

Can Christians Dabble in Darkness Without Fear?

The rise of the unbiblical false-grace message has had predictable results: Christians are increasingly dabbling in darkness in the name of freedom. Those in that camp wrongly presume their casual response to sin has no consequences and that God's love will cover every iniquity.

My recent Charisma News article on the dangers of engaging in cultural wickedness resulted in some Christians reacting in disagreement. Many vehemently resisted the idea that we should have any measure of concern about participating in Halloween due to our position in Christ—a position they believe cannot be compromised no matter how we behave. However, this emerging false principle reaches far beyond whether we should go trick-or-treating or not. Our entire lives are at risk the moment we dismiss caution regarding the unholy.

“I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service of worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:1-2, MEV).

This unbiblical, permissive principle that laughs at concern over evil in our culture gives license to careless playing with darkness. As a result, the aggressive defense against calls to separation and consecration very often comes in the form of an accusation. They presume to be standing for liberty and against religion as they boldly accuse messengers of holiness of legalism.

I actually believe it's a severe offense to the cross when we

reject calls of consecration in the name of freedom. This liberal position of casual unrighteousness is gaining wide acceptance in the charismatic world. Instead of exposing the darkness, the evil in the land is resulting in a collective yawn.

“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them. For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light—for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth—proving what is pleasing to the Lord” (Eph. 5:6-10, MEV).

“And do not have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; instead, expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret” (Eph. 5:11-12, MEV).

The argument is that we as Christians should never be afraid of repercussions from entertaining worldly elements in our culture. After all, perfect love casts out all fear, right?

“There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. Whoever fears is not perfect in love” (1 John 4:18, MEV).

Perfect love doesn't automatically manifest simply because we are saved and that we have a connection with Jesus. Not even close. Perfect love produces evidences and one of those evidences is a repulsion of anything that is unholy.

“I will sing of mercy and justice; to You, O Lord, I will sing. I will consider the path that is blameless. When will You come to me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before my eyes. I hate the work of those who turn aside; it shall not have part of me” (Ps. 101:1-3, MEV).

Perfect and steadfast love, as declared in the above passage, results in worship of God and living a blameless life. We won't put anything worthless or anything wicked as the Kings James Version puts it, before our eyes. We will have a hatred of anything unholy and will do all we can to ensure it doesn't cling to us. Sadly, instead of hating the wickedness in our culture, many are working hard to validate their "innocent" participation as proof of their freedom. The result? Wickedness is clinging to them as they bring dishonor to the God they say they love. Deception is running rampant.

What About the Blood?

Many presume the mere act of repeating a prayer and inviting Jesus into their life makes them bulletproof. The idea is that a revelation of the power of the blood will result in a confidence that we are untouchable by the enemy. Thus, we can have no concern regarding our behaviors, what we are entertained by or the growing darkness in the land.

We can participate without fear. Friend, that is a gross misunderstanding of liberty, love and fear.

Others have accused preachers of righteousness of inciting fear in people when they talk about the consequences of participating in worldly entertainment such as Halloween, immoral movies and television and music. The truth is that ungodly fear of the enemy is an expected result if we are aligning ourselves with him. The warning is to resist the devil, not to ignore him. If we resist, we can walk free from fear. However, if we ignore the enemy or dismiss worldly attractions as benign, we open ourselves up to a very real nightmare. We can't embrace evil and avoid fear. It's not possible.

If we are entertaining demons and the evil that demanded the slaughter of Jesus, we can be sure our love has not been made perfect. Further, we can have confidence that access to our

lives has been granted to very evil beings.

The blood of Jesus absolutely does not grant Christians immunity from attack or from the influences of evil that we open our lives to. The blood of Jesus grants us authority to pierce the darkness as we live consecrated, blameless lives of perfect love.

“As righteousness tends to life, so he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death. Those who are of a perverse heart are abomination to the Lord, but such as are upright in their way are His delight” (Prov. 11:19-20, MEV).

Our connections or alliances or permissions can make us extremely vulnerable. They result in open doors for the enemy to access our lives.

A very important question comes from the Bible: *“Do two people walk together, if they not be agreed?”* (Amos 3:3).

