



# HALLOWEEN



**Where did the pumpkins, skeletons, bats, black cats, witches riding brooms, and haunted houses come from? Should Christians celebrate Halloween?**

**By Gene Keith**

**October 2009**

**W**hen I was a young boy growing up in Tarpon Springs, the thought of doing research on Halloween never entered my mind. Halloween was a time for my friends and I to get into all kinds of mischief, believing it was acceptable because that was what everybody did on Halloween. Everybody was doing it. That's just the way things were.

Looking back, I don't ever remember hearing one sermon on Halloween in all of my life. I am also sorry to confess that I don't remember ever preaching a sermon on Halloween in all of my years in the ministry. Please forgive me for this wrong!

Now that I am older, and I hope a little wiser, I have been forced to take more serious look at this popular holiday and the customs associated with it.

Today, Americans spend an estimated \$6.9 billion annually on Halloween, making it the country's second largest commercial holiday. Isn't it time we asked some questions about this popular holiday?

## **QUESTIONS ABOUT HALLOWEEN**

What do you know about Halloween? The purpose of this report is to answer several important questions about this strange celebration.

1. Where did Halloween come from and why do we celebrate it on October 31?

2. What is a soul cake?

3. Why do people wear Halloween costumes?

4. Why do we put candles in pumpkins and call them Jack-a-lanterns?

5. Where did the idea of trick or treat come from?

6. How are bats, skeletons, witches, and goblins associated with Halloween?

7. And last but not least, should serious Christians take part in the celebration of this strange holiday?

## **THE HISTORY OF HALLOWEEN**

The first thing I did when I began this research was to go online to good-old-Google and see what I could find. There are 963,000 references to Halloween on this site and also 42,600,000 pictures available.

After reading what Google had to say on the subject, the next thing I did was to see if John Ankerberg had written anything on the subject. Dr. Ankerberg has prepared a DVD on the subject which is available for \$39.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.ankerberg.com](http://www.ankerberg.com)

## History.com

The most interesting site I found was History.com. Most of the following information was taken from that site.

### **HALLOWEEN BEGAN IN EUROPE**

#### **Ireland**



The Celts, who lived 2,000 years ago in the area that is now Ireland, the United Kingdom, and northern France, celebrated their new

year on November 1. This day marked the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter, a time of year that was often associated with human death.

This was a time the pagans believed they had to do something to placate the supernatural powers controlling the processes of nature. The Druids would light new fires and offer sacrifices of crops and animals. As they danced around the fires, the season of the sun passed and the season of darkness would begin.

The Celts also believed that on the night before the new year, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred and the ghosts of the dead returned to earth, visited their homes, and caused a lot of problems.

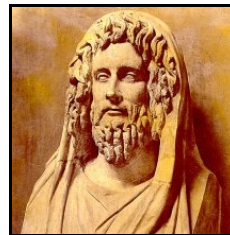
#### **The Durids <sup>2</sup>**

"In those early days in England, there was another kind of witchcraft known as Druidism. The Druids were called "men of the oaks" and were a strange clan of men who dressed in white robes. The Druids worshipped Cernunos, the "horned hunter of the night." Halloween was sacred to the Druids because their sun-god receded to the underworld on October 31st, which is why darkness increased and light decreased according to their reckoning."

## **The Roman Influence**

By A.D. 43, the Romans had conquered the majority of Celtic territory. In the course of the four hundred years that they ruled the Celtic lands, two festivals of Roman origin were combined with the traditional Celtic celebration of Samhain (pronounced: sow- wen).

#### **1. Ferialia**



The first day was Ferialia, a day in late October when the Romans traditionally commemorated the passing of the dead.

#### **2. Pamona**



The second day was a day to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple and the incorporation of this celebration into Samhain probably explains the tradition of "bobbing" for apples that is practiced today on Halloween.

## **Catholic Influence**



During the Middle Ages (about 600 years ago), the Roman Catholic Church decided to make the change-over from pagan religion to Christianity a bit easier, and therefore allowed the new converts to maintain some of their pagan feasts.

It was agreed, however, that from now on, Halloween would be celebrated as "Christian" feasts. So instead of praying to their heathen gods, they would now pray to, and remember the deaths of saints.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.lasttrumpetministries.org>

For this reason the church decided to call November 1 the "Day of All Saints," and the mass to be celebrated on that day "Alhallowmass."

In consequence of this, the evening prior to this day was named, "All Hallowed Evening" which subsequently was abbreviated as "Halloween." In spite of this effort to make October 31 a "holy evening," all the old customs continued to be practiced, and made this evening anything BUT a holy evening!

