

# Halloween

**This Trick is NO Treat!**

**By Eric Barger & David Benoit**



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When we were kids growing up, we always looked forward to Halloween. We knew nothing about how it began, or what the meanings were behind it. All we knew was that we could get dressed up funny and go through the neighborhood and people would give us candy.

The information you are about to receive is to help you understand the seriousness of Halloween. It is not to spoil your fun, but to ask the question: **Should we, as Christians, join in a festival whose history and practices are for the dead?** Today, with Halloween being a billion dollar business second only to Christmas in retailing, few understand the true nature and historic foundations of this occult celebration.

### Origin of Halloween

The word "Halloween" actually has its origins in the Catholic Church. It comes from the words "All Hallows Eve," "All Hallows Day," or "All Saints Day." This day was set aside to honor saints. The holiday was founded to try to divert attention away from the pagan practices taking place on this day each October. Though perhaps well intentioned, trying to "Christianize" pagan practices can never be pleasing to God, and Halloween may be the most vivid example of this. Some believe Irish immigrants fleeing the potato famine may have brought its origins to America in the 1840s.

In occult and witchcraft circles, October 31 represents a day of worship called Samhain (pronounced *sow-en*). This is the Celtic New Year. History tells us that the Celtic people were worshipers of earth gods, woodland spirits, and sun deities. One legend explains that on Samhain the spirits of all those who had died throughout the year would come back in search of living bodies to possess for the next year. It was believed to be their only hope for entering the afterlife. It was also the day on which the living were to communicate with the dead (with magnified effectiveness). This practice is called necromancy. Time and again we read - **from occult sources** - that Halloween is focused on

the worship and contact of dead ancestors and communication with the spirit realm.

Deuteronomy 18:11 tells us that God considers this practice evil. We see examples of necromancy portrayed in movies like *The Sixth Sense*, *Lion King*, and *Ghost*, to name a few. Regardless of where or how the ritual practice started, one thing is certain—God forbids contacting any spirit unless it's the *Holy Spirit!*

## Symbols of Halloween

**Trick or Treat.** Here are three of the possible origins of present day "trick or treating":

a. In the early practice of Halloween, people were afraid of spirits doing harm to their home, so they would leave treats out side their homes to keep them happy.

b. The Europeans tried to "Christianize" this pagan ritual by calling it "souling." They would go out and collect soul cakes. The more cakes you would receive, the more prayers you would send up for your dead relatives.

c. In celebration of the recently completed harvest, Celts would give offerings of food to the gods. They often went from door to door to collect food to donate to their deities. History tells us that on Halloween the Celts would terrorize the countryside and populace, butcher cattle, and take it as spoil to please their gods.

Today's trick-or-treating consists of going from house to house and receiving candy from all the neighbors. Even if Halloween were totally harmless and free from pagan tradition, I would still be concerned about taking my children door-to-door and taking candy from people that I may not know. Throughout the rest of the year, we teach our children not to take anything from a stranger. But on Halloween we break our own rules!!!

**The Jack o'Lantern.** The Celts who lived in what is now Great Britain and northern France would carry a lantern when they walked on the eve of October 31. These lanterns were carved out of big turnips and

the lights were believed to keep the evil spirits away. Children carved faces in the turnips calling them "jack o'lanterns." People later started to use the pumpkin in order to carry a bigger light.

The myth behind the jack o'lantern was that a man named Jack made a pact with the devil and had to wander aimlessly through the darkness with only a piece of coal from hell in a turnip to guide him.

There are many people who believe that a person can never become a Christian if they have made a pact with the devil. This is not true. Before a person accepts Christ they **already** belong to the devil. In John 8:44a Jesus tells us, "You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."

But inviting Jesus into their hearts *sets men free!* So, why would the devil make a deal with someone when they are already his? If you call on God to forgive you—no matter what your past was like—He will hear you today.

