

Earth Religion vs. Heavenly Faith

When challenged about Halloween, parents look at you as if you are some kind of nut. They say, "I don't know what all the fuss is about. Why can't kids just be allowed to have a little fun?" When Alexander tried to defend Paul to the Ephesians, they tried to do the same thing. For two hours they just kept trying to drown him out by crying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The same kind of people now cry out, "Leave us alone, don't spoil the kids' fun."

There is a problem with that kind of logic. The reality is that kids are not *just* having a little fun. They ignore the context of what Halloween is all about.

Just having a little fun is *just* such thinking that has been used by "kids" to do increasingly bizarre things in order to increase their sense of excitement all in the name of *fun*. Aaron excused the Jews creating a calf because, after all, they were set on mischief. Saul said this to Samuel when he tried to excuse his disobedience so the people could have a feast. "I was just having a little fun" is an excuse bullies have used to torment their victims.

We need a higher standard for life than, "I was just having a little fun." The *fun* of Halloween requires you to set aside the *joy* you can have in Christ.

Matt 6:22-24 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

1. Earth Religion -

Halloween began as an earth religion—a human attempt to conquer death through ritual and superstition. Its roots go back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain (pronounced sow-in), when people believed that on October 31st the veil between the living and the dead grew thin. Spirits were thought to wander the earth as ghosts, which made it easier to contact the dead to tell people's fortunes. They offered crops and animals in sacrifice while people dressed in costumes made of animal skins.

When the Romans conquered the Celts, their own festivals blended in—*Feralia*, a day to honor the dead, and *Pomona*, the goddess of fruit, whose symbol, the apple, gave rise to bobbing for apples. Later, as Christianity spread, the Church tried to replace the pagan customs with new holy days: All Saints' Day on November 1st and All Souls' Day on November 2nd. The evening before became All Hallows' Eve—eventually Halloween.

Over the centuries, people reshaped these traditions to suit their times, proving how man-made religion always shifts. That's the difference between the religions of earth and the faith of heaven: man's ways change; God's Word never does.

While some try to spin the idea of Halloween into something positive, the true nature of it is revealed in all the marketing over it. The media reflects and amplifies public opinion. Halloween yard displays feature coffins, demons, blood, and torture. TV shows and movies of the season are all about horror and death. The *heavenly faith* challenges us to focus on *victory* over death.

Phil 4:8-9 Finally, brethren,
whatsoever things are true,
whatsoever things *are* honest,
whatsoever things *are* just,
whatsoever things *are* pure,
whatsoever things *are* lovely,
whatsoever things *are* of good

report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

Col 3:1-2 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

2. What are you celebrating?

When people say, "What's the harm in celebrating Halloween?" we can simply ask them to compare it with the great holidays we observe at Christmas and Easter. These three days reveal the heart of two very different kingdoms: one celebrates death and darkness, while the others proclaim life and light.

Halloween glorifies death, fear, and evil with its roots in paganism and men trying to bargain with spirits to protect themselves from death. The costumes, the skeletons, the witches and tombstones, all testify to a world under the curse of sin. It is a season that laughs at that which brings destruction.

Isa 5:20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

By contrast, Christmas celebrates life entering the world. It is the announcement of hope in human flesh.

Luke 2:10,11 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

The message of Christmas is Emmanuel, "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). Where Halloween glorifies fear, Christmas drives it away with the presence of perfect love. Easter celebrates the defeat of death itself when Jesus broke the power of the grave.

Rev 1:18 *I am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

1Cor 15:54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

Halloween reminds people of death's sting; Easter removes it forever.

Halloween trains hearts to take pleasure in darkness. It desensitizes children to evil and teaches them that horror is entertaining.

Eph 5:8-11 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*.

Christmas, on the other hand, moves hearts toward love and giving. It stirs compassion and goodwill because it reminds us that:

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Easter inspires faith and rejoicing. It reminds us that sin has been conquered and eternal life is secure. The angel declared:

Matt 28:6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

Because He lives, we can face tomorrow.

Where Halloween fosters dread and gloom, Easter fills us with courage and confidence in Christ. Halloween looks backward to death, decay, and graves. It is a celebration of the curse without a cure. It offers no hope beyond the coffin. Solomon described that same hopelessness that man has without God.

