

The Truth About Halloween

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Greetings again, everybody. I know for many, we've just kept the best Feast ever. We have the cliché of having the best Feast ever, but certainly at Kellogg, and I've received cards from the folks in Elkhart, that many feel this last Feast was the best they ever kept, with the peace and harmony and unity. The fact is we are so blessed to understand God's plan for mankind, His plan for salvation.

But Satan and the world, human nature being what it is, have corrupted that plan of salvation that God lays out in His holy days. Satan has done everything to corrupt that plan. We know historically that Satan has provoked a change from the Sabbath to Sunday and he has provoked a change from Passover to Easter. When you consider the fall festival, think about this. He has provoked a change from the Feast of Tabernacles, the great fall harvest, to what? What we're going to have next week, Halloween and all the trappings that go with Halloween. That is Satan's effort to replace God's true fall festivals. He has corrupted that for all humanity. Just stop and think for a minute, look at how far this corruption has gone. I think sometimes because we are immersed in it every year we tend to not think about it.

In recent years, Halloween is now second only to Christmas in the amount of dollars spent on this holiday. Let me quote from Time, Business and Money, September 26, a year ago and, of course, it's worse now. I'm quoting now:

According to the National Retail Federation, a record 170 million Americans will spend close to eight billion dollars on candy, pumpkins, decorations and costumes for them and their pets.

Can you imagine? Dorothy found this in the paper this week. It's an ad for a Halloween pet costume contest and it's going on right now as we speak in our hometown of Yakima. People are dragging their pet in, dressed as who knows what. Going on:

More than seventy percent of the people in the United States say they will celebrate Halloween this year, the most ever recorded by the National Retail Federation. The average American will spend almost \$80 on the holiday compared with \$72 in 2011.

I looked at statistics in Canada and it shows that Canadians, on a per capita basis, are spending just about the same as we are here in the U.S.

Look how the "Christian" churches have bought into this. These are two ads in the Yakima Herald Republic:

Unitarian Universalist Church of Yakima ... Sunday service features a Halloween communion in remembrance of those who are now dead who deeply affected our lives. Dr. John Barrows Johnson's sermon topic directed at young and old is, 'Ghosts and Goblins and Gremlins, Oh My!' The annual pumpkin carving and chili feed follows the service.

Think about that.

Then for the local Catholic Church, it says:

Celebrations of the annual Mexican Dia de Muertos, the celebration for the Day of the Dead are planned in Sunnyside in Yakima starting today. The centerpiece for the event will be an ornate altar (in the Catholic Church) honoring the deceased. It will be decorated with sugar skeletons embroidered with names of the deceased, flowers, personal messages to the deceased and baskets brimmed with Mexican sweets and fruits.

I could go on and on. The "Christian" churches are incorporating Halloween into their very services. We get a TV guide in the local paper. I went through the one for this week and last week and looked just for movies about this subject. Let me read a few. Some are shocking. *Dawn of the Dead; Little Vampire; Witches of the East End; The Mummy; Paranormal Activity; Legion* (which refers to demons); *Ghost Town; Isle of the Dead; Horror of Dracula; American Werewolf; Nightmare on Elm Street; Fright Night; Rise of the Zombies, Satan's Little Helper; Zombie Apocalypse; Teen Witch; Corpse Bride; The Howling; Wizards; Bats – Human Harvest; Black Swarm; Bloody Mama; Monsters Inc; Swamp Devil; Halloween I thru Halloween VI; Scream; Insect Woman; The Mummy Returns; Amityville Horror and Zombie Night*. These are all movies in the last two weeks leading up to Halloween. We got a flier from Barnes & Noble, the book purveyors, and the book they're featuring this week is *Encounters with Flying Humanoids*, and it shows human beings with bat-like wings.

Understand that where the occult is, Satan is. You can guarantee that. Wherever you see anything involving the occult, Satan and his demons are right there. Quoting from the [Yakima Herald Republic](#) this morning, regarding a little boy, the title of the article was "*Police: Boy heard voices telling him to shoot bully.*"

An eleven year old boy turned up at school with knives, a gun and four hundred rounds of ammunition. He heard voices telling him to shoot a bully.

Now this doesn't happen in a vacuum. Those thoughts don't happen in a vacuum. They're part of a context. The fact is that we shouldn't be surprised. We shouldn't be surprised at all.

Let's go to 2 Corinthians 4:4. This is all by way of introduction. We're told that we're part of a world that has very little, if anything, to do with God anymore. We see that more and more. Paul is saying:

2 Corinthians 4:4. *In whom ... (KJV)*

We cannot forget this.

4b) ... the god of this world ... (KJV)

Satan is the god of this world. God and Christ are not yet. Let's understand that God controls Satan. Satan doesn't do anything without God's permission, but this is part of God's plan.

4 continued) ... has blinded the minds of them which believe not ... (KJV)

Just what I've read; it's obviously apparent by reading any newspaper, magazine or watching any television news program that this is the case.

