

# Satan, Demons, and Halloween: History, Satanic Influence, and Christian Response

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If you give treats at Halloween, what do you say when someone comes to your door dressed in a costume depicting Satan, a demon, or a witch? This brief essay offers a suggestion for Christians, whom the Lord has called to be his witnesses in this age of spiritual warfare (cf., e.g., Ephesians 6:10-18; Revelation 12-20), but first an essential prefatory perspective is necessary to have in place as a frame of reference. This essential reality, our identity in Christ and relationship with the triune God, must shape our worldview, the frame of reference, the theological filter, through which we view all of life.

This worldview also helps us speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) in such situations and thereby serve the Lord in the calling he has given us. God informs us both through his Word (called in theology special revelation) and through observable phenomena, including careful science that is accurately done, (called in theology general revelation, cf., e.g., Romans 1:18ff.). In the latter, sound human learning research reveals that behavior which is rewarded tends to be reinforced and repeated. Therefore, if one gives a reward, in this case a treat, to someone posing as Satan, a demon, or a witch, all of which God condemns in the Bible (Genesis 3:14ff.; Matthew 8:16; 1 Corinthians 10:20-21; 1 Timothy 4:1; Deuteronomy 18:10-11), that will be received as an affirmation of his or her decision to represent an evil being that actively opposes God and all he wills and is doing, certainly not pleasing to God, and not at all a witness for Christ and the triune God.

What, then, can a Christian do to turn this negative situation into a positive one for the Lord and a good witness for him? If you are planning to participate in Halloween, now is the time to prepare for this possible occurrence, so Christians who do offer Halloween treats will not be caught off guard. Such costumes are likely to be seen, since such Satanic activity is increasing.

If someone comes to your door dressed in a demonic costume, consider saying something like this: “Do you know that your costume represents a being who is actively opposed to God?” Momentarily pause, and then say, “As a believer in and follower of Jesus Christ, I cannot affirm such a being, or reward what that being you stand for with your costume does in real life. At the same time, I would like to think that you are not such a being as you are posing to be, so I have a deal for you. I won’t give you a treat in that mode of dress, but if you come back without that costume, I will not only give you a treat, but I’ll give you twice as much as I would normally give you in order to reward you for your better judgment.” You could also say, “I will give you a special treat” and make it extra nice for further emphasis of your strong point. If you don’t know the child’s name it might be good to say, “What is your first name, so when you return, I’ll know it’s you.” Especially if he or she is a young child, it might also be good to say, “Why don’t you bring your mom or dad with you when you return.” In that way, you’d have an opportunity to be a witness for the Lord to his or her parent(s) as well.

Many say, “Is this situation really all that significant? Aren’t the kids and others participating in Halloween activities just having fun?” To adequately understand and answer these and related

questions and comments, we need to think more carefully with God's Word and the Holy Spirit's help.

*Take the reality of sin and evil seriously.*

We begin with God's Word, which is clear: When Adam and Eve sinned, they initiated death and a profound and cosmic disharmony, which God told, indeed warned, them would occur if they disobeyed him. From that time until Jesus returns again, this spiritual and physical death and disharmony is the root cause of all the problems in life. Too many people are clueless about this reality, and their lack of awareness is exploited by Satan and his demonic followers, including those who practice such dimensions of it as witchcraft. There is much more.

Incorporating into our worldview the Biblical explanation of the spiritual warfare that characterizes this age gives us understanding and added wisdom. It explains the occurrence of phenomena many people experience but cannot understand, much less know what to do about, such as unexplainable phenomena *The Denver Post* reported in an interview with Ryan Cornwell, a former resident in an apartment in the Uptown Square district. Cornwell was accused by a downstairs neighbor of jumping up and down all night for weeks, but he was actually sleeping. "There was this energy in the air there," Cornwell said. "I moved and haven't felt it since."<sup>1</sup>

