for Satan himself, because he was the author of wickedness and destruction.

"What accord has Christ with Belial?" They are total opposites.

II Corinthians 6:15-18 Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore [this is Paul's concluding statement] come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty.

He makes his own postscript on this beginning in chapter 7.

II Corinthians 7:1 Therefore, having these promises [promises that we will be God's children, and God will live among us] beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

This comes full circle back unto holiness and purity again, and being clean and pure of any type of darkness, of any type of Satanism, of any type of lawlessness. Once again Paul draws the same conclusion, let's say, as God gave him the holiness code. He

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doesn't quote the holiness code, but he says, "Don't do these works of darkness, because I am holy, and you need to be holy, and you won't be able to live as God's children without being holy."

That's our goal, so we need to perfect holiness in the fear of God. God is just as able now to have the land vomit us out as He was to those people under the Old Covenant.

The Bible's teaching on this is consistent from beginning to end. Spiritism, the occult, is a form of idolatry. It's spiritual prostitution, and it's going to end in separation from God, and destruction.

I think we've seen enough to show that we want to have nothing to do with Halloween, as tame as it may be presented to us from people in the media, friends, relations, whatever. I didn't even have time to get into the aspect really of their total abandonment of laws and order and rules. This is really still part of the American celebration. "Trick or treating" is part of that. Wearing costumes and pretending to be somebody else is part of that. Doing pranks, and vandalism, and hedonism, that is done in "hardy-hardy" as it were, is part of that.

Many, many Halloween parties will go on tonight, with the beer and all the rest, and even worse going on. We can see the detrimental aspects of these things very clearly. I don't really need to explain them.

Let's close in Ephesians 5:8-14.

Ephesians 5:8 For you were once darkness. . .

Notice that. We WERE darkness-not just we were "in" darkness, but we WERE darkness.

Ephesians 5:8-10 But now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), proving what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

That's what I tried to do today.

Ephesians 5:12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are

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done by them in secret.

We don't even know what's being done on Halloween in secret—and I don't want to know, for it's a shame.

Ephesians 5:13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light. . .

God's truth shines on them and exposes them for the darkness and the evil that they are. That's why I said earlier all we need to know is the one right and good way, because that will expose those unfruitful works of darkness and give us wisdom and how we should act.

Ephesians 5:13-14 . . . But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.

We used to be dead in our sin. We used to be in darkness. We used to be asleep to the things of God. But now we've had the truth revealed to us, and the truth has also revealed these unfruitful ways of darkness. Now we are in the light and hopefully growing in the fruit of God's Spirit.

Thank God that we have been cleansed and purified from the filthiness and darkness of this witches sabbat—Halloween.

I hope, in spite of Halloween, you can have a good Sabbath—what's left of it. I'll talk to you again in about three weeks.