4 continued) ... lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. (KJV)

Paul adds to that in Ephesians, chapter 2. We'll read verses 2 and 3. Herbert Armstrong often quoted this and likened what we're going to read here to a radio broadcast where you don't see anything. You can turn on a radio with a flip of a switch and hear a voice that is originating thousands of miles away. Of course, we have smart phones that do the same thing while you're walking down the street.

Ephesians 2:2. *Wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world ... (KJV)*

We've all done that.

2b) ... according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience. (KJV)

Looking at that movie list, that spirit is working big time in the children of disobedience. There is one Greek word that is translated "of the power," the prince of the power. That is Strong's 1849 and it's "exousia." It means *to have the mastery of*, meaning Satan has the mastery of the air. It can also mean *super human*. Satan can broadcast things that are beyond human understanding, broadcast thoughts, pictures in our head, words in our mouth and emotions. He has the ability to do that, much like you can have radio waves and telephone signals travel through the air and you don't see it, but it's there.

3) Among whom also we all had our conversation (conduct) in times past ... (KJV)

Notice what is broadcast.

3b) ... in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (KJV)

What this tells us is that supernaturally, Satan has the mastery of the air, the space all around us and he can broadcast lusts of the flesh, desires of the flesh and desires of the mind. I think we've all experienced that, where you're happy and everything is fine and all of a sudden, a thought will come into the head or an emotion will come up. You weren't thinking about that. Where did that come from? It comes from the master of this process. The fact is Satan will do anything to pervert God's plan of salvation. He will do anything to keep us from properly celebrating and memorializing the holy days of God and the Sabbath. Particularly at this time of year he has done everything in his power to pervert the understanding of God's fall holy days and turn people's attention to this wicked, wicked day that we call Halloween.

How did this happen? How on earth did this happen? You look at what is going on around us, all the parties and all the stuff on television. This is an ad that came in the paper today, a grocery ad. Dorothy pointed it out to me. There's a box of hard cider and it's called *Angry Orchard Hard Cider*. It has a picture of ghosts and goblins in an orchard. Here's another one called *Vampire Wine*. You can get it at your local grocery store. It just shows you the pervasive influence of Satan. It's in our commerce, our television, books, it's everywhere.

So maybe this would be a good time to take a step back and ask the question, how did all of this come about?" We're going to talk today about the origins of Halloween. I think most of us know some of it or most of it. In doing the research for this, there were some things that I didn't realize that shows the pervasiveness of Satan's influence.

The second thing we're going to do is see what lessons there are for us to learn about this day of Halloween. We're going to talk first about the ancient origins of Halloween. I'm going to combine all of the sources; books, articles, internet, history and all of that rather than give you quotes of page numbers and all of that. For the sake of time I'm just going to lump it all together.

Halloween's origins date back to an ancient Celtic festival called "Samhain." It is pronounced *so'win*.

Before Christ was born, the ancient Celts settled in the area of Ireland, Scotland, England and northern France. They celebrated their new year on November 1. It marked the end of summer and the conclusion of the harvest. It was their belief that evil spirits brought on darkness and evil spirits brought on the colder weather. This was a celebration to mark the end of the good times and to note that the evil spirits were bringing in the cold and dark. It was also a time associated with human death, because the land all around them was dying. Leaves were falling from the trees and the crops were dying. So they began to think about human death at this time also.

The night of October 31, the night before their new year of November 1, they celebrated Samhain. They believed that on this night before their new year that the boundaries between the physical life and the spiritual life became blurred. They believed that the living and the dead would intermingle on this night. They believed that the spirits of the dead, (or some people would say the souls of the dead) returned to earth, and particularly the ghosts and souls of people who had committed horrible sins were cast down to earth. They roamed the earth and they caused problems. They caused problems with crops, health and they roamed the earth on this night before their new year the next day.

There was a bit of good news in this celebration because their Celtic priests, the Druids, felt that because there were all these spirits roaming the earth on the night of Samhain that they had a closer communication with the spirit world. Therefore, they could foretell what was going to happen in individuals and for the area for the next year as far as the weather, the crops and what will happen on an individual basis because the spirit world was now closer to them on that night. This was prior to the birth of Jesus Christ. These obviously are very poor people with subsistence living and all of that. So what they did to celebrate Samhain, on that night they extinguished all of the fires in their homes. They put out their candles and especially the fire in their hearth, because now it's getting cold and this took a degree of faith on their part to extinguish all fires in their homes. Then on this night, the Druids (the Celtic priests) erected enormous bonfires. These were "holy" bonfires. Each village had its own priest, and they extinguished the fires in their homes and trudged out to the area outside their village or hamlet. They would gather around this enormous bonfire that the Celtic priests lit, and it was "holy." If you were on a high hill, you could look off in the distance and see bonfires in other communities being lit and people around them. They gathered around the bonfire to sacrifice some of their harvest, their crops, to appease the Celtic gods. They also sacrificed some animals, particularly black cats, and we'll talk about that in a minute. In addition to that, the Druids foretold the coming year, both as individuals and for the little community. During this celebration, the Celts wore costumes. Primarily they wore animal skins with the head attached. The head would come down over their head and it was covered with fur. They did this in an effort to imitate the spirit world in order to appease the spirit world.

