

Halloween

BE THE LIGHT

Featuring:

Where does Halloween come from?

Should Christians celebrate Halloween?

Ideas that take the scare out of Halloween, but leave the fun

Ideas that are simple and require little preparation



Should Christians celebrate Halloween?

I'm going to show my age now, but when I was a kid, Halloween just wasn't a big deal. I grew up in a Christian home, and for us Halloween was something we definitely shunned and closed the door on. But, now it is big and ever increasing business.

According to the trend surveyor Mintel in 2016 over £300m was spent on Halloween and 40% of

the population bought a Halloween related product.

Team that with the increasing popularity of vampire and zombie related TV shows and literature and this is a trend that Christians can no longer hide from.

So, where does Halloween actually come from? Is it something to take a stand against? What should we do

when it comes to Halloween?

Surprisingly, Halloween is actually incredibly Christian in it's origin!

Halloween is actually incredibly Christian in it's origin

The church festival of All Hallows (Hallowmass, All Saints' Day) remembered those who had died. It was a



time to celebrate heroes of the faith, and could include people dressing as those historic heroes. You can still see this reflected in the word 'Halloween'. 'Hallow' meaning to honour or praise, such as 'Hallowed be your name...' and 'ween' a derivative for evening or night. Literally 'a night for honour'. Historically it was a major Catholic festival on par with Christmas and Easter.

The Reformation of 16th century denounced it because of its links with 'purgatory' and 'prayers for the dead' and so outside more traditional Catholic circles it rarely has significance now in church life.

However, somewhere along the way this celebration of heroes has been twisted to focus more on death and all things spooky and scary.

Arguably, much of this isn't actually through the promotion of the Occult and a darker focus on Satan and demons, it's actually through the subtle commercialisation of Halloween and its normalisation in culture.

Many people engage with Halloween with little if any understanding of its heritage –

Be the light - Halloween

it is simply what we do. A first generation might reject a new culture practice, the next allow it, and the third simply assume it as normal.

Much of the growth of Halloween has nothing to do with the occult, but subtle commercialisation

Where does that leave Christians? Firstly, who better than those that know Jesus to celebrate Halloween?

Acknowledging that death is real and certain, but also knowing that we have a God who conquers death and is the ultimate light of the world.

When the light of Jesus is held up against the dark it only shines brighter!!

Whatever you choose to do this Halloween, don't be afraid of the dark! *"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Romans 8:38–39

How can you 'Be the light' at Halloween?

If you do choose to 'redeem' Halloween we've put several ideas in this pack that hopefully will kick start you to using this celebration as an opportunity for you to shine brightly as you seek to 'be the light' in your community even in these trickier times. We've tried to include simple ideas that are Covid secure, but still provide you an opportunity to share Jesus' light at this time of year.

Whatever you choose to do, be intentional, make a plan and put it in to action. This is an opportunity for you to 'be light' don't let it pass you by.

If you need any more help or ideas don't hesitate to contact the Beacon office on info@thebeaconchurch.com we'd love to help!



Keep Covid Secure!!

Trick or treaters are unlikely this year, so we are focusing on activities that can be done socially distanced or with up to 6 people. If you are concerned that any of these activities will attract trick or treaters just put a polite notice on your door saying you won't be opening the door tonight, but wish them a fun evening.

Pumpkin Carving

Pumpkin carving is a fun activity for all ages with either family or friends. Why not invite people over to carve a pumpkin and display it outside your house as a symbol of light (sticking to the rule of six of course, or if there's more of you go for a zoom carving party!). It also means that those walking around the neighbourhood will get to see it - perhaps carve a cross or the word 'light' or 'stay safe' as a positive message to your community.



Have a fireworks night

This is a great way to remain socially distanced in a 'together, but apart' community way! Let your

neighbours know what you'll be doing and what time and you can all enjoy the display from the safety of your own back gardens. Take the opportunity to catch up with your neighbours and find out how they are doing as you discuss when the display will happen.

If fireworks are a bit too much, why not decorate outside your house instead and invite neighbours to light up your street too!

Treasure Hunt

You could organise a neighbourhood treasure hunt for people to complete with their own households. Why not laminate pictures of spiders and tie them to trees and lampposts for families to spot, or paint wooden spiders with glow in the dark paint and PVA glue. Let neighbours know what you're up to and when the treasure hunt will begin!

Activity Pack Giveaway

We have a simple activity pack you can give away with basic pumpkin crafts and activities, a Bible story booklet and a comic about Halloween. Because of Covid these can't be given out at the door or posted to neighbours, but rather they are to give to families and children that you already know. If you'd like a pack you can sign up [here](#).



If you do go ahead with using Halloween to shine a light in your community this year do let us know, we'd love to share your stories!

Email info@thebeaconchurch.com.