

I'm Done with Halloween... So Now What?

By: Niki Winston

PHASE 1: The Paradigm Shift

Just like so many parents, when I look at my children I want so much for them to be happy. It's inherent, it's a God-given desire, and it's healthy. That feeling of desiring happiness for my babies, however, is trumped for my burning desire to raise them to be godly men and women for the Lord. Halloween, and many other of our western culture's traditions can get tricky. That's why we should treat them with sensitivity and care. If you've read the article, by David N. Taylor ([linked here](#)) about the origins of Halloween (if you haven't, you SHOULD. Really... Go now. It's much more important than what I have to say), you probably immediately wanted to take a strong stance against Halloween. As a matter of fact, I remember when our boys were 8 & 9 years old and we gave them the article to read for themselves. It was the first year I personally had been enlightened about Halloween's origin, and was honestly concerned about the reaction my own boys would have after finding out that we were no longer going to observe the holiday. I only hoped that they would understand so this would feel more like a "family stand," rather than some kind of "surprise discipline." After finishing reading the article, my second son (8 years old at the time), blown away by what he had just ingested, looked up from his paper, and slowly and dramatically said, "Why... would ANYONE...celebrate... Halloween?" My husband and I breathed a huge sigh of relief as a new season seemed to sweep the atmosphere. We no longer participated in Halloween, and it was an enthusiastic decision for the whole family. Now don't misunderstand: If our children hadn't come to the right conclusion themselves, we would've done it for them, but it would've been more difficult, and a bit bitter. We are so thankful to God that He had prepared their hearts to receive the revelation that Halloween is literally and boldly celebrating death, satan and all that is evil.

PHASE 2: What now?

So now what? Do we stay inside our house, turn off all the lights, and hide from the trick-or-treaters, hoping not to get egged? Do we leave treats outside in a bowl to appease the tricksters, while refusing to encourage and affirm their own celebrating? What do we do? We began a family tradition. I personally can't see why every other child in school should be able to have candy in their lunch at school, but ours are left without, because of their strong Christian beliefs. Every October 31st, our children get candy, and they get plenty. We usually do a candy hunt throughout the house (and perhaps outside, weather permitting), but occasionally we might do something a bit more creative. Secondly, I believe in FUN. Instead of locking ourselves inside of our house, we go bowling! We have a great family time! We leave just in time to miss the first trick-or-treaters, and then return after the last ones are finished. They bring a couple handfuls of candy, and after they eat dinner (at the bowling alley), they enjoy their candy. Every year our children look forward to bowling. I remember last year, my second oldest was asking me about our bowling weeks ahead of time. It's a family tradition, and we all look forward to it... Just like they used to look forward to trick-or-treating!

Perhaps your family may choose something different. Some great resources are: Groupon - They have an array of family friendly activities that you can enjoy at deeply discounted prices, and usually sell their tickets in multiples; also, those coupon books that you can usually buy from school fundraisers often have coupons to lots of fun places like museums, Legoland, and other family attractions.

But does this glorify God? Absolutely! We are a ministry family and a lot of our time is spent ministering to and being a blessing to other people and families, but we are very aware that our FIRST ministry is our family. Our children are the most important souls to me, and my husband and I are very careful to breed in them a desire for the things of God, as opposed to resentment for them. I don't want my children to feel that because they love the Lord, they are "left out of all the fun." That's why it is important for children and youth to see and experience godly fun (If you have children, ages 13-19, you can check out our events page on our youth ministry website: <http://www.gohardforchrist.com/events>). We create our own fun, and as a result, our children have a good taste in their mouth for the things of God. As we minister to our family on October 31st, OUR family is glorifying God.

You may want to take a more active approach, however. The Word tells us to be a light to others, and this may be just the day for your family to take a perfect opportunity! Perhaps you would like to answer your door, give out candy with tracks or stickers attached, inviting them to a church, a Christian website, or even to say the prayer of salvation. Some families offer prayer with their candy, and win souls to Christ just because they DID answer the door on that night. What an awesome way to glorify God and demonstrate His power on a night that is traditionally dedicated to evil! If you want to show the devil that he has LOST the battle, get folks healed and saved on "Halloween." Another approach, instead of a traditional party, might be a service day: Invite a group of children or youth to meet at a designated spot. Make sure you have plenty of adult chaperones, and then (preferably while it is still daylight), perform a service to the community. Clean up a neighborhood, pick up trash, help the elderly, even do some yard work, and don't forget to offer prayer and salvation to those you run into along the way... Then, when all is finished, have everyone meet for hot cocoa or cider and doughnuts. Make sure to send them home with candy. You blessed others while being a light and showing young people what life is really about: loving your neighbor as yourself (Mk. 12:31).

PHASE 3: The Reward

God sees that you are sacrificing for Him. He knew it wouldn't always be easy to go against the grain. That's why he felt it necessary to include Rom. 12:2 in His Word: He tells us NOT to be conformed to this World. He is proud and pleased at your decision to prove what is "...that good, acceptable and perfect will of God." There is reward for obedience. It is the key to your blessing. When you obey God and His Word, you unlock His blessing in your life (Deut. 28:1-14). So get blessed: Say "Halloween, Schmalloween!"