When the celebrations were over, after the sacrifices and the dancing around and the chanting and all of that, they would take a coal of this sacred bonfire back to their home and then relight their hearth fire. So they believed that this sacred fire would protect them through the winter. Then they would launch into spring with planting and all of that. So this is the Celtic celebration of Samhain.

Remember this started a couple hundred years before the birth of Christ. By 43 A.D. the Roman Empire had conquered all the territories of the Celts. In the course of the next four hundred years, they ruled the Celtic land and they brought a couple of their Roman holy days that intermingled with the Celtic festival of Samhain. The first was the Roman festival of Feralia (in English). It was celebrated in late October by the Romans

and it was their traditional commemoration of the passing of the dead. They would honor those who had died that year. That was in late October.

A second day they kept that intermingles with Samhain was the day to honor Pomona. Pomona was the goddess of fruits and trees. They would honor her because of the abundant harvest they had that year. Guess what the symbol of Pomona was. It's the apple. This explains where the tradition of bobbing for apples comes from on Halloween, because if you're bobbing for apples you're honoring Pomona, the goddess of fruits and trees. So these two Roman festivals intermingled with the Celtic festival of Samhain.

We also know that what came to be the Catholic Church (and I'll put "Christianity" in quotes here), became the official religion of the Roman Empire. So, over time, the Christian influence began to exert and be felt in Ireland, Scotland, England and Northern France where the Celts were. Remember in 325 A.D., the emperor, and I'll stress the word "Emperor" Constantine (not any religious authority) called the Council of Nicea. That was the first general Council of the Catholic Church in 325 A.D. Then in 445 A.D., the Emperor Valentinian demanded obedience of Roman citizens to the pope, the Bishop of Rome. He did so because the Catholic Church was claiming, as they do today, that the pope is a direct descendant of the Apostle Paul, and also because Rome was the capital of the empire and the emperor was smart enough that if he could unite the people with a common religion and then control that common religion, he could then control the people. That's exactly what happened. That was in 445 A.D.

Then something interesting happened on May 13, 609 A.D. In Rome, Emperor Phocas, gave the pagan temple, the Pantheon, to Pope Boniface IV. The ruins of this temple are still there. He gave this temple for the use of the "Christians" in Rome. That very day when the temple was handed over to the Pope, and it was a grand ceremony of course, that Pope Boniface dedicated the Pantheon to all of the Christian martyrs that had died for Christ up to that point. The Pantheon was dedicated to them. He established the Catholic feast of All Martyrs' Day on May 13 609 A.D.

Then Pope Gregory III, in the 700s A.D., about one hundred years later, expanded the festival. Instead of relating to all martyrs, it included all saints as well. He moved the observance from May 13 to November 1, the New Year of the Celts. So by the ninth century, by the 800s A.D., the influence of Christianity had spread through all the Celtic lands and the Roman festivals, the new Catholic festivals and the Celtic festival Samhain all began to be intermingled.

It is very interesting that by 1,000 A.D. the Catholic Church appointed November 2 as All Souls' Day. All Souls' Day was the day that you would pray for your relatives who were in purgatory, not up in heaven with the beatific vision of God, but in purgatory. You would pray for them, because they had not been cleansed from their venial sins. Those are the sins that could be pardoned. They hadn't been cleansed, so it was up to all the people on November 2 to pray for all of your relatives who had committed venial

sins who were in purgatory, to try to pray them up to heaven so that they could have the beatific vision of looking at God.

Now, what they did then is make All Saints' Day on November 1, All Soul's Day on November 2. All Saints' Day on November 1 was there to honor all of the saints known and unknown in the Catholic Church. It was also called All Hallow Mass. They had a holy mass on All Saints' Day to honor all of the saints, known and unknown, in this holy mass. The night before that day, All Saints' Day, was the traditional night of Samhain, the Celtic religion. It became known as All Hallows Eve before All Hallows Mass the next day. All Hallows Eve means all hallows evening, and it was later shortened to Halloween or Hallow Evening, prior to All Saints' Day, prior to the new year of the Celtic religion.

So you can see how the Catholic Church, over time, was attempting to replace the Celtic religion and their festivals with Catholic observances that were essentially the same thing, but they were gaining control over the people. It was now a Catholic celebration, a "Christian" celebration rather than a pagan celebration.

Let me just quote from the World Book. You can find this in any encyclopedia anywhere, but World Book, Volume 9, Page 25 under *Halloween*:

The Roman Catholic Church named November 1 as All Saints' Day. The old pagan customs and the Christian feast day were combined into the Halloween festival.

The Christian feast day and the old pagan customs were combined.

