



How Do I Explain to My Kids Why We Don't Celebrate Halloween?

Alicia Purdy

“Mom, Dad, is it “wrong” to celebrate Halloween?” That’s a question Christian kids ask their parents every year when the decorations start to come out—the witches, the skulls with the spinning eyes, the graveyard and ghost décor, the blood and spiders.

It’s almost easy to give an answer to that question when you consider all of those gory and clearly demonic, dark displays, but what about all the cuteness? Is that “wrong” too?

It is “wrong” to dress up in fun costumes and go out with all of your friends and knock on doors, giggle together and get free candy? Is it wrong to dress up like a princess or a favorite sports player and go to the church parking lot for a “Trunk-or-Treat” on Halloween?

Not Celebrating Halloween Isn’t about Right and Wrong

When you’re young, you want to be the same as everyone else. You want to fit in. As an adult, you know that Christians live in contrast to the world’s ways of living. Christians are light in the darkness, pilgrims not of this world, called to “come out from among unbelievers.” ([2 Cor. 6:17](#))

Yet, even many Christians celebrate or participate in Halloween activities in some way. It isn’t “right” or “wrong” to want to fit in. It is simply part of the human community experience to desire closeness and sameness on some levels, especially socially. But if that causes conflict between the world’s systems and the Kingdom of God—what then? How can you explain to your kids why your family doesn’t celebrate Halloween?

The Christian Confusion about Halloween

When you’re walking with the Lord, operating even close to the borders of darkness is outside of God’s desire because God is light ([1 John 1:5-6](#)) and He has *nothing* to do with darkness. The fact is this: No matter what you decide to do about Halloween or even what arguments are made about its origins, Halloween has its roots in darkness.

No matter how cute the kids look, or how harmless their costumes are, and no matter what reasons someone gives for why they justify participating in Halloween, it doesn’t negate the known and widely accepted fact: that this “holiday” is one that is way too close to darkness to be comfortable justifying it when you want to “walk in the light as He is in the light.”

God isn’t in Halloween, not even a little bit, so why would you raise your children to justify even the “cute” side of darkness?

A Light in the Darkness

When your kids ask why your family doesn't celebrate Halloween, don't focus too heavily on the darkness, like its [pagan roots](#) and the fact that witchcraft plays heavily into its origins. Focus on the *light*. Talk to the kids about what you have learned about being the "light of the world" as Jesus wants them to be, too—like the moon, reflecting the light of the sun.

The moon's job is to shed light into the dark places, into the night. But the moon doesn't come down to earth to do it. Instead, the moon stays above the darkness and sheds its light. Talk about your great love for Jesus and about how family's can commit to staying in the light, even if that means giving up some things that other people do.

You are going to encounter this same issue (the conflict between light and darkness) over and over as you raise your children. There will be many times your children will experience clashes between the ways of the world and the ways of Christ, so you might as well start the conversation as early as possible.

Encourage them that they were born different, into a different family. Don't let them resent and avoid it. Teach them to love and embrace it.

Walk in the Light as He is in the Light

Your lives as parents are the ultimate example to your kids. They are incredibly smart and they will spend their entire lives observing your example of godliness. If you allow little bits of darkness into your home, they will see your elimination of Halloween as a contradiction, a hypocrisy.

What you watch on TV matters. What you listen to matters. How you speak matters. Your example of a light in the darkness will be what they look to when confronted with the pressures of being like the world.

This is a challenging way of living, but it's worth every sacrifice, every self-denial, every elimination of darkness to honor the Lord in all you do.

Some "Easy" Answers

You'll need to equip your children with some things they can say when their friends ask what they're doing for Halloween, or when a teacher asks how they'll dress for the class party or someone wants to know why they don't participate in the church's "Trunk-or-Treat."

Avoid long explanations about the historically [pagan](#) or [demonic](#) roots, arguments, or making other people feel like they're "evil" or bad. Simple answers are best. Here are a few **simple ideas you can customize or build from**:

"Our family doesn't like what Halloween stands for so we don't participate."

"My family celebrates the fall season a different way —with apple picking and a hayride and we make a pie."

"We don't dress up for Halloween." When people ask why, you can reply: "We just don't."

"We aren't going to the party/dressing up/celebrating because we have family plans."

"Halloween isn't a big deal in our family so we are going to do something else together."

Stay the Course

When your kids are little, it's easier to distract them, keep them busy and avoid a lot of the Halloween nonsense. As they get older, they're naturally going to have more questions and want clearer answers. They're going to want to be with their friends when everyone goes out. They're in a dark world, just like you are, and the temptations to be like the world are many!

You'll spend the rest of your life as their parent helping them navigate these complications and showing them how to live as a light in the darkness. There isn't anything "cute" or harmless about darkness, not even when it's a chubby 2-year old toddling around in a bumble bee costume.

Most people truly don't understand why Halloween is an issue and are not dressing up to celebrate evil whatsoever, but that doesn't change the fact that darkness comes in many forms. That is why the world needs light!

Be different. You were called to that anyway. Be strong. Your children need you. Be brave. The world, and even other Christians, won't appreciate your position. Be firm. Your choice is yours to make and you don't need to justify it to anyone. God is on your side. Be loving. The world expects you to judge them, instead show them the light of God's great love. Be willing.

If a conversation opens up, discuss your position with a heart to show light, not to attack the dark. The thing about light is this: Even a little one drives darkness away. Your children are little lights and the sooner you teach them to understand and appreciate the difference even one light can make in the darkness, the better.



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