It is dangerous to downplay, disregard, and to participate to any degree in these and all other forms of evil. The subject of Satan, the demons, and their ilk, must be taken seriously. Making light of it with unwitting and uninformed cavalier comments such as, "Isn't he a cute little devil?" is to thoughtlessly deceive oneself and others. Devils are neither cute nor little; they destroy life, including eternal life. People open themselves to Satan and the demons in such ways as with Ouija boards; following horoscopes; charging crystals; visiting fortune tellers, psychics, tarot readers, mediums and their ilk; becoming involved in Yoga, a key part of Hindu religion (Biblically faithful Christianity offers far more, and is spiritually far safer, than anything in Yoga, even than in so-called "Christianized" Yoga);<sup>2</sup> embracing non-Christian religious literature; and attending services of non-Christian worship and such worship practices in private, as well as in many other ways. All these practices are disobedient to God and are not in accord with his will; indeed, he detests them.

For more information on, and how with the Lord's all-sufficient and all-powerful help to counter, the work of Satan and the demons, read the Bible each day and pray to the Triune God! Also read Biblically accurate literature, such as C. S. Lewis' classic book, *The Screwtape Letters*, wherein he advises Christians to have a healthy balance in our thinking about Satan and the demons, thus avoiding two equally dangerous extremes: the complete unbelief in the existence of Satan and the demons or an excessive preoccupation with them, both of which lead to dangerous

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Hernandez, "The ghost Nextdoor: What to do if your Denver apartment is haunted, *The Denver Post*, reprinted in the *Loveland Reporter-Herald*, October 17, 2021, p. 5D.

<sup>2</sup> When I talk with people about Yoga being part of the Hindu religion, they say, "Oh, well, we don't do the Hindu part." I reply, "Then why call it Yoga? That's really deceiving yourself and others." I am also not convinced they even know what Hinduism is and how Yoga is a key part of that religion.

unbiblical error. Just as with a person who has an unbiblical and unrealistic view of human nature, e.g., looking at humans as being essentially good rather than inherently sinful, reduces watchfulness and lets his or her guard down, thus leaving the person vulnerable to crime and being taken advantage of in other ways, disregarding even the existence of Satan and the demons renders one susceptible to their manipulation, influence, oppression, and even possession. Never forget the Apostle Peter's admonition, "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." (1 Peter 5:8)

Talk with or read about the work of a Christian who has the gift of discernment (1 Corinthians 12:10) and those who have studied and been trained in, done, and been involved with exorcism of demonic beings. Such exorcists have learned how to look for signs of demonic activity that others can easily miss or mistakenly attribute to something else, such as mental illness. Be careful here; not all who claim to have these spiritual gifts are Biblically accurate in their thought and practice. Many problems that are being treated as "mental health" issues go far beyond mental illness, though you'll never hear of this from the so-called "mainstream media." Of course, many people struggle with true mental health matters, e.g. schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and depression, that are not directly due to Satanic influence or demonic possession. Christian exorcists first do due diligence, working with credible, credentialed, Christian healthcare professionals to rule out other causes of psychiatric and physical health disorders before engaging in the process of diagnosing demonic involvement in the person's life. Further, there is a distinct but important difference between Satanic oppression and demonic oppression and possession.

Our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters in Christ; those in the Anglican Church, especially in countries that are mostly pagan, such as Africa and in India; and some other Christians, have excelled in taking seriously the Biblical teaching on spiritual warfare and in particular the Bible's teaching on Satan and the demons. I've been listening to; speaking with some, including when I was teaching in Africa; and reading the literature of those to whom the Holy Spirit has given the gifts of discernment and the ability to exorcise—the casting out of evil spirits from persons or places which is accomplished with the authority and power derived from Jesus Christ and done in Jesus' name. I've also been reading accounts of former Satanists, who disclose from the inside what abysmal, corrupt, and hellish Satanic worship involves and how it is intentionally contrary to Christian worship, e.g., holding Satanic worship services from 12:00 midnight until 3:00 AM, just the exact opposite of the time Jesus was on the cross until his death in which he conquered Satan and his demons. Here is seen more of how Satan has always completely opposed God; we should not participate in any way! Further details are revealed in the articles below; some are so despicable that I refer readers to these articles. Evil is nothing to play with and must be avoided in order to please God.