Now as part of looking back in history, let's ask the question: What were the old pagan customs that were combined with the Catholic feast day on November 1 and on the night before? Well, one of the old pagan customs, the first one we're going to talk about is ghosts and witches. Where did that come from? The World Book in that same article said:

The Druids, an order of priests in ancient France and Britain believed that at Halloween, ghosts, spirits, fairies, witches and elves came out to harm people. From these Druidic beliefs comes the present day use of witches, ghosts and cats in Halloween festivities.

You see, the ghosts, witches, black cats and all of that goes back two hundred years prior to the birth of Jesus Christ as a pagan celebration and here we are, two thousand years later, doing exactly the same thing. It shows you the power and influence of Satan.

The custom of wearing masks at Halloween goes back, as I said, to the Celtic traditions of attempting to copy the evil spirits or placate the evil spirits. In Scotland during this

time, the dead were impersonated by young men who wore masks, or they wore veils or painted their faces black, but they wore white robes, indicating ghosts or apparitions.

So we see that ghosts or witches go all the way back to the earliest Celtic festivals and ghosts and witches are in the middle of the Catholic Church right now and in the middle of other churches right now, over two thousand years later.

What about black cats? You see ads for Halloween and people decorate their lawns and there are black cats. Where did that come from? Again from the World Book:

The Druids thought the cat was sacred and believed that cats had once been human beings, but were changed as punishment for evil deeds.

So on this night, if you saw a black cat, that cat used to be an evil human being that was changed into that cat on this night. By the middle ages the Catholic Church taught that black cats were “friends of the devil”. There were all kinds of Catholic superstitions about black cats. That’s where we get ... if a black cat walks across your path, you’re supposed to turn and go a different direction. That’s all superstition coming from the ancient Celtic festival of Halloween that’s co-opted by the Catholic Church. Because of this, their belief that cats were human beings turned into cats, and in that cat now was the evil spirit of this evil human being, black cats became the favorite sacrifice on the bonfires of Samhain or on the bonfires that the Catholics had when they co-opted that festival. The night before All Hallow Mass was celebrated just exactly like Samhain was. They would find black cats and make them as offerings. They would toss them live onto the bonfire, because you were getting rid of an evil spirit by doing so.

Okay, so ghosts, witches, black cats; what about bats? Where did that come from? In Greek mythology, the bat was attributed to the goddess Peresphone, and she was the queen of the underworld. The bat was always associated with Peresphone. In parts of Africa, Australia, Bosnia, Tonga and England, the bat was considered to be sacred because it represented the spirit of the dead. So in some areas you didn’t touch a bat and in other areas you tossed it on the bonfire. Some people believed that in the bat was the spirit of the dead, and if you could touch a bat on Halloween then your soul could supernaturally travel. People would try to capture bats and touch bats because they were the embodiment of the spirit world. The Catholic Church taught that the bat was the bird of the devil and it was an incarnation of the prince of darkness. If you look at the old wood cuts and old oil paintings, Satan is often depicted as having bat’s wings. The early Catholic Church supposed that the bat was a hybrid of a bird and a rat. In the folklore in Europe the bat represented black magic, witchcraft, cunning, revenge and all of that. So because of the association starting with Peresphone, the Goddess of the underworld, the bat began to be incorporated into the celebration of Samhain and later the Catholic celebration of Halloween.

Another common feature of Halloween is the pumpkin and the scary faces carved in pumpkins. Where on earth did that come from? You think that the celebration of

Halloween to us is really bizarre, but when you understand the origin of the pumpkin it really gets strange.

The pumpkin originated from an Irish myth about a man named Stingy Jack. I'm going to shorten this myth for time. It could take thirty minutes to explain it, but I'm going to pare it down and you'll get the gist of it. Stingy Jack, according to this ancient legend, invited the devil to have a drink with him, and true to his name, Stingy Jack didn't want to pay for the drink. So he convinced the devil to turn himself into a coin that Jack could use to pay for the drink. So the devil did this. Then when the devil became the coin, Jack, rather than paying for the drink, put the coin in his pocket right next to a silver crucifix. Because it was so close to the crucifix, the devil had no power to change himself back into the devil. So, in essence, now the devil was trapped in Jack's pocket. Jack communicated with the devil and eventually freed him under the condition that the devil would not bother Jack for a year, and if Jack should die during the coming year he would not take his soul to hell. That was the condition. At one point, Jack died. Because Jack was such an evil character, God wouldn't take him into heaven. (This is really bizarre.) Because of the promise the devil made to Jack, the devil couldn't take him to hell. So the devil kept his word and would not claim Jack's soul and take him to hell, but what the devil did as punishment was send Jack off on a dark night with only a burning coal to light his way. Jack took that coal and took a carved out turnip and put the coal inside to make a small lantern, and Jack has been roaming the earth ever since with this turnip lantern with a coal inside.

This is an Irish myth, so the Irish began to refer to this ghostly figure that roamed at night as "Jack of the lantern" which began to be shortened over time to jack-o-lantern. In Ireland, Scotland and England, people made their own versions of this jack-o-lantern that they put on their front stoop or in their window to frighten off evil spirits on this night or to frighten off Stingy Jack if he should be wandering by.

