

INTRODUCTION

1. In less than a week the world will be celebrating “Halloween.”
2. As this day is celebrated, questions rise as to whether Christians should participate or not.
3. I received an email this week from someone who had just listened to a message I preached in 2004 on Halloween.
4. She writes, “Thank you for exposing the darkness and speaking the truth. I’m struggling with this issue in my church since I’m looked at as throwing fire and brimstone every time I encourage anyone to steer clear of Halloween activities. Even my pastor doesn’t want me to speak to others about the true meaning of Halloween. He’s chosen to ignore the topic all together and wants us to do the same. When so many participate in it, they don’t want to feel judged in any way for it. It was so refreshing to hear that I’m not alone with this issue in churches. The Holy Spirit has called me to speak out and His judgement is the one I’m worried about. It’s sad to me that so many participate in such a dark event and think nothing of it. Thank you again for your sermon, I loved hearing it.”
5. After reading that email, I thought we should be reminded of several things pertaining to this day.
6. To do that I want us to look at several passages of Scripture

that speak our identity and representation to the world.

7. First, let's look at our identity.
8. Who are we according to Scripture?
9. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says we are "new creatures."
10. Ephesians 2:10 says we are "His workmanship created in Christ Jesus."
11. Notice how James answers this question in James 1:1.

I. Who We Are

“James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

A. Slaves of God and Jesus Christ

1. He was not a slave of men but a slave “of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.”
2. His allegiance was to “God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

D. Edmond Hiebert says, “In the human realm it was inconceivable for a person to be the slave of two masters (Mat.6:24), but the claim of James bears witness to his faith in the spiritual unity between God and Jesus Christ.”

Sadler says, “St. James could not thus style himself as the slave of two intelligences in heaven unless they were co-equal and co-eternal. They must have had equal right of property in him if they were to be called his joint masters or Lord’s.”

- a) James understood what Jesus meant in John 10:30, when He said, “I and My Father are One.”
- b) He may have been present in the Garden of Gethsemane and heard Jesus prayer to the Father

in John 17:11 when He prayed, “I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.”

3. James uses terms that indicate how he saw Jesus

a) “the Lord”

Gr.kurios, occurs 14 times in James and 8,186 in the LXX and the NT.

The word carries the implications of deity. It means, “sovereign master.” In the LXX it is the translation of Yahweh.

b) “Jesus”

Gr.iesous - Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua, means, “salvation”

c) “Christ”

“Gr.christos, is the Greek form of the Hebrew Messiah both meaning “anointed one.”

4. This is the view of other writers of scripture
To be a doulos of God was considered a great honor

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in Jewish culture. Such Old Testament luminaries as Abraham (Gen. 26:24), Isaac (Gen. 24:14), Jacob (Ezek. 28:25), Job (Job 1:8), Moses (Ex. 14:31), Joshua (Josh. 24:29), Caleb (Num. 14:24), David (2 Sam. 3:18), Isaiah (Isa. 20:3), and Daniel (Dan. 6:20) are described as God's servants.

In the New Testament, Epaphras (Col. 4:12), Timothy (Phil. 1:1), Paul (Rom. 1:1), Peter (2 Pet. 1:1), Jude (Jude 1), John (Rev. 1:1), and our Lord Himself (Acts 3:13) all bore the title of *doulos*.

By taking that title, James numbered himself with those honored not for who they were, but whom they served—the living God (Ibid., MacArthur, 12).

5. This is what we are

Slaves is the Greek word *doulos* which means, “one who is in permanent relation of servitude to another” (Hiebert, 59).

The term emphasizes “the supreme and absolute authority of the master and the entire submission of the slave” (W.H. Bennett, 145) and depicts “a person deprived of all personal freedom and totally under the control of his master.

Absolute obedience and loyalty to his master (who provided him with food, clothing, and housing) was

required of every doulos.

In contrast to the andrapodon, who was made a slave, the doulos was born a slave.