Zachary King, who became a Christian in 2008, was selected by the top leaders in the World Church of Satan to hold the position of high wizard. In this position, which he held for 26 years, he traveled widely to conduct Satanic rituals for politicians, CEOs, TV producers, and artists. Consider for a moment the implications of all that influence on our culture, the increasing disunity and divisiveness in the social issues and other problems in our country today, and its connection with the decline in the understanding of [the Christian basis of the United States](#). An interview with King, shows how children are now at a high risk of becoming involved with the

occult and how much the world is becoming more accepting of Satan. See also these articles on the Christian Education page of my [Website: Satanism: The Occult and Satanism in America](#) and [Satanism: The Little Girl Satanist Next Door](#).

Many of the Roman Catholic and other contemporary accounts from all over the world, closely parallel the accounts in the Bible, showing the continuing and increased Satanic and demonic activity, including here in the United States. Be very discerning. Beware. In particular, beware at Halloween.

*Halloween originated in and continues to promote paganism, the origin of which is from Satan.*

The origin of [Halloween is traced back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain](#) (pronounced “sow-in”). The Celt people were an amalgamation of tribes that emerged around 1,200 B. C. in central Europe. Gradually, they migrated throughout western Europe, and by the third century B. C., they held hegemony over much of Europe, especially France, Spain, Britain, and Ireland. Their cultural remnants remain most observable in Ireland and Great Britain.

The Celts celebrated their New Year on November 1. This date designated the end of summer and the beginning of the darkest and coldest time of the year, which in much human thinking links with the death of human beings. The Celts believed that the evening before the new year, the boundary between the realms of the living and the dead become blurred; therefore, they celebrated Samhain, one of the aspects of which is the unbiblical belief that the ghosts of those who have died return to earth often for malevolent purposes.

This widespread pagan belief system, shared by other non-Christian religions, conceives of the spirits of those who have died coming back to earth to make trouble, including damaging crops. Furthermore, the Celts believed that their priests, also contrary to God’s Word, could consult with these spirits from another world in order to make predictions about the future.

Another part of this pagan worship is recognizing the return of departed human spirits, which is unbiblical. When human beings die, we go to where God has appointed, based on our relationship with Jesus Christ; we do not leave that place until the resurrection, when Jesus returns for the final judgment and the decision as to where we spend eternity, again based on our relationship with him. (Luke 16:26; 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Matthew 25:31-33ff.)

Contrary to God’s Word, the pagan practice of religion all over the world has historically included a fear of returning human spirits, and this fear is especially manifest in the West at Halloween. The tradition of dressing up in costumes has Celtic roots. When people had to leave their homes on Halloween, they believed that if they dressed up in a costume and put on a mask, the spirits wouldn’t recognize them. How easily they, and people today, could have replaced their fear with faith in Christ Jesus, who is the omnipotent second person in the Triune God, Lord over all, and who has conquered the world with all its evil, so that his people do not need to be afraid! See more below in the comments on John 16:33. This fear was also manifest in the building of large bonfires, which the Celts believed to be sacred, where crops and animals were burned in sacrifices to their gods. These bonfires were built on hilltops in order to also frighten

away evil spirits. During this celebration, the Celts donned costumes, usually with animal heads and skins, together with the attempt to predict one another's future. After the celebration, the people would take some embers and light their own fires at home in order to protect them throughout the winter. Of course, such practices drew them farther away from God, exactly the purpose of Satan who is behind it all. Always keep in mind what God revealed to us through the Apostle Paul, "the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons." (1 Corinthians 10:20)

*For a time, the church transformed the meaning of Samhain into Halloween.*

An early tradition in the history of the church is All Saints Day, celebrated to remember at corporate worship those believers in Christ, whom the Bible refers to as saints, ἁγίων (*hagiōn*) > ἅγιος (*hagios*), which means holy, separated to God. (Cf., e.g., Matthew 27:52; Romans 1:7; Revelation 5:8) Originally, All Saints Day recognized those saints who were martyred and are now with the Lord in heaven, those who in obedience to Jesus Christ literally laid down their lives for him in martyrdom. (John 15:12-17; 1 John 3:16-18; Revelation 6:9ff.) When the number of believers who were killed while remaining steadfast in their witness (the New Testament Greek word for which, e.g., Acts 1:8, is μάρτυρες [*martures*], witnesses, from which the English word, martyr, is derived) for Christ became so large, a day was set apart for remembering these saints.

