

Just How Evil Is Halloween?

I remember the sweat pouring down my face as the condensation and heat built under my cheap plastic Spiderman mask. A similar but cheaper plastic outfit covered my body as I ran door to door with my pillowcase, collecting candy. I was trying to keep up with my older brother and neighborhood friends without much luck, but having a great time anyway.

For a kid in Western Montana, Halloween was about candy and surviving the elements. It was frequently quite cold and even snowing! The weather didn't stop our frenzy for all types of sugar and the excitement Halloween produced.

It wasn't until later I heard that Halloween was evil.

Unbeknownst to my family and me, we had been participating in a satanic event which helped the powers of darkness deceive millions. Long time Christians, who knew far more than I did, told me how the holiday was steeped in the mystic mechanisms of pagan and satanic worship. Evil forces hijacked this night, All Hallows' Eve, and made it into a night of revelry for demons and witches.

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As I studied, I came to understand the history of All Hallows' Eve. All Saints' Day is Nov. 1. It is a day to commemorate those who have gone before us in the faith. They are dead, but we are grateful for them. I think of it like the great cloud of witnesses from Hebrews.

With superstition and the belief that the saints were among us, it wasn't hard for people to allow this date to become macabre. In fact, cultures across the globe celebrate this day differently, each with its own flavor and spin, depending upon

its standing within Christian tradition.

Given that All Hallows' Eve is celebrated differently around the globe to commemorate those who have gone before us in the faith, it seems odd that some are fearful it is evil.

If it is evil, it is so because it will soon eclipse Christmas in spending, joining capitalism and Christianity in an even more convoluted web of practice. Its evil can be found in the intent of some to practice evil on this night. Can evil be found in celebrating the fall harvest? Only if you worship something other than Christ. Can evil be found in children pretending to be someone else, like their favorite hero? Only if it is for some nefarious purpose. I certainly never felt that way when I played cops and robbers. Can evil be found in people giving out candy? Only if they give candy corn; that stuff is gross.

Making Halloween, or All Saints' Eve, an evil practice has everything to do with those participating. Allowing them to dictate how we should participate (or not participate as the case may be) in cultural events doesn't make sense. There will always be a small portion of people who want it to be evil, and they will make it so.

For the vast majority, it is a time to have fun with their kids. It is a time to gather with friends around a cookout or chili. It is a time to take hundreds of pictures of our children, dressed up and excited, and for us to remember those sweat-filled laps around the neighborhood collecting candy and enjoying the fun that is Halloween. {eo}

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