

## October 2011

Dear Gilead Family,

Monday, October 31, 2011 is Halloween, but even back in August, I saw the advertisements for Halloween. Stores were rented and opened for the sole purpose of selling the merchandise for this day.



What is Halloween? Literally, *hallow* is the same word for "holy" that we find in the Lord's Prayer, and *e'en* is a contraction of "evening." Therefore, we might conclude that Halloween is a 'holy evening.'

*Now a children's holiday, Halloween was originally a Celtic festival for the dead, celebrated on the last day of the Celtic year, Oct. 31. Elements of that festival were incorporated into the Christian holiday of All Hallows' Eve, the night preceding All Saints' (Hallows') Day.*

*Customs and superstitions gathered through the ages go into the celebration of Halloween, or All Hallows Eve, on October 31, the Christian festival of All Saints. It has its origins, however, in the autumn festivals of earlier times.*

*The ancient Druids had a three-day celebration at the beginning of November. They believed that on the last night of October spirits of the dead roamed abroad, and they lighted bonfires to drive them away. In ancient Rome the festival of Pomona, goddess of fruits and gardens, occurred at about this time of year. It was an occasion of rejoicing associated with the harvest; and nuts and apples, as symbols of the winter store of fruit, were roasted before huge bonfires. But these agricultural and pastoral celebrations also had a sinister aspect, with ghosts and witches thought to be on the prowl.*

*Even after November 1 became a Christian feast day honoring all saints, many people clung to the old pagan beliefs and customs that had grown up about Halloween. Some tried to foretell the future on that night by performing such rites as jumping over lighted candles. In the British Isles great bonfires blazed for the Celtic festival of Samhain. Laughing bands of guisers (young people disguised in grotesque masks) carved lanterns from turnips and carried them through the villages.*

*In ancient Britain and Ireland, October 31 was celebrated as the end of summer. In later centuries it was the opening of the New Year and was the occasion for setting huge bonfires on hilltops to drive away evil spirits. The souls of the dead were supposed to revisit their homes on that day, and the annual fall festival acquired sinister connotations, with evil spirits, ghosts, witches, goblins, black cats, and demons wandering about.*

*Halloween, name applied to the evening of October 31st, preceding the Christian feast of Hallowmas, Allhallows, or All Saints' Day. The observances connected with Halloween are thought to have originated among the ancient Druids, who believed that on that evening, Saman, the lord of the dead, called forth hosts of evil spirits. The Druids customarily lit great*

*fires on Halloween, apparently for the purpose of warding off all these spirits. Among the ancient Celts, Halloween was the last evening of the year and was regarded as a propitious time for examining the portents of the future. The Celts also believed that the spirits of the dead revisited their earthly homes on that evening. After the Romans conquered Britain, they added to Halloween features of the Roman harvest festival held on November 1 in honor of Pomona, goddess of the fruits of trees.*

*The Celtic tradition of lighting fires on Halloween survived until modern times in Scotland and Wales, and the concept of ghosts and witches is still common to all Halloween observances. Traces of the Roman harvest festival survive in the custom, prevalent in both the United States and Great Britain, of playing games involving fruit, such as ducking for apples in a tub of water. Of similar origin is the use of hollowed-out pumpkins, carved to resemble grotesque faces and lit by candles placed inside.<sup>1</sup>*

Given what we know about Halloween, what should Christians do? Our response ought to be based on the following:

*“And God spoke all these words: ‘I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ‘You shall have no other gods before me. ‘You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments (Exodus 20:1-6).’”*

**Therefore, as Christians, we should have nothing to do with Halloween!**

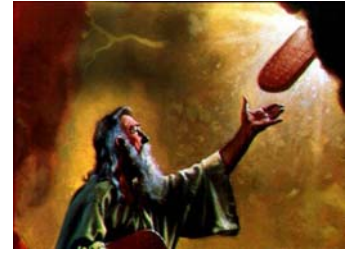
May God bless you all!

