

# Pastor's Wife Offers 'Jesus' Alternative to Demoniac Halloween

Growing up, Halloween was a fun time of year. We dressed up in cute little costumes and went around the neighborhood collecting large amounts of candy. The candy lasted for over a month. I remember my little pumpkin candy collector that one year was replaced by a pillowcase. The pillowcase held more room for candy.

My parents kept me away from the scary side of Halloween. We never went to haunted houses or scary events. We didn't watch horror movies or do scary things.

When I went away to college, Halloween was no longer part of my life. After all, my friends and I were too busy studying and hanging out to think about a children's holiday such as Halloween. However, each year on my college campus there would be a pentagram drawn somewhere with a few dead animals laying on top of the writing. Often the dead animals included at least one black cat. No one dressed up on Halloween. Besides, the horrific pentagram scene we would see the day after, Halloween was just a distant childhood memory.

I assumed that when I had my own children, I would dress them up and take them trick-or-treating. After my husband, Mike, and I married, we would pass out candy to neighborhood children on Halloween, often enclosing little tracts to share the gospel with them. About this time, strange things started happening to candy. There were rumors of razor blades and other non-candy items being found in children's candy. Kids were encouraged to take their candy to the police stations to be checked before they ate it. Parents, who had years before sent their children off by themselves to trick-or-treat, were

now encouraged to go with them. As a result of these scares, or so I thought, churches began offering Halloween alternatives. Children would dress up, play games and gather candy from large bowls around the fellowship hall.

My husband, a youth pastor, planned and headed up many of these events in our church. We had fun and played silly games.

As my children drew near to the age of trick-or-treating, things began to change in our lives. Mike became a senior pastor and we counseled people who had been involved in witchcraft, including one girl who had been tortured and raped in a Halloween celebration. You see, we learned that Halloween was a high “Un-Holy” day for Satanists and others involved in various types of witchcraft and the occult. We were shocked!

As we were discovering the dark side of Halloween, Halloween became more and more popular in America. Suddenly the stores weren’t just filled with candy, they were filled with creepy decorations. Creepy costumes never were attractive to me, but to walk through my neighborhood and see lawns turned into graveyards gave me a start. I didn’t like the darkness of the decorations.

As we researched Halloween, we realized that we didn’t want to participate as a family. At the same time, we didn’t want to be Scrooges, so we passed out candy and tracts with our children. Soon, however, they asked us questions like: “If we think Halloween is bad, why are we passing out candy?” or “Why can’t we go out trick-or-treating?” They were confused by our behavior, and, to be honest, so was I.

Was there a solution? Well, looking at the calendar, we discovered that on Oct. 31, Martin Luther nailed the 95 Theses to the Wittenberg Door and the next day, Nov. 1, was celebrated as All Saints Day for centuries by Christians. Now, those things were things I could get behind and celebrate.

Now each year, we have a Heroes for Jesus party. Adults and

older teens dress up as heroic Christians from the pages of history who did exploits for the glory of God. We have had St. Patrick, Martin Luther, St. Francis, Brother Andrew, Elisabeth Elliot, Nate Saint, Corrie ten Boom, George Mueller, Lottie Moon, Amy Carmichael, Eric Liddell, Charles Wesley, John Wesley, the apostle Paul, Athanasius, Polycarp, Dr. David Livingstone and Joni Eareckson Tada “visit” our parties. They introduce themselves to the children and play a game with them. We often end the evening with a movie such as *Luther*.

If you would like to learn more about having your own Heroes for Jesus party, you can purchase my e-book, *Celebrate Our Christian Heroes (Instead of Halloween)*. {eoa}

**Meredith Curtis**, pastor's wife and homeschooling mom of five amazing children, has been married to her college sweetheart, Mike Curtis for 31 years. She loves Jesus, leads worship, homeschools, writes, mentors ladies and sometimes even cooks dinner! She is the author of *Joyful* and *Successful Homeschooling*, and several high school classes and Bible studies. She and Mike are founders of the *Finish Well Conference*, a Christian conference aimed at equipping families to disciple their children to be world changers.