James had become a doulos by his new birth through faith in Jesus Christ (John MacArthur, James [Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1998]. 12).

- a) We are those who have been born into slavery in Jesus Christ
 - (1) John 1:12-13 says, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, 13 who were ***born***, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but ***of God***.”
 - (2) Romans 6:22 says, “But now having been freed from sin and ***enslaved to God***, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.”

1 John 3:1-2 tells us also who we are. It says we are...

B. Children of God

“See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that

we would be called *children of God*; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 *Beloved*, now we are *children* of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.”

“Children” (teknon), “born children” (Wuest). It’s used “without reference to sex distinction” (Friberg)

John uses this term 8 times in his three epistles.

1. In verse 10 he gives a distinction between those who are children of God and those who are the children of the devil
 - a) The children of God practice righteousness and love their brothers (see vv.6a, 7, 9)
 - b) The children of the devil practice sin and murder (see vv.6b, 8; also 1:6, 8, 10)
2. Throughout this epistle John makes it clear who is a child of God and who is not

He says:

- a) Children of God have true “fellowship...with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1:3)
- b) Children of God “walk in the light as He is in

the light” (1:7)

- c) Children of God have been cleansed “from all sin” (1:7, 9)
- d) Children of God “confess” sin (1:9)
- e) Children of God have “an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (2:1)
- f) Children of God “keep His commandments” (2:3-5)
- g) Children of God love their brothers (2:9-10)
- h) Children of God abide in the light (2:10)
- i) Children of God know the Father (2:13)
- j) Children of God “have overcome the wicked one” (2:13)
- k) Children of God hate the world (2:15-17)
- l) Children of God do not abandon the faith (2:19)
- m) Children of God have “an anointing from the Holy One” (2:20, 27)
- n) Children of God know the truth (2:21)

- o) Children of God confess the Son (2:22-25)
 - p) Children of God “practices righteousness” (2:29)
 - q) Children of God “lay down [their] lives for the brethren” (3:16-19)
 - r) Children of God “do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God” (4:1-3)
 - s) Children of God overcome “the world” (5:4-5)
3. The Bible teaches that everyone who exercises genuine saving faith becomes a child of God at the moment of belief
- a) Gal.3:26 says, “For you are all sons of God through ***faith in Christ Jesus.***”
 - b) 1 John 5:1 says, “Whoever ***believes*** that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.”

C. Beloved

- 1. Because of the love the “Father has bestowed on us” (3:1)

The Father initiated His love on us (Eph.2:4).

“Bestowed” (didomi), “give” (perfect.act.ind.), used 365 time in the NT (Strong). The “word signifies an unearned gift” (Rienecker)

“The perfect tense is used here to indicate that the gift becomes a permanent possession of the recipient.

God has placed His love upon the saints in the sense that they have become the permanent objects of His love” (Kenneth Wuest, Word Studies in the Greek NT).

2. He did this through Jesus
 - a) Rom.5:8 says, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
 - b) 1 Jn.4:9-10 says, “By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”
3. He did this through His Spirit
 - a) Rom.5:5 says, “Hope does not disappoint,

because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts *through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

- b) Gal.5:22 - “But the fruit of the Spirit is love...”

- 4. John uses this word “beloved” 5 times in this epistle as a term of endearment (3:2, 21; 4:1, 7, 11)

“Beloved” Gr.agapetos, means, “very much loved” (Analytical Lexicon of the Greek NT). The NIV translates this word as “the one I love.”

- 5. The early church used this term when describing Barnabas and Paul in Acts 15:26

“Our beloved Barnabas and Paul.”

- 6. Paul used this term when referring to:
 - a) The believers at Rome - Rom.1:7, “beloved of God”

 - b) The believers at Corinth - 1 Cor.4:14, “my beloved sons”

 - c) The believers at Ephesus - Eph.5:1, “dear children”

 - d) The believers at Philippi - Phil.4:1 - “Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and

crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.”