The church also uses this day to remember Jesus' teaching about laying down our lives for him by denying ourselves through giving to others in need (1 John 3:16-18); by suffering insults ("character assassination"), persecution, and people falsely saying all kinds of evil against us because of our relationship with Jesus (Matthew 5:11-12); by remembering the need to prepare even for the possibility of having to lay down our lives literally as a witness for our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ, to always persevere in the faith in him, and to never deny or recant our faith in the Triune God. (Acts 7:54-60) In America and in other places in the West, Christians are not in nearly as much danger of physical death for Christ as our brothers and sisters in the Lord elsewhere in the world, but the farther our Western culture moves away from Christ, the possibility of having to literally die for Christ increases. This is one reason for daily joining me in prayer that God extends and nurtures his kingdom (the rule of Christ in human hearts and minds) throughout our country as well as the rest of the world (it's a joy to mention specific countries in particular), and that he helps us be his witnesses, through whom he will extend and nurture his kingdom, thereby transforming people's lives from paganism into followers of Jesus Christ.

On All Saints Day, as well as daily, it is still important to recognize and pray for the even larger number of our brothers and sisters in Christ who are being martyred in modern times and for their families and fellow church members. In the last one hundred years, more believers in the Lord have been killed than in all the preceding 20 centuries...combined!

The saints honored on All Saints Day now include all who are with the Lord, literally all saints, who believed in and faithfully followed Christ Jesus while here on earth in the church militant. Churches today include in particular loved ones in the faith who have died, especially in the past year. It is good to remember the faithful in Christ as a way to keep in mind the Biblical

eschatological worldview, “the broad picture,” so we believers remember our calling, the importance of faith and persevering in Christ, and the eternal joys ahead for those in Christ Jesus.

All Saints Day was originally celebrated on May 13, a day established as early as the fourth century A. D.. By 744 A. D., the feast was expanded to include all the saints in heaven (called the church triumphant, contrasted with the church militant [fighting the good fight against evil in our ongoing spiritual warfare here on earth]); thus, the title of the festival was changed to the “Feast of All Saints” by 840. In some parts of the church it is still called “All Saints Day.” In 844 A. D., Pope Gregory IV transferred the celebration to November 1 to coincide with the harvests, including providing food for pilgrims. Some scholars maintain that this timing was done to eclipse the pagan feasts on November 1. Such rival celebrations have been done throughout the history of the church, e.g., establishing December 25 as the day to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and eclipse the pagan festival of Saturnalia that celebrated the winter solstice.

In 1484, Pope Sixtus IV designated November 1 as a holyday of obligation, and, in accord with a common custom throughout the history of the church, gave the November 1 festival a vigil beginning the evening prior, on October 31. Compare, e.g., the Easter Vigil on the Saturday evening before Easter; the Divine Office, or Liturgy of the Hours, containing Evening Prayer for the 51 other Saturday nights before the following Sunday, each of the 51 Sundays referred to as “Little Easter;” and a common historic practice among many Christians on Saturday evenings to holistically, including spiritually, prepare for corporate worship the next day. In England, saints, i.e., holy people, are called “hallowed.” Thus, this “All Saints” vigil became known as “All Hallows’ Eve” or “Hallowe’en.”

In the attempt to place all of life under Christ, who is Lord over all, some churches, such as Roman Catholic and Episcopalian, have developed liturgies for worship services to commemorate Halloween. Over time, Christians who are less mature in their faith and others in the culture, have allowed the influence of Satan, whom Jesus referred to as the (temporary) “prince of this world” (John 12:31; 16:11), to corrupt the church’s practice of the All Saints Vigil on October 31, thus producing the contemporary Halloween that contains evil mixed in with the good.

