

# Two holidays in one week!

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**By Lenny Cacchio**

LEE'S SUMMIT, Mo.—I wasn't sure what to write about today because during this next week we will have two different days either one of which would be a good topic: Halloween and Election Day.

Will Rogers once said that "we come pretty near to having two holidays of equal importance in the same week—Halloween and Election Day. And of the two, the Election provides us with the most fun. On Halloween they put pumpkins on their heads, and on Election Day they don't have to."

I settled on Halloween on the theory, to quote Mr. Rogers once again, that if God wanted us to vote He would have given us candidates. (Disclaimer: I do vote and encourage you to inform yourself of the issues and do the same.)

Not to gore anyone's ox, but it's hard for me as a Christian to see any redeeming value in a day that celebrates death, hobgoblins, witches, the occult and demons. The day itself has its origins in the pagan Celtic festival of Sam-Hain, or "Summer's End."

Celts believed that on this particular day the border between our world and the "other world" becomes thin, allowing spirits to pass through. They wore costumes and masks to ward off evil spirits and hollowed out large turnips and carved them with faces.

Even human sacrifice sometimes played a part in these days.

Today, Halloween is still a high day of the occult, including witchcraft, druidism and paganism.

The Western Church adopted Nov. 1 (All Hallows' Day or All Saints' Day) as a holy day during the Middle Ages during the days of Charlemagne. Hence the name "All Hallows' Eve" or "Halloween" for the evening before. The practice of the medieval church had been to adopt traditions and days of the pagan world, in a sense *baptizing* them with a Christian facade in an attempt to use them as an evangelization tool.

But one must ask if the focus of the day has really changed much from its original pre-Christian meaning. A veneer of Christian theology hardly merits mention in most quarters where it is celebrated. The emphasis instead is on either a lighthearted treatment of the dark side of the spirit world or, in the world of the occult, an out-and-out celebration of Satan himself. Scripture

tells us not even to attempt to worship God through such means (Deuteronomy 12:29-32).

C.S. Lewis, in his introduction to *The Screwtape Letters*, said: "There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight."

I submit that Halloween encourages both.