

Key Scripture:

2 Corinthians 11:14–15 (NLT)

14 But I am not surprised! Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

15 So it is no wonder that his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. In the end they will get the punishment their wicked deeds deserve.

1 Peter 5:8 (NLT)

8 Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

1 John 4:1 (NLT)

1 Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.

Deuteronomy 18:10–12 (NLT)

10 For example, never sacrifice your son or daughter as a burnt offering. And do not let your people practice fortune-telling, or use sorcery, or interpret omens, or engage in witchcraft, 11 or cast spells, or function as mediums or psychics, or call forth the spirits of the dead. 12 Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD. It is because the other nations have done these detestable things that the LORD your God will drive them out ahead of you.

Isaiah 8:19 (NLT)

19 Someone may say to you, "Let's ask the mediums and those who consult the spirits of the dead. With their whisperings and mutterings, they will tell us what to do." But shouldn't people ask God for guidance? Should the living seek guidance from the dead?

1 Samuel 28:3-15a (NLT)

Gen 3:1-5 (NLT)

Start **talking**. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- Clay shared a story about an encounter with a demon. Have you ever had an experience with the demonic? How did you respond?

Start **sharing**. These questions are to help get your group thinking and to create openness.

- **Read 2 Corinthians 11:14-15** and **1 Peter 5:8**. What do these verses reveal about the enemy? How do we know if what we are experiencing is from God and not the demonic? (Ref **1 John 4:1**)
- **Read Deuteronomy 18:10-12** and **Isaiah 8:19**. Who should be our primary source for guidance? Whom do you usually consult with when questions arise?
- **Read 1 Samuel 28:3-15a**. Why do you think Saul sought out the Medium of Endor, despite his previous efforts to remove such individuals from the land? How do desperation or fear drive people to make bad choices counter to their beliefs?
- Some people dabble in the occult because they want power and control. What are the dangers of seeking power outside of God's will, as suggested by the temptation in the Garden of Eden? (See **Gen 3:1-5**).
- Discuss Clay's statement "Rules lead to legalism, tools lead to liberty." Do you agree? Why or why not?
- How can Christians discern between harmless traditions and spiritually harmful practices during holidays like Halloween? How might Christians use Halloween as an opportunity for outreach or to display the love of Christ?
- Discuss the two "Toolbox Questions:" Is my attitude and behavior reflecting a redeemed life in Jesus Christ? Is what I'm about to do something I need to Receive, Reject, or Redeem?

Start **doing**. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Apply the two Toolbox Questions to the cultural practices and traditions in which you currently participate.

Start **praying**. Be bold and pray with power.

- Father God, please help us to discern how to engage with the world with both salt and light, truth and grace; to be in the world, but not of it. Forgive us where we fall short and help us to repent, seeking only your guidance and the power that flows only from acting in your will. In Jesus' mighty name, Amen.

Question: "Should Christians celebrate Halloween?"

Answer: Whether or not Christians should celebrate Halloween can be a very controversial topic. Some Christians celebrate Halloween simply by dressing up in a costume and having fun, seeing it as innocent and harmless. Other Christians are equally convinced that Halloween is a satanic holiday established to worship evil spirits and promote darkness and wickedness. So, who is right? Is it possible for Christians to celebrate Halloween without compromising their faith?

Halloween, no matter how commercialized, has almost completely pagan origins. As innocent as it may seem to some, it is not something to be taken lightly. Christians tend to have various ways to celebrate or not to celebrate Halloween. For some, it means having an "alternative" Harvest Party. For others, it is staying away from the ghosts, witches, goblins, etc., and wearing innocuous costumes, e.g., little princesses, clowns, cowboys, super-heroes, etc. Some choose not to do anything, electing to lock themselves in the house with the lights off. With our freedom as Christians, we are at liberty to decide how to act.

Scripture does not speak at all about Halloween, but it does give us some principles on which we can make a decision. In Old Testament Israel, witchcraft was a crime punishable by death (Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27). The New Testament teaching about the occult is clear. Acts 8:9-24, the story of Simon, shows that occultism and Christianity don't mix. The account of Elymas the sorcerer in Acts 13:6-11 reveals that sorcery is violently opposed to Christianity. Paul called Elymas a child of the devil, an enemy of righteousness and a perverter of the ways of God. In Acts 16, at Philippi, a fortune-telling girl lost her demon powers when the evil spirit was cast out by Paul. The interesting matter here is that Paul refused to allow even good statements to come from a demon-influenced person. Acts 19 shows new converts who have abruptly broken with their former occultism by confessing, showing their evil deeds, bringing their magic paraphernalia, and burning it before everyone (Acts 19:19).

So, should a Christian celebrate Halloween? Is there anything evil about a Christian dressing up as a princess or cowboy and going around the block asking for candy? No, there is not. Are there things about Halloween that are anti-Christian and should be avoided? Absolutely! If parents are going to allow their children to participate in Halloween, they should make sure to keep them from getting involved in the darker aspects of the day. If Christians are going to take part in Halloween, their attitude, dress, and most importantly, their behavior should still reflect a redeemed life (Philippians 1:27). There are many churches that hold "harvest festivals" and incorporate costumes, but in a godly environment. There are many Christians who hand out tracts that share the Gospel along with the Halloween candy. The decision is ultimately ours to make. But as with all things, we are to incorporate the principles of Romans 14. We can't allow our own convictions about a holiday to cause division in the body of Christ, nor can we use our freedom to cause others to stumble in their faith. We are to do all things as to the Lord.

© Copyright 2002-2023 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved.

www.GotQuestions.org