The way Halloween is being recognized today by many people desensitizes them to the extensive evil and dangers of the demons and Satan, which is exactly their intent. They are not good; in fact, they hate you and the rest of us and even themselves.

Jesus revealed Satan as a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44) We read in God’s Word that Satan also wears a costume: “Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.” (2 Corinthians 11:14) Be sure to keep in mind that Satan doesn’t remove his costume after Halloween; he always appears other than he truly is, thoroughly opposed to God and against God’s people. This is one of the reasons why Jesus also revealed that there is no joy in hell; rather, it is place of great weeping and gnashing of teeth. (E.g., Matthew 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28)

*As Christians, what should we avoid at Halloween and throughout the year?*

As mentioned above, Christians should always take Satan and the demons seriously. Therefore, we should never open or expose ourselves to demonic influence and worse in such ways as with Ouija boards, visiting fortune tellers, reading and absorbing non-Christian religious literature and attending services of non-Christian worship and such worship practices in private, and avoid involvement in any of the many other ways people dabble in the demonic.

If you have an interest in such subjects, read Christian literature written by highly regarded authorities in an historic Christian church that faithfully teaches and preaches God's Word. It is very important to be an active member of such a church.<sup>3</sup> Your pastor will be able to recommend trustworthy resources on these subjects.

Msgr. Stephen J. Rossetti, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist, President of the St. Michael Center for Spiritual Renewal, and a research associate professor at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D. C. He is also an exorcist. As an exorcist, he has seen the demonic up close and in action. Satan and the demons still act as they did when the Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles with Jesus' power drove the demons out of people. In his book, *Diary of an American Exorcist: Demons, Possession, and the Modern-Day Battle against Ancient Evil*, he states that

There are times during the year when the demonic is more powerful than usual, and Halloween is at the top of the list. It is the demons' distortion of the great feast of all Saints on the following day. Moreover, Satan's human minions will join in and cast curses, spells, and all sorts of evil, which doesn't help.

I wonder about parents who dress up their children as devils or witches. Do they have any idea?<sup>4</sup>

Fr. Vincent Lampert, another American Roman Catholic exorcist, explains the following in his book, *Exorcism: The Battle against Satan and His Demons*. A dear friend of mine, an outstanding Roman Catholic priest, knows some of the priests involved in this book and affirms their fine work. Fr. Lampert writes,

Halloween is something that is also problematic when it comes to creating an entry point for the demonic. Its popularity has soared in recent years making it the second most celebrated holiday in the United States. Christmas being the most celebrated. There are Halloween shops that have popped up all over the country

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<sup>3</sup> See my essays, "What is the church, and why should I attend?" and "What is the church, and why should I become a member" at <https://fromacorntoak12.com/what-is-the-church/>. See also "Essential Christianity: Historic Christian Systematic Theology—With a Focus on Its Very Practical Dimensions," a PowerPoint program at <https://fromacorntoak12.com/theology/>. Use the "Find" feature for "church attendance" and "church membership" to quickly locate the slides on those subjects.

<sup>4</sup> Msgr. Stephen J. Rossetti, Ph.D., *Diary of an American Exorcist: Demons, Possession, and the Modern-Day Battle against Ancient Evil* (Manchester, New Hampshire: Sophia Institute Press, 2021), p. 249. While containing some information that is not Biblically based, the book is otherwise an insightful and empirical disclosure of much demonic activity in the world still today, which is occurring as recorded in the Bible.

with all sorts of ghoulish costumes depicting the likes of demons, ghosts, witches, zombies, and werewolves. There are also many haunted houses, corn mazes, and insane asylums. People need to know that Halloween is a trap the devil uses to lure them into his world of evil. It begins with the desire for fun and entertainment and ends with the glorification of Satan and his [fallen] angels.<sup>5</sup>

