

2 0 1 5 O C T O B E R

the PASTORAL *point*

PROCLAIMING TRUTH IN A WORLD OF UNCERTAINTY

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” (1 Timothy 4:1) This very cogent warning by the Holy Spirit, spoken “expressly” (or “with special clarity”) for those living in the latter days, predicts an unusual outbreak of seductive demonism—not just in pagan, idol-worshipping, or animistic cultures, but in “Christian” nations, where they can lead many to “depart from the faith” which their forefathers once professed. Christians, therefore, should not be taken by surprise at the vast eruption of witchcraft, New Age mysticism, Eastern occultism, rock-music demonism, drug-induced fantasies, altered states of consciousness, and even overt Satan-worshipping cults that have suddenly proliferated in our supposedly scientific and naturalistic society. Behind it all are the “seducing spirits” and “the rulers of the darkness of this world” ([Ephesians 6:12](#)).

It should be obvious that Christians must completely avoid all such beliefs and practices. “I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils” ([1 Corinthians 10:20](#)). “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing” ([2 Corinthians 6:17](#)). Even “innocent” fun (Halloween parties, ouija boards, dungeons-and-dragons games, etc.) and well-intentioned (but many times superficial) exorcism of apparent demon possession by Christian workers have often led to dangerous demonic influences in the lives of Christian people, as well as in Christians who have sought supernatural experiences or revelations. In anything that even touches on occultism or demonic influence, the advice of Peter is relevant. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith” ([1 Peter 5:8-9](#)).

Seducing Spirits

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The Christian Response to Halloween

Today Halloween is almost exclusively an American secular holiday, but many who celebrate have no concept of its religious origins or pagan heritage. That's not to say Halloween has become more wholesome. Children dress up in entertaining costumes, wander the neighborhood in search of candy, and tell each other scary ghost stories; but adults often engage in shameful acts of drunkenness and debauchery.

So, how should Christians respond?

First, Christians should *not* respond to Halloween like superstitious pagans. Pagans are superstitious; Christians are enlightened by the truth of God's Word. Evil spirits are no more active and sinister on Halloween than they are on any other day of the year; in fact, any day is a good day for Satan to prowl about seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). But "greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). God has forever "disarmed principalities and powers" through the cross of Christ and "made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them through [Christ]" (Colossians 2:15).

Second, Christians should respond to Halloween with cautionary wisdom. Some people fear the activity of Satanists or pagan witches, but the actual incidents of satanic-associated crime are very low. The real threat on Halloween is from the social problems that attend sinful behavior—drunk driving, pranksters and vandals, and unsupervised children.

Like any other day of the year, Christians should exercise caution as wise stewards of their possessions and protectors of their families. Christian young people should stay away from secular Halloween parties since those are breeding grounds for trouble.

Third, Christians should respond to Halloween with gospel compassion. The unbelieving, Christ-rejecting world lives in perpetual fear of death. It isn't just the experience of death, but rather what the Bible calls "a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which will consume [God's] adversaries" (Hebrews 10:27). Witches, ghosts, and evil spirits are not terrifying; God's wrath unleashed on the unforgiven sinner—now that is *truly* terrifying.

Christians should use Halloween and all that it brings to the imagination—death imagery, superstition, expressions of debauched revelry—as an opportunity to engage the unbelieving world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. God has given everyone a conscience that responds to His truth (Romans 2:14-16), and the conscience is the Christian's ally in the evangelistic enterprise. Christians should take time to inform the consciences of friends and family with biblical truth regarding God, the Bible, sin, Christ, future judgment, and the hope of eternal life in Jesus Christ for the repentant sinner.

Christians and Halloween by Travis Allen