The immigrants that came from Ireland, England and Scotland brought this tradition over to Canada and the United States. When they arrived here they found the perfect lantern in the form of a pumpkin which is native to America. You don't find pumpkins across the ocean. They are native to America and they became the perfect jack-o-lantern. So this is how this lantern began to be associated with Halloween because on this night they would carve scary faces and they would ward off evil spirits. This goes way back two thousand years.

We've talked about the pumpkin and bats and ghosts and all of that. Where did this whole notion of trick or treat come from? How did that get here and how did it get associated with Halloween? The practice of dressing up in costumes and going door to door begging began in the middle ages. It was called "souling." It began in Ireland and Great Britain where poor people on Hallow Mass, November 1, would go door to door and ask for coins, fruit, cakes and cookies. If you would give those to that individual, then they would promise to pray the following day, on All Soul's Day, for their relatives in purgatory. So you were basically buying people to pray for your relatives to get them out of purgatory and into heaven. So they received food and gifts for doing that on All

Hallow Mass the night before. Shakespeare even mentions this practice of souling in his comedy, "The Two Gentlemen of Verona." He wrote that in 1593. Similar practices were found through northern Europe all the way down to southern Italy.

Also, there was a similar practice called "wassailing" that began on Christmas where you would go around and sing carols and people would give you fruits and nuts, etc.

Souling was also called "guising." That's short for *disguise*. Children would disguise themselves in costumes and go door to door for food and coins. That was called guising. The first recorded incident of guising was found in Scotland on Halloween night in 1895. The guisers would go around with lanterns made of scooped out turnips, scooped out beets or other similar vegetables and they would visit homes and were rewarded with fruits or cakes or honey or sometimes a coin or two. Guising was first mentioned in North America in 1911 where a newspaper in Kingston, Ontario reported kids on Halloween night going guising and getting fruits and money, etc. Now trick or treat is prevalent in the United States, Canada, Britain, Scotland, Ireland and Puerto Rico.

In Mexico it is called "Calaverita." That is Spanish for "little skull." Instead of saying trick or treat, they would go and say, "Can you give me my little skull?" The people would create little skulls of either chocolate or sugar and then would hand them to the kids when they said instead of trick or treat, "Can you give me my little skull?" So it's even common in Mexico today.

Over the centuries or millennia, what Satan has done is pervert the Feast of Tabernacles, to pervert the great fall harvest into this sinful, evil, wicked night of Halloween that we have today. Just to show you the pervasiveness of Satan, let me quote from a United Kingdom publication called, The Psychiatrist. It says, Religion And Mental Health – What Should Psychiatrists Do? That's an interesting title. Religion is equated with mental health and what should psychiatrists do about this. The article says:

Studies of psychiatrists in the United Kingdom, Canada and the USA suggest there remains widespread prejudice against religion.

This is from psychiatrists in the U.K. The article goes on:

Ninety-two percent of psychiatrists believe that religion and mental illness were connected. Forty-two percent believe that religiousness could turn into mental illness.

See what Satan is doing? People who believe in God, believe in something you cannot see or touch, who believe in the Bible are mentally ill. We're going to see that more and more, I believe, before the end is over. The reason I bring that up is, you have to ask the question: Now who is really mentally ill here? Those who believe in a creator God and look at God's creation and see that it could not possibly have evolved and there has

to be a design and a mind and a creator behind it, or people who, in the twenty-first century, celebrate ghosts and witches and bats and mummies and zombies and go door to door extorting food and who knows what from people on this night? Two thousand years of pagan festivals is coming to a head right now in the twenty-first century in North America. Now who are the mentally ill, people who do that or people who believe in a creator God? This is how far we have come.

What are the lessons we can learn from all of this? There are four lessons. You can think of more, I'm sure.

The most obvious lesson is that human nature hates anything that comes from God.

Human nature hates anything that comes from God. Let's go to Romans 8:7. This is a familiar scripture, but let's read it in context of Halloween and what's happened over the last two thousand years to pervert God's holy days in the mind of the average person.

Romans 8:7. Because the carnal mind ... (KJV)

"Carnal" means *fleshly*.

7b) ... [is] enmity (Greek word means enemy of) against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (KJV)

Anything that is of God; Satan and human nature wants to corrupt and wants to change, anything that comes from God. Let's go to 1 John 2:16. We need to remember these scriptures at this time of year because of all the evil around us. It's totally explainable, and God knows exactly what's going on. We know exactly what's going on and as we're going to see in a minute, we need to run as far away from it as we can.

1 John 2:16. For all (everything) that [is] in the world ... (KJV)

Boy, we learn this at this time of year.

16b) ... the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life ... (KJV)

All that is in the world:

16 continued) ... is not of the Father, but is of the world. (KJV)

That holds true for Halloween probably more than at any other time of the year.