Another exorcist, who serves in the Anglican Church of North America, has also seen the demonic up close and in several contexts. Eric Junger has had a wide ranging career, including as an enlisted sailor in the U. S. Navy, a medical examiner, a police detective, and a crime scene analyst, prior to becoming a clergyman over 10 years ago. Referring to Satan as “a master manipulator, an enemy responsible for physical, psychological, and spiritual havoc...he advises fellow believers to ‘put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.’” (Ephesians 6:11)<sup>6</sup> Junger maintains that Biblical admonitions to fight against Satan “take on a heavy urgency once you have seen the twisted work of Satan up close, again and again.”<sup>7</sup>

We Christians must avoid taking Satan and the demons lightly. Recent research from the Barna Group reports that even most Christians see Satan as a symbol of evil rather than a living being, thus misinterpreting the Bible. To properly interpret literature, including the Bible, historic principles of hermeneutics (interpretation) must be carefully employed. One of those principles involves how to discern whether a particular word or passage is to be understood literally or figuratively. The passages pertaining to Satan and the demons are written in a literary genre that is to be read literally. Griffin Jackson quotes Junger’s observation that “Many priests and ministers of most all denominations have lost their sense of the reality of Satan as a real entity bent on our destruction...Instead, they either don’t preach about what has always been clearly stated in sacred Scripture, or they minimize the extent.”<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the whole Bible, Satan and the demons are described as living and powerful beings, albeit nowhere near as powerful as God. In fact, God and Satan are *not* peers: Satan is a little peanut contrasted with God. Satan and his demonic followers are simply fallen angels who are created by, but disobedient to and have been cast out of the presence of, God. Jesus, and his disciples functioning under Jesus’ authority and omnipotence, cast out of demon possessed humans real evil spirit beings with extraordinary strength, not symbols of evil. (Cf., e.g., Mark 5:1ff.) These beings have names (e.g., Mark 5:9); generic evil does not have a personal name. Nor does a symbol of evil have the ability to predict the future, as did the one in a slave girl who earned a lot of money doing fortune-telling for her owners until the Apostle Paul in the name of Jesus Christ commanded the evil spirit to come out of her, which it did at that moment. (Acts 16:16ff.) From that time she was unable to predict the future, and her owners lost that source of income. Symbols cannot predict the future.

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<sup>5</sup> Fr. Vincent Lampert, *Exorcism: The Battle against Satan and His Demons* (Steubenville, Ohio: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2020), p. 88.

<sup>6</sup> Griffin Paul Jackson, “The Protestant Exorcists,” *Christianity Today*, p 53.

<sup>7</sup> Jackson, p. 54.

<sup>8</sup> Jackson, p. 54.



Halloween has morphed in recent decades. Adults of all ages are actively participating. In 2021, a record of over [10 billion](#)<sup>9</sup> (yes, that’s a “b”) is expected to be spent on Halloween, with 3.2 billion just on Halloween costumes. The U. S. Census of 2010 disclosed that witchcraft, which is condemned in God’s Word, is the fourth largest religion in the United States.

A newspaper column asks, “Who do you want to be for Halloween?” a very dangerous pursuit!<sup>10</sup> God has already created you to bear his image and to serve him in the greatest mission ever (Matthew 28:18-20); what more could you and I want?! Moreover, God’s power is infinitely greater than any other power, and the greatest power a human being can have is to be filled with the Holy Spirit, which any Christian can have. (Ephesians 5:18ff.)

*As Christians, what can we do with Halloween?*

Does all this mean we should avoid Halloween altogether? Not necessarily. Especially with young children, I prefer to use such opportunities as teachable moments. Here is another of the constant flow of circumstances in life here on earth where we can help children, teenagers, and adults to discern truth from error, right from wrong, what pleases God and what displeases him; i.e., what is in accord with and what goes against his Word and his will. As believers in and followers of Christ Jesus, we choose to obey the Lord and be holy to him and separated from evil. In so doing, we need to explain how we are different and why. That explanation is in this article, and in other passages in God’s Word. The discussion also involves what we do and don’t do, including how we dress, and why.