### **Soul Cakes**

A Soul cake is a small round cake which is traditionally made for All Souls' Day to celebrate the dead. The cakes, often simply referred to as souls, were given out to soulers (mainly consisting of children and the poor) who would go from door to door on Hallowmas singing and saying prayers for the dead. Each cake eaten would represent a soul being freed from Purgatory.

### **From Ireland to America**

It was interesting to discover Halloween did not become popular in America until the twentieth century. In 1846, there was a great potato famine in Ireland and America was flooded with new immigrants. When these Irish immigrants came to America they brought their (heathen) traditions with them before long Halloween became popular in America.

### **American Spiritist Movement**

Historians remind us the rise in popularity of Halloween in America coincides roughly with the national Spiritist revival that began in 1848. Halloween is a very special day in the occult and Satan worship.

### **HALLOWEEN CUSTOMS**

Where did the customs, pumpkins, and trick-or-treat come from?

### **Halloween Costumes**

The pagans in ancient Britain and Ireland believed that the souls of the dead and demons of all kinds would roam about and actually revisit



their homes on October 31. They also believed these departed spirits would cause all sorts of harm to the living if those spirits were not pacified, so they

would leave food out for the spirits. The people would also dress in costumes and wear masks so the spirits would not recognize them as humans, but would be tricked into thinking the living people were departed spirits like themselves. Some even believed that those who wore animal heads and skins would actually acquire the strength of the particular animal. One writer suggested that some ancients may also have worn Halloween masks and costumes to hide their true identity when they took part in the pagan festivals.

### **The Jack-o'-lantern.**



The carved pumpkin may have originated with the witches' use of a skull with a candle in it to light the way to coven meetings. But among the Irish, who, as noted, prompted the popularization of Halloween in America, the legend of "Irish Jack" explains the

jack-o'-lantern. The legend goes:

"There was a stingy drunk named Jack who tricked the devil into climbing an apple tree for an apple but then cut the sign of a cross into the trunk of the tree preventing the devil from coming down. Jack forced the devil to swear he would never come after Jack's soul. The devil reluctantly agreed. Jack eventually died but was turned away at the gates of heaven because of his drunkenness and life of selfishness. He was next sent to the devil who also rejected him, keeping his promise.

Since Jack had no place to go, he was condemned to wander the earth. As he was leaving hell, the devil threw a live coal at him. He put the coal inside a turnip he had been eating, and has since forever been roaming the earth with his "jack-o'-lantern" in search of a place to rest. Eventually, pumpkins replaced turnips since it was much easier to symbolize the devil's coal inside a pumpkin.

### **Bobbing for Apples**



As previously stated, the Romans observed two important dates: The first was Feralia, a day in late October when the Romans traditionally

commemorated the passing of the dead. The second was a day to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple and the incorporation of this celebration into Samhain probably explains the tradition of "bobbing" for apples that is practiced today on Halloween.

### **Witches Riding Brooms<sup>3</sup>**



The word "witch" comes from the Anglo-Saxon Wicca, or "wise one." Witches were thought to be possessors of magic. Witches, who worship the deities of nature, have living talismans or symbols through which

they derive their dark powers. They invoke evil spirits to enter the bodies of their talismans. Some have dogs, owls, snakes or swine for their talismans, but the most common are cats.

The broomstick is a symbol of the male organ, on which the witch mounts and leaps high

---

3

<http://www.exposingsatanism.org/halloween.htm>

around the fields to "teach" the crops how high to grow.

The notion of flying witches relates to the fact that witches believed they could fly great distances to their feasts by smearing their bodies with ointments containing drugs. The drugs gave them psychedelic "trips" making them think they flew.

Witchcraft is demonic worship in diametric opposition to the worship of the Heavenly Father Yahweh. Yahweh minces no words about it. He told Israel through Moses, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Ex. 22:18).

He says in Deuteronomy 18:10, "There shall not be found among you any one that makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that uses divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch."

### **Black Cats**

The pagan Celts believed cats were humans who had been changed into cats by evil powers. The black cat particularly was connected to demonic powers. Black cats are the chief idol of the goddess of Wicca, Diana. In legend, she turns into a black cat to commit incest with her brother, Lucifer.

### **Halloween and Witchcraft**

Halloween is regarded as the high "Sabbath" for practicing witches today. Orange, black, and red, the devil's colors, are the colors associated with Halloween. Black prefigures black magic and demonic influence. The black of night is when these forces of evil are busiest, using the cover of darkness for their sinister works.

