

Revelation Grace Church

Pagan Roots of Halloween: From Samhain to Modern Traditions

Halloween, celebrated on October 31, traces its origins primarily to **Samhain** (pronounced “sow-in”), an ancient Celtic pagan festival dating back more than 2,000 years. It marked the end of harvest and the beginning of winter—the Celtic “new year.” During this time, people believed the barrier between the living and spirit worlds was thinnest, allowing ancestral spirits and malevolent forces to cross over. Communities held rituals involving fire, costumes, and offerings to honor ancestors and seek protection.

Pagan Rituals and Their Modern Connections

Costumes and Guising

The Celts wore animal skins and masks to disguise themselves from roaming spirits or to impersonate them. This evolved into dressing up in costumes to blend in or repel evil spirits. Medieval 'souling'—going door-to-door for food or prayers—became modern trick-or-treating.

Jack-o'-Lanterns

Turnips were carved into grotesque faces and lit with embers to ward off evil or guide lost souls. Irish immigrants brought this custom to America, where pumpkins replaced turnips for easier carving.

Bonfires and Fire Rituals

Massive fires were lit for protection and purification. People danced around them and offered sacrifices to their gods. Today, bonfires, candles, and glowing decorations echo these fire traditions.

Feasting and Divination

Lavish feasts honored the dead, and games like apple-bobbing or nut roasting were used to predict future events or love matches. These traditions survive in Halloween parties and fortune-telling games.

Honoring the Dead

Families set out food for spirits and marked doors to invite good spirits while keeping bad ones away. This became reflected in visiting graves, leaving candy offerings, or celebrating the dead as seen in Día de los Muertos influences.

Testimony of Evangelist John Ramirez

John Ramirez, a former Satanist turned Christian evangelist, has spoken extensively about the spiritual dangers he believes are tied to Halloween. Through media like *CBN*, *Christian Post*, and *Destiny Image*, Ramirez warns that Halloween remains a major night for occult rituals and demonic activity. He describes it as “the devil’s holiday,” claiming that even innocent participation can open spiritual doors to darkness. He explains that costumes, horror imagery, and haunted attractions mirror ancient practices that glorify fear and death. He cautions that believers who take part “for fun” risk spiritual compromise, comparing it to “a one-night stand with the devil.” Ramirez says October is considered by occultists as a month of high spiritual warfare, urging Christians to replace Halloween with prayer and evangelism.

Supporting Sources:

CBN News – Former Satanist Warns Christians About Celebrating Halloween

Christian Post – Ex-Satanist Warns Against “One-Night Stands with the Devil”

Destiny Image – Halloween Is the Devil’s Holiday

Biblical Perspective and Christian Discernment

The Bible urges believers to avoid darkness and live as children of light.

Christians are called to test every tradition to ensure it honors Christ and not the works of evil. **Ephesians 5:11 (NKJV)**: “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.” **Romans 12:2 (NKJV)**: “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” **1**

Thessalonians 5:22 (NKJV): “Abstain from every form of evil.” Christians are encouraged to replace fear with faith, using this season as an opportunity to share Christ’s victory over death and darkness.

Conclusion:

Modern Halloween is a mixture of ancient pagan rituals and cultural traditions. For believers, this handout is a reminder to seek wisdom, purity, and discernment—remembering that Jesus Christ has conquered darkness once and for all. As written in *John 1:5*: “And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.”