Pastor Moy and Mrs. Moy

Source of information <http://cupofjoe.goodfight.org/?p=1136>

## 2011 十月牧者之信

親愛基列教會之家,



2011 年 10 月 31 日, 星期一, 是萬聖節 (Halloween)。

但是, 早在八月, 我已看到了萬聖節的廣告。有商店已經為這一天的商品而開業。

什麼是萬聖節? 從字面上看, hallow 是神聖的“聖”。亦即在主禱文裏所提及的“聖”“hallow”。e'en 是“晚上”同一個字的縮寫。因此, 我們可以得出結論, 萬聖節是一個“神聖的夜晚... ..”。

現在萬聖節已成為孩子們的節日。萬聖節起源於凱爾特人 (Celtic) 的死人節, 是在凱爾特人年的最後一天, 10 月 31 日慶祝。後來該節被納入基督教節日裏, 在萬聖節的第二天, 成為諸聖日 (All Saints Day)。

習俗和迷信, 隨著年日亦進入 10 月 31 日萬聖節慶祝的活動中。而基督教的諸聖節亦如是。習俗和迷信有它的起源; 然而, 在早期時代多是沿於秋季節日的慶祝。

古老的德魯伊人 (Druids) 曾在十一月初進行為期三天的慶祝活動。他們認為, 死者的靈魂會在十月最後一個晚上在地上漫遊, 因此他們點燃篝火 (bon fire), 以趕走他們。在古代羅馬的波莫納 (Pomona), 水果和花園女神節亦在大約每年的這個時候慶祝。這是一個與收穫有關的喜悅場合。人們會在巨大的篝火前烤堅果和蘋果, 因為這是冬季水果的象徵。但是, 這些農牧慶祝活動也有陰險的一面, 認為鬼怪和女巫同時在四週徘徊著。

即使在 11 月 1 日成為基督教的節日紀念所有聖人, 很多人仍固守在長大時參與的古舊異教信念和萬聖節的習俗。有些人試圖預言將來, 而在當晚點燃的蠟燭跳過去等儀式。在英倫三島 (British

Isles)，凱爾特人在該節日大開篝火。青少年帶上怪誕面具為偽裝，點著用蘿蔔雕刻成的燈籠，大搖大擺大笑地穿過他們的村莊。

在古代英國和愛爾蘭，10月31日為慶祝夏天結束。在後來的幾個世紀，這日子就成為新年的開始。在山頂上，亦燒著巨大的篝火，趕走惡靈。他們相信死者的靈魂會重溫當日他們的家園，而在每年秋季節就收納這些惡鬼，巫婆，鬼怪，黑貓，並徘徊著的惡魔為標號。

直到近代，凱爾特(Celtic)在萬聖節的存統生篝火；蘇格蘭和威爾士以鬼和女巫的概念為所有萬聖節慶祝活動的中心，仍然存在。羅馬豐年祭節的習俗，仍盛行於美國和英國，例如玩遊戲，把蘋果迴避在水浴缸。還有，類似的起源是在挖空的南瓜，雕刻像怪誕的面孔和點燃蠟燭放在裏面。

**鑑於我們對萬聖節所知道的，基督徒應該怎樣做？我們的反應應該是基於以下：**

出埃及記 20: 1-6:神吩咐這一切的話、說、我是耶和華你的神、曾將你從埃及地為奴之家領出來。除了我以外、你不可有別的神。不可為自己雕刻偶像、也不可作甚麼形像、彷彿上天、下地、和地底下、水中的百物。不可跪拜那些像、也不可事奉他、因為我耶和華你的神是忌邪的神，恨我的、我必追討他的罪、自父及子、直到三四代。愛我守我誡命的、我必向他們發慈愛、直到千代。

**因此，作為基督徒，我們應該與萬聖節全然無關的！**

願神祝福你！                      梅建邦牧師及師母

資料取自網站 <http://cupofjoe.goodfight.org/?p=1136>