### **Trick-or-Treat**

The pagans believed if the living did not provide food or "treats" for the spirits, then they would "trick" the living. Therefore, the ancient pagans would "treat" the ghosts by preparing a table with food. After the ghosts had eaten, the people of the village, who were wearing masks and costumes, would lead a parade hoping the ghosts would follow them out of town.

## Human Sacrifice

As darkness set in on October 31st, the clan of Druids would put on their white robes and hoods. They would carry sickles and Celtic crosses as they began a torchlight procession. At the beginning of the procession, a male slave was killed and dragged by a rope fastened to his left ankle.

The Druids would walk until they came to a house or a village where they shouted the equivalent of "trick or treat."

The treat was a slave girl or any female to be given to the Druids. If the people refused to give them a girl as a "treat," blood was taken from the dead slave and used to draw a hexagram or six-pointed star on the door or wall of the village. Spirits of the "horned hunter of the night" were invoked by the Druids to kill someone in that house or village by fear that night.

If the house or village gave a girl as a "treat," the Druids put a pumpkin with a face carved in it in front of the door or gate of that place. Inside the pumpkin was a candle made of human tallow to keep evil spirits away. Thus, the Jack-O-Lantern was and is a sign that you have cooperated with Satan.

The treats or female victims were taken to Stonehenge where they were raped and killed and then sacrificed on the sacred bonfire until only glowing embers were left. The "bonfire" is the origin of the modern day bonfire. As a matter of luck for winter survival, all villagers were expected to use the glowing embers of the bonfire to light their hearths.

### **Pastor David J. Meyer**<sup>4</sup>

Pastor David J. Meyer, a former astrologer and occultist wrote:

"As we can clearly see, Halloween is not harmless. Satan has people in our modern era mimicking the witches and Druids of

old. All of this is cursed of God.

We live in a time when witchcraft is being revived. Movies are filled with witchcraft and numerous television programs such as "Charmed" are teaching witchcraft to millions.

The Harry Potter books are likewise furthering the cause of Satan! Halloween is no joke and is not harmless fun!

This evil holiday has no part in the life of a Christian. The Roman Catholic Church borrowed Halloween from the witches, which shows how blind they are. May God help you as you read this tract to avoid Halloween and warn others that it is strictly the invention of Satan and can never be anything but evil of the first magnitude!"

### **SUMMARY**

The important question is: Should a serious Christian celebrate Halloween when everything associated with it is pagan?

The decision is yours but as you decide how you and your family will celebrate Halloween this year, it would be good to read the following Scriptures from the Word of God.

### **Deuteronomy 18:9-12**

"When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations 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. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you.

---

<sup>4</sup> Last Trumpet Ministries International,  
PO Box 806, Beaver Dam, Wisconsin 53916.  
<http://www.lasttrumpetministries.org>

## **Galatians 5:19-21**

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; 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."

## **Revelation 21:8**

"But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars--their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

## **Revelation 9:20-21**

"The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood--idols that cannot see or hear or walk. Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts."

### **PS: WITCHCRAFT IS ALIVE AND WELL**

Governor of Maine, Dead 38 Years, Issues Magic Week Proclamation (Additional coverage online at the Mount Desert Islander, 10/18/2007).

Percival Proctor Baxter, the Governor of Maine from 1921 to 1924, proclaimed October 25-31 as Magic Week in Maine "for eternity" in a séance held on October 10 at the historic Criterion Theatre in Bar Harbor, Maine. The séance included members of the press and VIP guests who have been generous in the effort to preserve the Criterion Theatre, an Art Deco jewel built in 1932.

Governor Baxter's proclamation appeared as a message written on slates following contact with

the Governor's spirit, who spoke briefly through the medium, Dr. Wilson. The message was the climax of a séance that included demonstrations of psychometry, crystal energy, and the answering of questions put to the spirits by the sitters.

The Bar Harbor town council passed a Magic Week proclamation on October 2. Rumford, Maine's Capital of Magic, is expected to issue a proclamation next week. The current Governor of Maine, who for the last four years has issued a Magic Week proclamation, declined to do so this year, citing a policy change.

Dr. Wilson scheduled the séance following the word from the Governor's office, fulfilling a pledge to Marlene Clark, S.A.M. Regional Vice President for New England, to obtain a Magic Week proclamation from the Governor of Maine at the historic Criterion Theatre during the month of October.

(<http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.ibmring362.org/magicweek/images/seance1.>)

## **Should a serious Christian celebrate Halloween?**

**Like they say on Fox News:**

# **We Report! You Decide!**

---

You may correspond with Pastor Gene by Email: [gk122532@bellsouth.net](mailto:gk122532@bellsouth.net) You may also download other sermons and articles by visiting our church website: [cbcgainesville.com](http://cbcgainesville.com)