**Witches.** When David and Eric were growing up, they were always told that witches were make-believe. But witches are real. The Bible talks about them in several passages. Today witchcraft is a very popular religion among our youth in America. Who would have ever thought that a seventeen-year-old honor student in Detroit, Michigan, could sue her school for the right to wear her pentagram, which is a symbol of her Wiccan religion. This is exactly what Crystal Seifferly did, according to the *Chicago Tribune*, February 10, 1999.

The Wiccan religion does not believe in the devil or Satan. They believe in five elementals, which are the false gods of forces. The five elementals are earth, wind, fire, water, and spirits. Witches do not claim to be devil worshippers. Witches do not believe the Bible is true so they will not accept a character from the Bible to worship. Many witches will hide behind environmentalism as a cover-up for the worship of Gaia, the goddess called "Mother Earth."

**The Black Cat.** The black cat has long been associated with witchcraft. Many superstitions have evolved about cats. It was believed that witches could change into cats. Some people also believed that cats were the spirits of the dead. Friends and relatives who had died would often return, with their souls inhabiting an animal—often a black cat. Black cats have remained a symbol of Halloween to the present. On the eve before their New Year (October 31), it was believed that Samhain called together all of the deceased. The dead would take different forms, with the evil spirits taking the form of animals—the most wicked taking the form of cats.

The belief in people coming back from the dead is **not** a Christian belief. That belief is called reincarnation. The Bible teaches that man dies only once. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

**Dressing in Costumes.** During the festival of Samhain, there was a fire festival to honor the god of death. Sacred bonfires were lit on the tops of hills in honor of the false gods. History tells us that after the bonfire to Samhain,

people were afraid to walk home in the dark. They were in fear of being possessed by spirits. So they dressed up in costumes and carved scary faces in their fire holders. They hoped that the spirits would be frightened and not bother them.

Without even knowing it, children in our society today continue this pagan practice by dressing up in various costumes. Pumpkins are now the objects of choice to carve faces into. The wearing of death masks is still used around the world in demon worship.

### **In Conclusion...**

In Deuteronomy 18:10–12, God gave His people **nine** things they were to stay away from. Many of the practices go hand in hand with the traditions of Halloween and go directly **against** God's Word.

1. **Human sacrifice:** In ancient times, they would offer children to false gods of fire. The bonfire was used by pagans who worshipped fire gods, like Baal. To appease these gods, they would offer children in the fire.

2. **Divination/fortune telling:** If you watch much TV, you can't miss the advertisements of psychics and people who are supposed to know your future. This practice is condemned in the Bible.

3. **Observer of times:** This is astrology. Christians do not believe that the stars can guide their lives. Christians believe that God will guide our lives through His Word.

4. **Enchanter:** A person who uses chants to cast spells.

5. **Witch:** Witches are not make-believe characters. Exodus 22:18 says: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Though New Testament Christians certainly do not condone the Old Testament practice of executing witches, the fact is they have become accepted members in our culture today.

6. **Charmer:** Objects that are made by someone to protect you or curse others.

7. **Consulter of familiar spirits:** a familiar spirit is a spirit that impersonates a person who is dead.

8. **A wizard, magician, or sorcerer:** a person who uses magic to control people or uses occult practices to entice people into witchcraft.

9. **Necromancer:** someone who claims to contact the dead.

Deuteronomy. 18:10–12 says:

**"There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, (11) Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. (12) For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee."**

You may have another question: What should I do with those things in my life that are associated with witchcraft? Follow Acts 19:18-20 which states:

**"And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds. (19) Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. (20) So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."**

So, what is the answer to our opening question—should a Christian be involved with the pagan holiday of Halloween? No! Ephesians 5:11 says, **"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."** Not only should a Christian not partake in evil, *we are to expose it!*

### **But there is a more important question . . .**

Christ is asking for our obedience, but first He wants our hearts. He is willing that **anyone** who calls on His name can be saved and be delivered from darkness. Witch, Satanist, murderer . . . it doesn't matter, He can and will forgive you! Praise God!

