

The challenge of Halloween

Halloween has changed because society has changed.

Long ago, before anyone with current memory was around, All Hollow's Eve was "celebrated" (actually memorialized) as a remembrance of our departed loved ones. Then somewhere along the line its religious connotations were replaced by a celebratory event – maybe looking death in the face and laughing – not in a religious sense but with a worldview that begin to look at and even mock the spiritual foundation of the day.

In your grandparent's day, Halloween was light and fun. It was for the kids. Trick or treating was a community event. People would invite you in for hot chocolate or cider with apples, donuts, and candy. Imagine that today. As they adults got more and more involved Halloween became darker and darker – more macabre. The religious connotations were pushed aside (like much in current society.) A part of Halloween has become a celebration of the demonic. And that which was light has become corrupted. It is not all demonic, it is not all bad but finding the dividing line has become so blurred and challenging that innocent children (and unknowing parents) are open to influences that are detrimental to the true spiritual growth of their children. So why open an "innocent" looking door?

Our experience was to redeem that which had been stolen with a different name and different celebration by having a fall Festival or a Fall Harvest celebration where we give thanks to God for the abundance of what He has provided. There have been times, not for most of us, where there was no or little harvest. It helps to remind children of God's blessings. We would celebrate with food and games. No scary costumes were allowed. Children were encouraged to dress up as community helpers or Bible characters.

Christian schools should be aware of the influences around them and be deliberate in their embrace (or lack of embrace) of the culture. Protecting our children from demonic and negative influences is now a necessity in a society that has turned every moral concept and family construct upside down.

The challenge of Halloween is to abstain from even the appearance of evil even when "evil" seems so innocent.