- e) The believers at Thessalonica - 1 Thess.2:8 -
“So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.”
 - f) Tychicus - Eph.6:21, “a beloved brother”
 - g) Epaphras - Col.1:7, “dear fellow servant”
 - h) Onesimus - Col.4:9 - “a faithful and beloved brother”
 - i) Luke - Col.4:14 - “the beloved physician”
 - j) Timothy - 2 Tim.1:2, “my dearly beloved son”
 - k) Philemon - Phile.1:1, “our dearly beloved”
 - l) Apphia - Phile.1:2, “our beloved”
7. The writer of Hebrews used this term when referring to his readers - Heb.6:9, “beloved”
 8. James used this term when referring to his readers - Jas.1:6, “my beloved brethren”
 9. Peter used this term 8 times in both of his letters - 1

Pet.2:11, “dearly beloved”

10. Jude used this term when referring to his readers -
Jude 1:3, “beloved”
11. God the Father used this term to describe His love
for the Son - Mat.3:17

“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well
pleased.”

So the Bible teaches that we are slaves of God and the Lord
Jesus Christ, children of God, and beloved of God and as such
we represent Jesus Christ to the world.

But not only are we represented to the world as such, they
can't see us.

In other words, they don't recognize that we have been born of
God.

John said in 1 John 3:1, “the world does not know us, because
it did not know Him.”

But I want you to notice what it can see.

II. What We Represent

A. Truth

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1. Jesus said in John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”
2. When you come surrendering your life to Jesus, you receive His truth

Not only the truth of who He is but the truth about who you are in Adam and in Christ.

You now “know the truth” (2 Jn.1:1). It “abides in” you and “will be with [you] forever” according to 2 John 1:2.

3. As God’s slaves, children, and beloved we represent the truth

Our lives are to be lived consistent with what we know.

We have “put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” and therefore lay aside “falsehood” (Eph.4:24-25), “anger” (v.26), stealing (v.28), “unwholesome” words (v.29), “bitterness,” “wrath,” “clamor,” “slander,” and “malice” (v.30).

We, according to Ephesians 4:1, are to “walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.”

We are to “walk by the Spirit” (Gal.5:16) not the “flesh” (v.17).

So there is a standard of truth that we uphold and represent.

We also represent...

B. Light

1. This is the opposite of darkness and represents the character of God

John said in 1 John 1:5, “This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that **God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.**”

Scripture speaks of God as our “light and...salvation” (Ps.27:1) and as “an everlasting light” (Isa.60:19). His Word is called “a lamp to [our] feet, and a light to [our] path” (Ps.119:105). Christ is called “a light of the nations” (Isa.49:6), “the true light which...enlightens every man” (Jn.1:9), and “the light of the world” (Jn.8:12).

2. Since this is God’s character, this is also the character of His children

Ephesians 5:8 says, “For you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light.”

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“Scripture sometimes speaks of believers being in and of the light, but here we are said to be light. ‘You are the light of the world,’ Jesus said (Matt. 5:14).

Because we now share Christ’s own nature, we share in His light. Just as He is the ‘light of the world’ (John 8:12), His people are also ‘the light of the world’ (Matt. 5:14).

Because we are in the Lord, we who were once children of darkness are now children of light, and it is as such children that we should walk” (MacArthur, Ephesians).

He says, “you were formerly darkness.”

- a) Jesus said in John 12:46, “I have come as Light into the world, *so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.*”
- b) When you believed, Colossians 1:13 says you were “rescued...from the domain of darkness, and transferred...to the kingdom of His beloved Son.”
- c) You are now, according to 1 Peter 2:9-10, “A chosen race, A royal priesthood, A holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies *of Him who has*

called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 for you once were not a people, but now you are the people OF GOD; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

As slaves of God and Jesus Christ, children of God, beloved of God who walk in truth and light, to participate in the deeds of darkness of the deeds of the world is not only disobedience but living out of character with who we are.

