

GHOSTS, GOBLINS AND WITCHES

Matthew 6:24

Introduction:

- 1. The Halloween season is now upon us!**
 - a. Homes are decorated in fall colors, ghosts hang from trees, pumpkins are everywhere, and costume parties are planned.**
 - b. Stores are filled with a variety of candies, costumes and cards.**
 - c. Cute kids in creative costumes will soon be ringing doorbells demanding “trick or treat.”**
- 2. Halloween is the second largest commercial season of the year.**
- 3. It is a time of innocent fun for children and grownups alike.**
- 4. Few have ever considered the origins of Halloween and its traditions.**

Discussion:

I. HALLOWEEN WAS ORIGINALLY A RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY.

- A. The name “Halloween” is a contraction of “All hallows eve.”**
 - 1. “All Hallows Day” was a Catholic holy day which was celebrated on Nov. 1 each year; thus “Hallow ‘een” was the evening before - Oct. 31.**
 - 2. In Medieval times, All Hallows Day was a time to honor those who had recently died but had not yet gone to Heaven.**
 - 3. It began to be celebrated in 609 on May 13 of each year.**
 - 4. In 835, Pope Gregory IV. changed the day to November 1.**
- B. “All Hallows Day” is rooted in pagan customs which were incorporated into the Catholic Church.**
 - 1. Irish, Welsh and Scots held a festival in late October to mark the end of harvest and the beginning of winter.**
 - 2. Bonfires were lit and human sacrifices were offered.**
 - 3. It was believed the door to the underworld was opened so fairies, demons, and spirits could come to the earth.**
 - 4. Feasts were held to which the souls of the dead were invited.**
 - 5. Costumes were worn to disguise oneself from harmful spirits.**
 - 6. Jack-o-lanterns were originally carved from turnips and may have represented evil spirits.**
- C. Halloween has become a time of innocent fun in our day though it**

has its roots in pagan and Catholic practices.

1. Some oppose Halloween because of its pagan origin.
2. Satan worshippers and practitioners of witchcraft still regard Halloween as a “holy day.”

II. WITCHCRAFT (WICCA) IS ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING RELIGIONS IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA.

A. Witchcraft is an ancient religion centered around goddess worship.

1. The earth was often thought of as a mother goddess.
2. Some environmentalists today “worship” the earth.
3. “When one defines oneself as Pagan, it means he or she follows an earth or nature religion...We worship a deity that is both male and female, a mother goddess and father god, who together created all that is...” (Edain McCoy).

B. Witchcraft and Satanism were closely associated for centuries.

1. Many present day witches deny they are Satanists.
2. Wicca is the largest of several neopagan religions today.
3. “Witch” comes from an old English word which means “wisdom” or “knowledge.”
4. “Witch” describes a woman who practices witchcraft while a man would be known as a “wizard” or a “warlock.”

C. There are different schools of thought regarding witchcraft:

1. Some acknowledge it is nothing more than legend and ritual.
2. Others believe they are actually dealing with spiritual forces.
3. They believe demons appear in human or animal form.
4. Pan or Lucifer is a horned god, half man and half goat.

D. Witches believe they access spiritual powers by magic, incantations and rituals that enable them to cast “spells” on others.

1. Animals (usually cats, frogs or birds) who possess demons may assist witches in their work.
2. Magic potions are brewed to carry out a spell or curse.
3. Some witches believe they can turn into werewolves or vampires.
4. Witches commonly meet in covens of thirteen members.

E. Witchcraft has become popular in our time for several reasons:

1. Many denominations have become so liberal in their teaching that they leave a spiritual void.
2. Worship of a female deity appeals to radical feminists.
3. Witchcraft promises power over nature and other people.
4. Movies and TV shows have popularized the concept of witches, often presenting them in a good light.

III. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT WITCHCRAFT?

A. The Law of Moses strongly condemned all forms of the occult.

“You shall not permit a sorceress to live” (Ex. 22:18).

“Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them. I am the LORD your GOD” (Lev. 19:31).

“There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your GOD drives them out from before you” (Deut. 18:10-12).

B. Saul consulted the witch of En Dor (1 Sam. 28).

1. The LORD had deserted him (vs. 6).
2. The woman told him how Saul had cut off the mediums and spiritists from the land, not knowing he was Saul (vv. 3 & 9).
3. When the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice because she was as surprised as they were (v. 12).

C. The New Testament condemns witchcraft (sorcery) as well.

1. Paul blinded Elymas, sorcerer and false prophet (Ac. 13:6-12).
2. The Ephesians showed their repentance by burning their books of magic (Acts 19:19).
3. Sorcery is a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21).
4. Sorcerers will be in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 21:8).

Conclusion:

1. The practice of witchcraft was once done in secret because society frowned upon it.
2. Today, it is openly practiced and is a direct challenge to the faith of Christ.
3. Only Jesus Christ can save from sins (John 8:24; 14:6; Acts 4:11,12).
4. We must accept Him as LORD of our lives (Acts 2:36; Lu. 6:46; Rom. 14:11).