Think about this: If God says sex before marriage is wrong, what does society do? It promotes sex before marriage. You can't watch television, you can't read a book or magazine where sex before marriage isn't extolled or uplifted.

If God says abortion is murder, what does mankind do? They butcher and murder fifty million babies a year and they promote it, and the government pays for it. Just the opposite of what God wants.

If God says homosexuality is a perversion and evil, what does mankind do? He extols it, he promotes it. The government helps them, and it's all over television, movies and books. It's being promoted and pushed by society because God says the opposite.

If God says not to use His name in vain, what do we have? the OMG movement today. I think we all know what the OMG stands for. You see it everywhere. Young kids say it. They don't know what they're saying, but they say it. People who text (I don't text) but from what I'm told, OMG is a common phrase that gets texted all over. You see people on the news where they say God's name in vain over and over again, just time after time.

If God says not to do it, the world goes exactly the opposite. As Les was pointing out in the sermonette about getting the mind off the self, God says get the mind off of the self. What does the world do? The world promotes the self. It's all about me. I'm the one. I have to take care of myself, nobody else will.

If God says to keep the Sabbath, what does man do? He promotes either Sunday or Friday. Talk about a proof of God's existence. God says Friday sunset to Saturday sunset is holy. What the Muslims do is take Thursday sunset to Friday sunset as their holy day, and the Protestant and Catholic Churches take Sunday. They bracket the true holy day and then ignore it. If God says to keep the Passover, mankind promotes Easter. If God says to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles and the fall holy days, what does man do? Promotes Halloween.

Increasingly in this country, man openly hates anything that comes from God. I got an article from a fellow that keeps on top of these things. The United States Air Force Academy in their code of conduct, at the end says, "So help me God." The Air Force Academy is getting pressure to remove that. Can you image? Here's a code of conduct based on the Ten Commandments and, "Oh, we can't mention God in this at all."

So let's understand this first lesson that we need to learn is that humanity will do anything, will do everything to go against God. Humanity hates God and Satan is behind it all because he hates God.

The second big lesson we can learn is that Satan presents sin in a very attractive package.

He wraps it up so it looks absolutely beautiful.

On Halloween night these little kids get dressed up in costumes and they're going all over the neighborhood, they're all excited and they get candy. The parents get all

excited for their kids and it looks really good to the outside if you don't know anything about God. Then on Halloween night adventurous adults begin to rub shoulders with the occult. They watch more movies like I mentioned in the beginning. You know what the number one TV program in the United States is today? Over air broadcast, cable, satellite; put them all together. The number one TV program is *The Walking Dead*. It's the most popular TV program in the United States. Adults get a little close to the occult, and remember, where the occult is, Satan is.

Let's go to Proverbs 5 and look at a principle that applies to Halloween. It doesn't directly address Halloween. What it does is address prostitution, but this principle applies to Halloween. We'll read the first five verses. Solomon is talking to his son and trying to give him some advice that will hold him in good stead as his son matures.

Proverbs 5:1. *My son, attend unto my wisdom, [and] bow your ear to my understanding:*

2) *That you may regard discretion, and [that] your lips may keep knowledge. (KJV)*

"Pay attention to me. I'm going to teach you what I've learned."

3) *For the lips of a strange woman drop [as] a honeycomb, and her mouth [is] smoother than oil: (KJV)*

What he is saying is that her appearance and her words are very attractive; a strange woman that is not your wife, a strange woman that you should have no sexual relationship with at all, but she is very attractive. Physically it's attractive and appeals to the eyes, but notice the end result.

4) *But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.*

5) *Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on the grave. (KJV)*

He said, "You want to follow her, but if you want to yield to this, you are going to the grave. You're going to die."

You see, Satan makes physical lust very attractive. He packages it very attractively. Satan does the same thing with spiritual lust. He can make spiritual lust very attractive. Let's go to 2 Timothy 4:3. We see this in the greater Church of God today, spiritual lust made very attractive. Here Paul is talking to Timothy about a time in the future.

2 Timothy 4:3. *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine (teaching), but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. (KJV)*

We see that in the church today where somebody will come into town or publish a book or a video of a new doctrine. It might be the calendar; it might be about Christ not being eternal, but saying that He was a created being. It attracts the itching ears. It attracts

the intellectual spiritual lust of people. We see that all the time today. But whether it's a physical lust or spiritual lust, Satan makes it very attractive. Let's go to Genesis, chapter 3 and see an obvious example. Let's look at Genesis 3, the situation between Satan and Adam and Eve. Notice what Satan does in making sin attractive.

Genesis 3:1. *Now the serpent was more subtle... (KJV)*

The Hebrew word for "subtle" means *cunning or crafty*. The serpent was more subtle, more cunning, more crafty, more shrewd than any beast of the field.

1b) ... than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, Yes, has God said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (KJV)

Hasn't God said that you can eat anything you want?

2) And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3) But of the fruit of the tree which [is] in the midst of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die. (KJV)

God said that. Of course Satan is planting doubt.