We all know....

III. What Halloween Is

I am not talking necessarily about its history. I am talking about what is presented when you enter the stores or open your sale ads or watch on television or at the movies.

A. As Depicted in the Costumes

If you walk into your local Walmart, you will see costumes for babies through adults.

They have costumes for boys: skull, Frankenstein, Harry Potter, ghost, bleeding skeleton, bleeding skull.

The girls costumes are witches, vampiress, and the devil.

Adult mens costumes consist of wolves, monsters, and

the devil and the women's as the ghost bride.

I've seen in other stores years ago during the OJ Simpson trial, costumes depicting OJ Simpson's football jersey covered in blood or the Texas chainsaw massacre costume covered in blood.

All of these costumes celebrate death.

Notice what Halloween is....

B. As Depicted in the Movies

Some movies consist of: Halloween 1-4, Halloween Resurrection, Halloween: The Curse of Michael Myers, and Criss Angel: Mindfreak, Halloween.

C. As Depicted in the Culture

Just about every department store you enter, you see signs of Halloween.

It's promoted at gas stations, electronic stores, malls, restaurants, theme parks—you name it and it's probably promoted there as well.

Halloween will bring in approximately 3.3 billion dollars this year with retailers.

We have a family living not far from us that goes all out

in decorating their yard and house.

My question has always been, “What do the families of loved one who have been murdered think about all this?”

What is Halloween?

D. Halloween is a Celebration of Death

William J. Schnoebelen, who was a former witch high priest now saved by Jesus says, he used to be “astonished by how many Christians let their kids celebrate Halloween. Some churches even sponsor "haunted houses" and similar events on what is the Number One satanic "helliday" of the year”
(<http://www.chick.com/seasonal/halloween/celebrate.asp>)

Ephesians 5:11 says, “Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them.”

The word “participate” (Sunkoinones, pres.act.imp.) means “to join in fellowship with someone, to have part in a thing” (Rienecker). This is a “joint-participation between two or more individuals in a common interest and a common activity” (Wuest).

The word “expose” (elegcho) means “to reprove or rebuke” (Wuest).

Our resource for exposing evil is Scripture, which is the

light (Ps. 119:105, 130; Prov. 6:23; Heb. 4:13-13) and is “profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16).

CONCLUSION

1. Before you consider participation in this day, remember who you are—a slave of God and of Jesus Christ, a child of God, one who is beloved by God.
2. Remember also what you represent: truth and light.
3. And remember what Halloween is.
4. Some treat it innocently but there are many who don't.
5. Use this day as an opportunity for evangelism.
6. Confront the world—don't become what they are.
7. Remember John's warning in 1 John 2:15-17, “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.”
8. If you're here today and you have not repented of your sins

and turned to Christ, my prayer is that you will consider earnestly the gospel.

9. You ask, “what is the gospel?”
10. The Gospel is that God is our holy Creator and righteous Judge.
11. He created us to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever, but we have all sinned, both in Adam as our representative head, and in our own individual actions (Rom.5:12; 3:23).
12. We therefore deserve death—spiritual separation from God in hell (Rom.6:23; Eph.2:3)—and are in fact already spiritually stillborn, helpless in our sins (Ps.51:5; Rom.5:6-8; Eph.2:1) and in need of God to impart spiritual life to us (Ezek.37:1-14; John 3:3).
13. But God sent His Son Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man (Phil.2:5-11), to die the death that we deserved, and He raised Him up for our justification, proving that He was God’s Son (Rom.5:1; 1:4).
14. If we would have Christ’s perfect righteousness credited to us, and the penalty for our sins accounted to Him, we must repent of our sins and believe in Jesus Christ for salvation (2 Cor.5:21; Mark 1:14-15).
15. Turn to Christ right now as we pray.