Eccl 2:17 Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun *is* grievous unto me: for all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

Christmas looks upward to heaven. It tells us that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14), and that there is "peace on earth, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14). It points us to the Savior who came once in humility and will come again in glory.

Easter looks forward to eternity. The resurrection declares that "if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." (1 Thessalonians 4:14) Halloween ends in the grave. Easter begins there — and walks out of it.

Halloween is a day of earth religion—a system that tries and fails to desensitize people to death by pretending it's harmless. Death is not something to laugh at or play with; it is something Christ came to conquer.

1Cor 15:26 The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.

Christmas and Easter are days of heavenly revelation. They are not born of

superstition but of Scripture. They are the unfolding of God's plan to rescue man from fear, sin, and the curse.

Heb 2:14,15 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;
15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

The fear of death drives the world into foolishness, but the love of Christ drives out fear. The devil uses death to enslave; Jesus used death to set us free.

So when someone asks, "Why not just let the kids have fun?" the answer is simple:

We already have better celebrations. We have holy days that fill our hearts with joy instead of fear, and light instead of darkness.

At Halloween, the world celebrates death pretending to be fun. At Christmas, we celebrate life and light coming into the world. At Easter, we celebrate life eternal and death defeated, forever.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

The contrast could not be sharper. Halloween, born of man's earth religion, offers the illusion of power and the shadow of death. But Christmas and Easter, born of heavenly revelation, offer life, truth, and everlasting hope. Now let's look more closely at what the earthly religion offers vs. what the heavenly kingdom offers.

3. Earthly Religion vs. Heavenly Faith -

- Darkness vs. the Kingdom of light

Col 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Rev 22:5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

- Death vs. Life

John 11:25-26 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

1John 5:19-21 *And* we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

- Deception vs. Truth

Eph 4:14-15 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

- Carnal treats that appeal to lust vs. the Bread of Life

Pro 23:3 Be not desirous of his dainties: for they *are* deceitful meat.

John 6:33,35 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

- Cursing vs. Blessing

Halloween presents witches and wizards casting spells to harm vs. apostles and men of God who have hazarded their lives for us.

Acts 15:25-26 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

James 3:10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

Rom 12:14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

- Revelry vs. Rejoicing

1Cor 10:5-8 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

1Thess 2:19-20 For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

20 For ye are our glory and joy.

- Fear vs. Love

1John 4:17-18 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

- Hopelessness vs. Anticipation

1Thess 4:13,14 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

- Demons vs. Angels

Matt 18:10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

Luke 15:10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence

of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

Luke 16:22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

- Seeking Pleasure vs. Purposefulness

Matt 6:19-21 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The devil likes to play on your fear of death to drive you to get a little fun in this life until it drives us into debauchery and death. Satan offers no hope, but Jesus does.

The world has taken what is dark and called it light. The devil has learned to paint death with a smile and to disguise bondage as fun. But deep in your heart, you know that what the devil offers always comes at a cost. Behind the laughter and lights of this world's celebrations is the same old lie from the Garden: "Ye shall not surely die."

Be honest with yourself. You've seen how sin dresses itself up to look harmless. But it is not harmless. It is deadly. Jesus said, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness." (Matthew 6:23) The devil's plan is not to make you into a monster. It's to make you comfortable in the dark until it's too late to find your way out.

There is another kingdom calling you, a heavenly kingdom, where light shines in the darkness and the darkness

cannot overcome it. Christ is that Light. He died to destroy the one who holds the power of death, that is, the devil, and to deliver you from fear and deception. (Hebrews 2:14–15) You can step out of the shadows into His marvelous light.

If you are not saved, turn to Him now. Confess your sin and your need. Tell Him you are done with the devil's disguises and empty pleasures. Believe that Jesus died for you, rose again, and offers you life eternal. He is not asking you to make yourself better. He is calling you to come as you are and be made new.

And Christian, this call is for you too. Maybe you haven't gone back to the world, but somewhere in your heart there's a hidden door — a secret entrance left unguarded, a place where you've allowed the devil a foothold. Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters." (Matthew 6:24) You cannot claim the joy of the Lord and still reserve a little corner for sin.

It's time to make your vision clear, your "eye single" for the Lord. Let His light fill every part of you. Renounce the works of darkness. Close that secret door. Tell the Lord, "I want no divided heart — only You."

There is a choice between earth's religion and heavenly faith, between death's shadow and Christ's shining face. Which kingdom will you live for?