We are told in God’s Word to “not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2 NASB). Thus, we are to develop a Christian worldview that is shaped and guided by God’s Word and help others to do so as well. So be very careful to avoid the evil parts of Halloween that the demonic dimensions of the culture have inserted into what was originally a Christian celebration to eclipse an evil event. This is all part of the spiritual warfare that God’s people are waging until Jesus’ Second Coming when the present age will come to an end with the final judgment.

If you decide to do anything with Halloween, make sure that what you are doing is transformed into a Biblical motif. Christians have joy in Jesus. Therefore, if you want to carve pumpkins, make the face joyful and not ugly. As Msgr. Rossetti explains,

carving scary faces in pumpkins has its derivation in the superstition that such faces would scare away the evil spirits that roamed the earth on All Hallows’ Eve. Likewise, nazars are symbols with large eyes, thought to protect their wearers from the curse of the evil eye.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://newjersey.news12.com/americans-expected-to-spend-record-10-billion-on-halloween-this-year> (Accessed October 28 and November 4, 2021)

<sup>10</sup> Valerie McCullough, “Who do you want to be for Halloween?” Loveland, CO *Reporter-Herald*, October 17, 2021, p. 3C.

Clearly, these are pagan superstitions that have no place in Christian practice. They highlight the difference between a Christian understanding of grace and pagan superstitions and magic.

Magic posits that if one performs special rituals properly, a spiritual power is elicited. Thus, there are books of magic spells and magic rituals. Similarly, nazars and other special symbols are thought to have their own power. Christians eschew such practices. If such pagan rituals have any power, it comes through one's invoking Satan, whether one realizes it or not.

Christianity, on the other hand, sees all power and grace coming from God.... This is why any use of pagan superstition or magic rituals is an offense against God. Such practices are a direct violation of the first commandment, to acknowledge and worship the one true God.<sup>11</sup>

We can either turn our lights off and not invite “trick or treaters,” (but in some parts of the country or world, guard your house) or we can reward with a treat those who come to the door with decent costumes, as in the opening part of this essay. As also mentioned above, we can use the candy as a teaching opportunity for those who show up with costumes depicting, and who are thereby tacitly approving with a deceptive disguise trying to be funny, and identifying with evil such as, Satan, demons, witches, goblins, and the like.

Beginning a conversation by beginning where people are in their identification with their culture, is an approach to witnessing for Christ that has been a key practice in Christian missions throughout church history, even going back to the Bible. Recall, e.g., the Apostle Paul's observations about the Athenian culture and how he used that observation in his opening presentation to the Upper Council in Athens, the Areopagus. (Acts 17:15-34, specifically v. 23)

Another possibility is to hold an All Hallows' Eve worship service, as is done in the [Episcopal Church](#) and in the Roman Catholic Church. Such a service could be adapted to your church's needs and liturgical practice. The service could be followed by a joyful fellowship event, especially one that includes reference to the next day's celebration of All Saints Day. The celebration should include the very positive and most important blessing of Christ Jesus' victory over Satan and the demonic. Include, e.g., Jesus statement to his disciples, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33) Notably, the original Greek word translated “overcome,” νενίκηκα (*nenikēka*), means “I have conquered.” Jesus is Lord over all; has conquered the κόσμος (*kosmos*), the world, including all its evil, including Satan and the demons! What a relevant and superb opportunity to proclaim this Good News and with great joy!

True believers in and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom the Holy Spirit dwells (thus prohibiting Satan and the demons), who daily nurture their faith by reading the Bible and spending time in prayer to our triune God, and attend worship in a Bible-believing church that

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<sup>11</sup> Rossetti, p. 251. Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 5:7.

proclaims the Gospel of Christ faithfully, and who are maturing in Christlikeness (Ephesians 4:11-16), do not have to worry about Satanic or demonic possession, and the Lord will help us overcome Satanic and demonic oppression. (Cf., e.g., John 16:33) Yet, neither should we unwisely and carelessly facilitate the activity of Satan and the demons by participating in such dangerous activities as indicated above or even in unwarranted and unwitting rewarding of evil aspects of Halloween.