The moment we roll our eyes at those who are making calls for holiness is the moment we become aligned with evil. Further, our agreement with the enemy and his plans of destruction result in a hand-in-hand walk with him. We become partners. We further his cause while we shout freedom from the rooftops and mock those who are exposing the darkness.

No, the blood of Jesus doesn't grant us immunity. But if we walk in authority, the power of the blood is beyond our ability to imagine! Sin is eradicated in a moment. Disease is healed, demons are cast out and people are transformed for eternity!

House Cleaning and Deliverance

I've been involved in some incredible deliverances and house cleanings over my 25 years of ministry. I absolutely love it when I can participate in ministering freedom and deliverance to people who are bound up by the enemy.

Some amazing Christian people have been unable to break free until they went through deliverance or until they invited people to pray through their house. One person actually removed 12 large trash bags full of items from their home after such a ministry session with my wife and me. The items were acting as curses upon them simply because they brought them into their homes.

Others eliminated movies and other media from their DVR or devices that were resulting in oppression and demonic activity.

In fact, over 20 years ago I sat down to watch a very popular movie at the time, *Silence of the Lambs*. Common spiritual sense should have made it clear that I shouldn't watch such a movie. Nevertheless, I did, and in the middle of it the Holy Spirit spoke very directly to me: *John, you have to turn this off.*

Some time went by and my new wife and I were vacationing in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. One night in the hotel I was exhausted and decided to go to bed early. As I was drifting to sleep I noticed my wife decided to watch *Silence of the Lambs*. I saw that it was on network television, so it was the "sanctified" version. I wasn't too concerned and I fell asleep quite quickly.

I suddenly started dreaming, if you can call it that. It was real and it was pure evil. I couldn't breathe as the demonic atmosphere overwhelmed me. In the dream I was in the same bed, in the same hotel room as I was in reality. I looked over and saw my wife next to me. She was watching *Silence of the Lambs*.

I then started levitating above the bed and was maneuvered above my wife. Somehow I had a very large knife in my right hand. As I was convulsing due to the inability to breathe, I took the knife and violently advanced against my wife with the intent to murder her.

Then I woke up.

My wife was extremely disturbed as she was shaking me awake. She told me I was convulsing and aggressive. Nothing like that had ever happened to me and it was disturbing.

As I came to, *Silence of the Lambs* was still on the television. I told her to turn it off immediately.

The room was filled with the thickness of demonic activity. Now awake, I could still barely breathe. The evil we somewhat unwittingly invited into the room had taken up residence.

Now, remember, my wife and I were blood-bought, Spirit-filled Christians. We were not immune to the attack of the enemy that we invited into our lives by watching that video. We opened the door and gave Satan authority to move in.

After turning off the television, we didn't rely on immunity and ignore the myriad of demons in the room. That immunity wasn't there. What we did, however, was move in our authority.

We repented for our sin and commanded every demon to leave, in the name of Jesus. Instantly they obeyed and left. The room was clean again and I could breathe.

Why am I sharing this? I want to point out how vulnerable we are to the enemy if we participate in unrighteousness. The evils of Halloween, most media and other forms of entertainment are saturated with demonic intent, and all it takes is an open door. Our participation is that open door. You can't innocently, harmlessly go trick-or-treating, dress up the kids and eat candy. You can't determine that certain types of movies don't offend you if they contain forbidden content. We must not put anything wicked before our eyes. We must not adopt the evil in our culture.

"When you enter into the land which the Lord your God gives you, you must not learn to practice the abominations of those

nations” (Deut. 18:9, MEV).

Depression, fear, anger, sickness and even death can come if we don't aggressively resist the devil and his schemes while proclaiming to follow Jesus. It's that serious.

“Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and unhealthy among you, and many die” (1 Cor. 11:28-30, MEV).

It's critical that we examine ourselves, live blamelessly and resist the devil. If we are careless in the name of freedom, we can only expect open doors to allow those who are bent on destroying us free access.

On the contrary, if we sound the alarm, reject wickedness and call people to righteousness, if we live in love and are zealous servants of the most high God, we can walk in extreme authority and annihilate the kingdom of darkness! {eoa}

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