

Avoiding the Occult World

Introduction

Over the course of my lifetime the pagan holiday of Halloween has mushroomed into a commercial holiday that generates in excess of 5 billion dollars of sales connected to its celebration! It is a gigantic promotion both in stores and in the entertainment business. We all cross paths with Halloween as the day comes and goes, however, as Christians we should not imitate the world's celebration of the day. We do not celebrate evil, nor do we intend to trivialize Satan. Consequently, we should not promote witchcraft or any other occult practice as though it is harmless. We do not celebrate death, blood, gore, fear, or terror. Christians everywhere in our culture need to avoid traditional Halloween parties that glorify the occult world. Instead, the Christian community should be proactive and use this season as an opportunity to teach their children to avoid the occult world.

As well, we should be proactive in our witness for Christ during this season. October 31st will be a day the Lord makes and we can rejoice and be glad in it. Just don't compromise with evil! Instead, rebuke it. Plan to be a witness and shine a light in the darkness! Plan an outing with your children if you like and even have a treat if you like, just don't mimic the world's celebration of darkness! Plan now to be a creative witness for Christ and do not have fellowship with the darkness that is a very real part of this pagan holiday.

There are so much commercial activity and levity around this occult holiday that I fear Satan and his Kingdom of darkness has become trivialized in the minds of many to the point of reducing Satan, witchcraft, and demons to the category of

myth and make-believe. That would be bad enough. But at the other end of the spectrum is the deadly reality this occult holiday is opening a dark world to many who are initiated into its' web of deception by the curiosity generated by the holiday. What the general public thinks of as an innocent opportunity for young children to be treated to a batch of fresh candy can become the doorway into a snare of Satan! Remember, *Satan is no joke!* He is real and his ultimate goal is to lead souls away from the knowledge of the one, true and living God. In so doing, he hopes to lead them down the broad road that ends in everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord!

Such a sinister foal as Satan should not be cuddled by the Christian community in any way. Rather, we must stand ready to resist Satan steadfastly in the faith! Whenever and wherever he raises his ugly head, we must be ready to expose him. Christians should "*celebrate the opportunity*" at Halloween to expose Satan and his far reaching kingdom of darkness for what it really is! We must not send a message to the unbelieving world around us that Satan and witchcraft is nothing more than a figment of our busy imagination. Nor should we send a message by our behavior that the occult world is something to entertain ourselves with. There is no part of the greater culture that is going to sound the alarm about the dangers of the kingdom of darkness other than the Christian subculture. God forbid we as Christians become so lukewarm toward the kingdom of darkness that we succumb to the temptation to revel in the highest occult holiday of the year– Halloween!

Thou Shalt Not Learn the Abominations of those Nations
Deuteronomy 18:9-14

Verse nine contains a very important spiritual message for New Testament Christians who are led by the Holy Spirit. I might paraphrase it this way: *as you journey on your pilgrimage through this world, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of the lost world around you!* The Holy Spirit says in Ephesians chapter five that “*you were sometimes darkness, but now are you light in the Lord: walk as children of light . . . demonstrating to those around you what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is too shameful even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light . . . See then that you (the Christian community) walk circumspectly (that is, you walk very carefully, purposefully, and worthily), not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time (or taking advantage of every opportunity), because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

We discern the mind of the Lord by coming to the pages of his holy word with deep respect. In the pages of his written word, we discover the will of God for our walk in this troubled world. My friend, do not be unwise, rather understand what the will of the Lord is from his own precious word. Be instructed and receive corrections. Let this passage in Deuteronomy provide clear guidance and discernment as to how you relate to anything connected to the occult world.

In verse 10 we read: *There shall not be found among you any one that makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire . . .* At times, the pagan practice of offering sacrifices to idol gods included the sacrifice of children to those idols. The depths of such depraved acts can only be understood as one begins to

comprehend the fact these people were offering their children in worship of devils! All idolatry grieves the Lord because it involves turning away from him to a false god, but the sin is especially egregious when the practitioners engage in the worship of devils that demand the life of their children in exchange for appeasement and supposed favor! In the occult world worshipers have at times stooped to such atrocities in their blind allegiance to devils masquerading as a god.

With that said, the truth is all idolatry is linked to Satan. There is no *bland* kind of idolatry! It is all designed by Satan to lead mankind away from the true worship of the Lord. In the New Testament we are taught by the Holy Spirit to “flee from idolatry.” The Apostle Paul states clearly under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, *“But I say, that the things which the gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?”*

Indeed, are we willing to ignore the Lord’s clear instruction to avoid contact with the occult world? Shall we compromise with its’ idolatry, divination, witchcraft, or sorceries? My advice to you, as one called to watch for your souls, is this: *fear the Lord and depart from evil!* Make it your business to honor the Lord in all you allow in your life and the life of your children.

Now let's continue on in verse 10 . . . There shall not be found among you anyone that uses divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. These, my friend, are the trades of those who traffic in demons. Those who deny the living God, but who persist in their belief of some kind of spiritual power in the universe, without fail end up trafficking in demons! There are only two sources of spiritual power in the universe. There is the living God who has all power, and there is Satan who has limited power. Satan is free to interact with the human race and for his deceptive purposes is willing to manifest spiritual phenomenon. Therein is the great danger. Those who get a taste of his deceptive power are often easy prey for his destructive work. Consequently, the Lord strictly forbids any contact with that world.

It is interesting to note as the gospel made its' advance into the gentile world of the apostolic era, the apostles faced cultures steeped in occultism. They simply did not tolerate it. Rather, they rebuked it openly and exercising the authority of the name of Jesus boldly took back ground the enemy had long held in the lives of many living in darkness. In Acts 19 we are told that *"God worked special miracles by the hands of Paul. So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."* But the story doesn't end there. The scripture goes on to say:

"Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I

know, and Paul I know; but who are you? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used the curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Do you see what happens when people deeply respect the word of God? They come out of the occult world, and they don't play with it anymore.

Now, looking back at our text in verse 12 . . . *“For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.”* The bottom line for the nations dwelling in the land of Canaan at that time was this: *your time is up! The Lord has waited for repentance, but you persist in evil practices. Therefore your land is taken from you and given to another!* My friend, those nations were judged by the Lord because of idolatry and occult practices. I must tell you we are also headed for the Lord's judgment for the same reason. In the latter part of Revelation chapter nine scripture predicts a time of judgment when one third of the earth's population will be killed by coming war that is unleashed upon the planet. When this happens the Bible says that *“the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see,*

nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.” Today the Lord is calling men to repentance, which means among other things, he is calling men to turn from involvement in witchcraft, sorceries, and any kind of involvement in the occult world. *Failure to repent of such behavior will leave one lost without hope!*

The scripture also says in Revelation chapter 21, *“He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”* It is the most serious matter of all to fall into the hands of the living God! What will one say to him on that day if the mercy and grace he is offering in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, be rejected for open involvement in the occult world?