

# Why My Family Decided to Give Up Halloween

The Halloween debate in many Christian circles can get heated as if it were politics. This article is not meant to cast judgement on people who choose to celebrate Halloween. There are a lot of people I know and love who celebrate it. This article is merely sharing my family's story and the reason we gave it up. If you don't agree with me, that's fine. It's between you and God.

My husband and I both grew up celebrating Halloween. I would say we both had the stereotypical upbringing of carving pumpkins and trick-or-treating. My family would throw Halloween parties, and I remember getting a plastic Smurfette costume and wearing it proudly. Early on for me, Halloween was something that seemed innocent.

Somewhere along the way, it changed, though. I'm not exactly sure when that happened. Was it the time I dressed up as a witch, and my mother thought I looked so convincing that she wouldn't let me go out of the house without a cross around my neck? Or was it the time that my aunt and I went into a "Haunted House" put on by the local theater company? I was so terrified that I begged my aunt to let me hide in the building in some random closet.

By the time I was in high school, I worked at a Halloween store, where I dressed up nightly and choreographed their runway show every year. At that point, I know something inside of me had started to wake up to the fact Halloween isn't all fun and games. I remember working in that store and playing Carmen songs as this horrid pre-recorded witch would cackle a song. This is also about the time I began learning about the supernatural.

What I kept coming back to as I grew older was that there really is a devil; he is out to steal, kill and destroy. But God is bigger. Jesus came so that we might have life and have it more abundantly. Once I began learning about and seeing exorcisms (demons leaving people) as well as praying for people to get free from demonic activity, it was no longer fun and games to me. It was a very real battle.

Then my husband and I had children, and our oldest was old enough that we had to make a decision. The more I thought about this whole Halloween debate, and learned what its origins really are, the more I couldn't deny it wasn't a holiday just meant for fun and games. Rather, it has a very dark side. How could I parent children and encourage them to live their lives on fire for Jesus 364 days a year but tell them it was OK one day a year to act out some practices that are deeply saturated in witchcraft? Could I let the traditions I was raised with overpower a growing check in my spirit when it came to Halloween?

That's about when a friend of mine sent me several videos. I started doing my own research regarding the origins of Halloween. It's still celebrated today as a holy day in many demonic circles. Historically, the day is filled with things I do not believe people who are trying to move forward in their relationship with God need to be celebrating.

My simple answer is that Halloween is a holiday for a religion to which I do not adhere.

I've heard many arguments from people who want to justify celebrating it. Again, this is the choice my family and I have made. What others want to do is in between them and God. One of the most common arguments is that "Halloween is all fun and games. We dress our children in non-evil costumes." However, did you know by declaring, "Trick or treat," you're basically saying, "Either give me candy or I'm going to put a curse on you?" Again, these are not things I want to encourage my

children to say. My husband and I just couldn't encourage celebrating this holiday in our family.

I've also heard the argument that All Hollow's Eve is Catholic in its origins, so Halloween is based on that, and thus it must be OK. Actually, the Catholic Church took the pagan traditions of Halloween and tried to make it work within the church, so I don't follow that line of reasoning either. Many people want to argue that "some Christmas and Easter traditions are also steeped in some pagan ones, so how can I say no to Halloween and not to the others?" My answer to this is simple. At Christmas I don't worship a tree; I celebrate Jesus' birthday. At Easter, I do not worship a bunny; I celebrate the resurrection.

Another common argument is that somehow "I'm making my children miss out on something by not celebrating Halloween." Neither of my kids has ever wanted to celebrate the holiday. In fact, both knew at an early age that the creepy decorations and costumes in stores leading up to Halloween were distasteful. I didn't have to tell them that. I can remember one of my kids being quite loud at some witch display. I tried to walk quickly past it because I was a little embarrassed at how loud my kids were.

If they want candy, I have no problem buying it for them, and I have no problem with them dressing up and being silly. We've been a part of various alternative harvest festivals over the years. I've also heard the classic argument, "Well I turned out OK," to which my response is "Great! I'm glad you did, but why would that make me want to celebrate something like this?" Just because I walked on hot coals (not literally) doesn't mean I think my children should. Why would I encourage my kids to play with fire?

Lastly, I've heard the argument "What if my kids grow up and choose to celebrate it?" Well, I hope they don't. They know how my husband and I feel, but that doesn't mean I would

disown them. What they will choose to do with their future families is between them, their future spouses and God.

To all of these arguments, I want to say this, “When do we teach our children that we are different than the world, and that’s OK? Why do we have to do something just because everyone else is doing it? Why can’t we just take a step back and see what kind of fruit something is manifesting in our lives?”

I realize that by posting this article, I’ll probably offend some people. That is not my desire. I just wanted to share why we gave up Halloween. I wanted to educate some who may not realize the dark side of this day. {eoa}

**Anna M. Aquino** *is a published author, guest minister and prophetic voice. Her books: Cursing the Church or Helping It? Exposing the spirit of Balaam, Confessions of a Ninja Mom, An Ember In Time and A Marriage In Time are available wherever books are sold. Please feel free to check out her website at*