4) And the serpent said to the woman, You shall not surely die:

5) For God knows that in the day you eat thereof (of that fruit), then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. (KJV)

Here he is presenting a picture that is very attractive. No, God doesn't want you to eat that. He wants to keep you down below Him, but He knows the minute you eat thereof, you're going to be elevated. Vanity, pride, being puffed up and vaunting the self; you're going to be elevated like Him, so that makes it very attractive to human nature, very attractive to focus on the self.

6) And when the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food ... (KJV)

Thank about that. When you're closing out a fast or something and you're looking at the food after not having eaten for twenty-four hours and there's the pasta dish you love or the sizzling steak or crisp salad or whatever it is you like when you break a fast, it is attractive. It is tremendously attractive. What she saw was that the tree was really attractive and good for food. "I would like to bite into that fruit." Then it was pleasant to the eyes. It was very pleasing to look upon, and a tree that was desired to make me wise, to elevate myself, to make me have more knowledge than I had before and to make me equal with God. When all of that came to pass, that very attractive package, she took it, she ate it, she gave it to her husband and he ate it.

If that isn't the poster child for making sin attractive, then I don't know what is. You see it throughout the Bible. Satan presents situations that make sin attractive, just like he does at this time of the year.

Let's go to 2 Corinthians 11 and we'll read verses 14 and 15 to add to this point. There's something about when the leaves are changing and the harvest is in and you see the pumpkins and the stalks of corn on the front door and all that and all of a sudden Halloween comes and the kids are excited about getting candy. Talking about ghosts and goblins gets them excited. It's a very attractive package.

2 Corinthians 11:14. *And no marvel ... (KJV)*

He says, "Don't be amazed."

14b) ... for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. (KJV)

Eve looked at him and she wasn't worried about him. No red flags came up, no alarm bells went off. He is transformed as an angel of light.

15) Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. (KJV)

The Greek word for "transformed" referring to Satan and his ministers, means *to transfigure or to disguise ... guising*. His ministers are guising as ministers of God. In reality they are ministers of Satan.

Les was talking about an aspect of love is not puffing one's self up. How can a minister stand up in front of people and say, "I am this" or "I am that" or "I am the only one"? If that isn't puffing up, I don't know what is. So they are transformed or disguised as a minister of God. We see on television, the internet, books and magazines, we see illicit activities, whether it's sex or graphic violence, the occult is all packaged very attractively and people flock to it because it appeals to the eyes and the senses. So let's understand that Satan packages all this to entice the flesh, especially Halloween.

The third point that we want to learn from is that humans want to celebrate and worship what they can see.

Humans want to celebrate and worship what they can see. Let's go to Romans, chapter 1 and we will read verses 19 through 25. I'm going to read it from the New Living Translation because it just puts it in modern English and still retains the integrity of the passages.

Romans 1:19. *For the truth about God is known to them instinctively. God has put this knowledge in their hearts.*

20) From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and the sky and all that God has made. They can clearly see His invisible qualities, His

eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God. (NLT)

If you, with an unbiased mind, look at the stars at night or the mountains or the oceans or the rivers, and the plants and flowers and the variety of all living things, and to say this all just happened; it was all a coin flip. What these verses are telling us, verses 19 and 20, there is no excuse when you look at God's creation. But yet human kind, as we said before, will do anything to discredit God or go against God and the whole topic of evolution is a prime example of that.

21) Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship Him as God or even give Him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused.

22) Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. (NLT)

Grown people in costumes dance around on Halloween, carrying pumpkins and bobbing for apples. Who are the fools and who are the wise?

23) And instead of worshipping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshipped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles.

24) So God abandoned them to do whatever shameful things their hearts desired. As a result, they did vile and degrading things with each other's bodies.

25) They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshipped and served the things God created instead of the Creator Himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen. (NLT)

Is that ever true! You see people today actually worshipping the occult. You see people worshipping Satan, worshipping demons and going after that whole lifestyle of the occult. They worship they know not what.

I had a personal experience regarding that with my dad. My dad grew up in the mountains of New Mexico and my granddad was a cattle rancher there for decades. It was not a religious household. There was no religious training at all. I can remember as a little kid, we lived in El Paso at the time. El Paso was built around the Franklin Mountains. The city built up as a "U" shape around the Franklin Mountains. The mountain stops and there is the Rio Grande Valley and the Rio Grande River and then you're on into Mexico. When I was five or six, I remember one evening Dad was out there looking at the mountain for about half an hour. I could see his lips moving a little. He never went to church. My Mom tried to drag him to church and it never worked. I said, "Dad, what are you doing?" He said, "I'm talking to my mountain." He said, "I have conversations with that mountain every once in a while." Over the years I saw him do that. To him, you see, he was worshipping the created rather than the Creator. It was the most permanent thing he knew. That mountain wasn't going to go anywhere. He had known it most of his life, and he would go out there. He was misled obviously, but he was worshipping the created rather than the Creator.