The steps to salvation are simple.

† You must admit that you have sinned against God. **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Romans 3:23).

† You must understand the penalty for sin is death. **"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"** (Romans 6:23).

† You need to understand that God loves you no matter what you have done. **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"** (Romans 5:8)

† You must confess that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah and receive His gift of salvation. **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation"** (Romans 10: 9–10).

**NOTE:** In 1999, Eric Barger and David Benoit released the forerunner to this pamphlet that outlined our concerns about Halloween. We've reprinted it here in its entirety. Over 200,000 of them have been printed and distributed worldwide in the past decade. Though you may have seen far more extensive pieces exposing Halloween (see links for two more perspectives at the bottom of this page), we feel that what we share here is very usable in communicating to children. Feel free to distribute this information. The only restriction is that if you print this, we ask that you print it in its entirety. This information also appears in the book ***Entertaining Spirits Unaware: The End-Time Occult Invasion***.

### **Eric Barger Postscript**

If there is any single thing Christians need to do on October 31st it is to pray! This is the highest unholy day of those in the occult. Many involved with witchcraft believe that the separation between the natural and spiritual worlds is thinnest during this day. So, if for no other reason, the amount of evil supernatural activity is going to be greatest that day just because more occultism is being practiced. Also, it is known that more sacrifice (animal and yes, human) is carried out on October 31st than on all of the other days of the year combined. Aware Christians - full of the Holy Ghost - should be praying and conducting spiritual warfare against the powers of darkness! Along with Christ-centered celebrations of life and activities for our kids, churches should consider some teaching from the above information we've shared followed by a power-packed time of prayer, binding the forces of darkness and asking God to protect our neighborhoods, cities, and citizens. **- Eric Barger**

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## Eric Barger

After spending two decades immersed in the world as a record producer, rock musician, drug addict, and New Ager, **Eric Barger** (pronounced *Bar-jer*) is now widely recognized in the area of Christian Apologetics and Discernment Ministry. Eric's ***Take A Stand! Ministries*** confronts both the culture and the Church, focusing on the Cults, World Religions, the Occult, Spiritual Warfare, and, most particularly, the troubling unbiblical trends and doctrinal issues facing Christians in these end days.

He is the author of numerous books, including the best-seller ***From Rock to Rock, Entertaining Spirits Unaware: The End-Time Occult Invasion*** (with co-author David Benoit) and ***Disarming the Powers of Darkness***. Eric has written for ***USA Today*** and has been interviewed by hundreds of print and electronic media outlets, including ***Time Magazine*** and ***Fox News***. His articles are now syndicated on dozens of biblically-based prophetic and apologetics websites and blogs. Eric has been a featured guest on many Christian and secular programs, such as ***Southwest Radio Ministries*** and ***Christ in Prophecy*** with Dr. David Reagan.

After hosting his own nationally broadcast program, Eric now serves as the co-host of "***Understanding the Times Radio***" heard each week on over 800 stations and across the Internet.

## David Benoit

David Benoit (Ben-wah) accepted Christ as Savior in 1972 after a rebellious teenage life had led him to reform school. He is a graduate of Liberty Baptist College (now Liberty University). In 1984, he founded Glory Ministries, an evangelistic ministry. His expertise in exposing the New Age Movement and the occult led him to author two books, ***Fourteen Things Witches Hope Parents Never Find Out*** and ***Who's Watching the Playpen?***

Having been the host of his own daily radio show, David has been interviewed on various Christian programs including the Inspirational Network, Trinity Broadcasting Network, Moody Broadcasting, "Point of View with Marlin Maddoux", Dr. D. James Kennedy, and Bob Larson Live. He is also a frequent guest host for the Southwest Radio Church program.

David resides in Lynchburg, Virginia, with his wife Debbie and children, Brandon and Lindsay.

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