

Jack Hayford: What We Should Do About Halloween

Most everyone has forgotten the derivation of the name Halloween: “hallowed-evening,” so called because it was the night before All Saints’ Day. The rise of pranks and foolishness on Halloween was a kind of “last-chance-for-sin” splurge on the night before everyone was to commemorate the quality of life and character in the great Christian leaders throughout history.

As a child, I loved Halloween.

Ringling doorbells and dashing from door-to-door picking up the good treats that neighbors offered with delight. I even remember thinking up ways to change my appearance so I could go back again to those houses where the best treats were being given!

Yes, I loved Halloween. I wish children today could too.

But something has happened to Halloween that requires discernment by parents and grandparents who care, particularly those of us who are aware of the subtle and sinister workings of the demonic. Innocent pranks have become vandalism, mischievousness has become indulgence in filth, witches aren’t just costumes, and the treats given out can no longer be trusted as safe to eat.

I am not cynical; I just feel a pain of nostalgia for something I truly enjoyed. But there is *something* to do:

In terms of activities, fulfillment and enjoyment for kids, many great churches have first-class parties for children. These “Harvest Celebrations” can be packed with fun, food, action, games, costumes, goodies and, to top it all off, a look at Jesus!

We also need to cultivate our senses to recognize and resist the subtlety of the demonic that seeks to take over this season. I frankly believe the evil one uses Halloween as a special recruiting day. Many people, who would not normally participate in evil things, will dabble in “games” of spiritism. Unfortunately, this *isn't* all “just good fun.” It’s a biblically based fact that demonic powers wait in the wings for access to those minds that will toy with their trade.

However, don’t mistake debunking for discerning. I become weary when people chant self-righteous, legalistic tirades against holidays, because it proposes that to believe in Jesus requires the renunciation of everything that is just plain enjoyable. Discerning that evil has entered Halloween doesn’t require scratching a Harvest or Fall celebration from your kid’s calendar; nor does the “praiselessness” of some people’s “Turkey-Day” destroy my praiseful feasting at Thanksgiving. Commercialized “Xmas” hasn’t deprived me of trees, gifts, carols, decorations, loving fun or Jesus.

When Christ lets you know who you are, you can recognize what’s going on around you. And Satan can’t take anything that belongs to you! {eoa}

For more, visit .