What we have to do is focus on what we cannot see, whereas the world on Halloween night focuses on stuff they can see. Let's go to 2 Corinthians 4:18. Humans want to celebrate and worship what they can see. We keep Trumpets and Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day. We are celebrating things we cannot see. We haven't seen that yet.

2 Corinthians 4:18. *While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen [are] temporal (meaning temporary); but the things which are not seen [are] eternal. (KJV)*

We must focus on the spiritual, not the physical. On Halloween the world that we know is going full tilt on what they can see and they're devising human imaginations and celebrating something that has been celebrated for over two thousand years.

The fourth lesson we can learn is an obvious one. We cannot adopt ungodly customs.

We cannot adopt customs of the people around us. We cannot worship God the way the people around us worship God. We know that. We cannot adopt ungodly customs. Let's go to Deuteronomy 12. God warned ancient Israel, "You're going into this promised land that I'm going to give you and you're going to rub shoulders with people that worship pagan gods. Don't do that." We'll read verses 30 through 32. God knew this was going to happen. He knew it was going to be a temptation. There is something about human nature that wants to adopt the culture of other people.

Deuteronomy 12:30. *Take heed to yourself that you be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before you; and that you inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? Even so will I do likewise. (KJV)*

Let's see what the ancient Druids and the ancient Celts did and let's follow their example, let's incorporate what they did into our lives.

31) *You shall not do so unto the Lord your God: for every abomination to the Lord, which He hates, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.*

32) *What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: you shall not add thereto, nor diminish from it. (KJV)*

That is a lesson for us today. Some people want to add all kinds of things to God's law. Other people want to water it down and diminish it. The thing we have to do is follow the straight and narrow, not adding or subtracting from God's law. We just cannot do that. We must be very careful about that.

A final scripture under this point; turn to Jeremiah, chapter 10 and we'll read the first four verses. Talking to the house of Israel and we know we are spiritual Israel in that regard. These words apply to us today. God is speaking to the house of Israel.

Jeremiah 10:1. *Hear you the word which the Lord speaks to you, O house of Israel: ... (KJV)*

"Listen," He says.

2) *Thus says the Eternal, Learn not the way of the heathen ... (KJV)*

It couldn't be any clearer. Don't incorporate all this garbage into your worship, to have an altar in a Catholic Church with skeletons made of sugar and notes to the dead.

2b) *... and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. (KJV)*

Oh yes, if there was an eclipse or something like that, they just wiggled out. God says, "Don't let that worry you."

3) *For the customs of the people [are] vain ... (KJV)*

This is what Les was talking about. In Hebrew it means *empty*. The customs are empty. It also means *worthless*. It has no value. Their customs are valueless.

3b) *... for [one] cuts a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe.*

4) *They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. (KJV)*

Talking about Christmas, but the same applies to Halloween. We cannot adopt ungodly customs.

In conclusion, what's the bottom line? Let's go to Amos 5. This is the thing we need to remember this time of year. We'll read verses 21 through 23. I'll read it from the New King James. We need to hate what God hates. We need to love what God loves.

Amos 5:21. *"I hate, I despise your feast days, and I do not savor your sacred assemblies.*

22) *Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept [them]. Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings.*

23) *Take away from Me the noise of your songs, for I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments. (KJV)*

God hates these days, and so the onus is on us to teach our children and our grandchildren and to teach each other and particularly our children from an early age.

They need to learn to hate everything surrounding Halloween. They need to see the evil of it.

This morning's paper, the twelve year old boy that shot his teacher, this teacher that was well regarded in Massachusetts. She was a sweet lady who cared about her kids. This twelve year old middle school student killed that teacher and wounded two other classmates and then he killed himself on the basketball court. His friends said, and it was reported in the paper, that he played zombie games. Where do these thoughts come from, shooting your teacher and shooting yourself in the head and shooting some of your classmates? Remember what I said, where the occult is, there is Satan. Satan is where the occult is.

Therefore, we have to run away from anything involving the occult; movies, books and comics. When Dorothy and I were growing up, remember the comics Archie and Jughead? It was a high school comic book that was so innocuous. There was nothing evil in it. They just resurrected that comic book and now Archie and Jughead are dead and they come back as zombies. Can you imagine? So we must beware of movies, comic books, novels, video games and websites. We have to especially run away from all of this, but especially Halloween. We have to run away from Halloween.

One closing scripture, Ephesians 6:12. Again, I'm going to read that from the NLT. This is our fight. This is our battle.

Ephesians 6:12. *For we are not fighting against flesh and blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world ... (KJV)*

That is celebrated today.

12b) against mighty powers in this dark world ... (KJV)

Who rule this world, and it's obvious on Halloween they do.

12 continued) ... and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. (NLT)

Just like the ancient Celts wanted to wear costumes to mimic the spirit world, it is happening today and is happening this coming week on Halloween.

So let's be thankful that we can keep the Feast. We have kept the Feast. We can continue to keep the Feast that reveals to us this great harvest of human beings. Also, let's understand and be thankful for the truth about Halloween.