

Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry Newsletter

Changing lives from the inside out.

Sept / Oct 2013

Let Us Not Allow the Pleasures of the World to Draw Us In

1Cor 13:11 “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.” Likewise when I was less mature in my understanding of the holiness of God, I did not worship in the same way I do now. I still have a long way to go and as I study God’s Word daily I better understand that celebration of His holy days should be done with the utmost reverence, peace, joy and excitement. Many of our Christian holidays are either infected with cultic practice, mocked, or forbidden to be properly celebrated by society, unless the holy aspect of the celebration can be watered down. In this newsletter I will mention several of the ones I see most infected. These articles are not to offend my brothers and sisters who are celebrating these holidays as mentioned here, but instead to try to put light on how God might look upon these cele-

brations in comparison to how He views true worship **Ps. 5:7** “But as for me, I will come [into] thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: [and] in thy fear {respect, reverence, piety} will I worship toward thy holy temple.” Jesus considered His Father’s house holy, and we see how He reacted when it was being misused. Do we ever mix the unholy with what is supposed to be holy, thereby polluting it? **Matt. 21:12, 13** “¹²And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, ¹³ And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.” **Lev. 7:7** “Sanctify {set apart, consecrate} yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I [am] the LORD your God.” **Lev. 20: 26** “And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the

LORD [am] holy, and have severed {divided or separated} you from [other] people, that ye should be mine.” God does not want His children to worship or celebrate in the same manner as the unsaved world does. **John 17:15-17** “¹⁵ I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” Knowing the truth and sharing the truth will set you free from unholy practices. **John 8:32** “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” Are we living a life as holy as possible, or are we missing out on blessings because we are walking in some of the ways of the world? **Gal. 5:16** “[This] I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

Intimacy With Jesus

Are we happy just to be saved and be going to heaven? Or are we seeking God with our whole heart? Are we truly seeking to be so close to Jesus we cannot walk outside His will or are we satisfied not to doing anything bad enough for our Christian brothers and sisters to notice? Though

some might consider this newsletter hard; yet, I need to be reminded that Jesus could come at any minute and then live as if He is coming today. That includes sharing whatever might help those who read this, so they can evaluate for themselves how they are worshipping God, how they

celebrate Him, and how they honor the God of the universe. These articles are as much for me as for anyone as I try to submit myself totally to His will, giving up all thought of how the world does things.

Pray for me as I pray for you!

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Why Do Some Christian Churches Celebrate HALLOWEEN?

The **Encyclopedia Britannica Deluxe Edition** had this to say about the origins of Halloween and All Saints' Day:

"Halloween had its origins in the festival of Samhain {(Celtic: "End of Summer"), one of the most important and sinister calendar festivals of the Celtic year. At Samhain, held on November 1, the world of the gods was believed to be made visible to mankind, and the gods played many tricks on their mortal worshippers; it was a time fraught with danger, charged with fear, and full of supernatural episodes. Sacrifices and propitiations of every kind were thought to be vital, for without them the Celts believed they could not prevail over the perils of the season or counteract the activities of the deities. Samhain was an important precursor to Halloween among the Celts of ancient Britain and Ireland. November 1 was considered the end of the summer period, the date on which the herds were returned from pasture and land tenures were renewed. It was also a time when the souls of those who had died were believed to return to visit their homes. People set bonfires on hilltops for relighting their hearth fires for the winter and to frighten away evil spirits, and they sometimes wore masks and other disguises to avoid being recognized by the ghosts thought to be present. It was in these ways that beings such as witches, hobgoblins, fairies, and demons came to be associated with the day. The period was also thought to be favorable for divination on matters such as marriage, health, and death. When the Romans conquered the Celts in the 1st century AD, they added their own festivals of Feralia, commemorating the passing of the dead, and of Pomona, the goddess of the harvest. In the 7th century AD, Pope Boniface IV established **All Saints' Day**, originally on May 13, and in the following century, perhaps in an effort to supplant the pagan holiday with a Christian observance, it was moved to November 1. The evening before All Saints' Day became a holy, or hallowed, eve and thus Halloween. **By the end of the Middle Ages, the secular and the sacred days had merged.** The Reformation essentially put an end to the religious holiday among Protestants, although in Britain especially Hal-

loween continued to be celebrated as a secular holiday."

All Saints' Day: "In the Christian church, a day commemorating all the saints of the church, both known and unknown, celebrated on November 1 in the Western churches and on the first Sunday after Pentecost in the Eastern churches. Its origin cannot be traced with certainty, and it has been observed on various days in different places. A feast of all martyrs was kept on May 13 in the Eastern church according to Ephraem Syrus (c. 373), which may have determined the choice of May 13 by Pope Boniface IV when he dedicated the Pantheon in Rome as a church in honor of the Blessed Virgin and all martyrs in 609. The first evidence for the November 1 date of celebration and of the broadening of the festival to include all saints as well as all martyrs occurred during the reign of Pope Gregory III (731–741), who dedicated a chapel in St. Peter's, Rome, on November 1 in honor of all saints. In 800, All Saints' Day was kept by Alcuin on November 1, and it also appeared in a 9th-century English calendar on that day. In 837 Pope Gregory IV ordered its general observance. In medieval England, the festival was known as All Hallows, and its eve is still known as Halloween."

"Along with other festivities, the celebration of Halloween was largely forbidden among the early American colonists, although in the 1800s there developed festivals that marked the harvest and incorporated elements of Halloween. When large numbers of immigrants, including the Irish, went to the United States beginning in the mid-19th century, they took their Halloween customs with them, and in the 20th century Halloween became one of the principal U.S. holidays, particularly among children. As a secular holiday, Halloween has come to be associated with a number of activities. One is the practice of pulling usually harmless pranks. Celebrants wear masks and costumes for parties and for trick-or-treating, thought to have derived from the British practice of allowing the poor to beg for food, called 'soul cakes.' Trick-or-treaters go from house to house with the threat that they will pull a trick if they do not receive a

treat, usually candy. Halloween parties often include games such as bobbing for apples, perhaps derived from the Roman celebration of Pomona. Along with skeletons and black cats, the holiday has incorporated scary beings such as ghosts, witches, and vampires into the celebration. Another symbol is the jack-o'-lantern, a hollowed-out pumpkin, originally a turnip, carved into a demonic face and lit with a candle inside. Since the mid-20th century, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has attempted to make the collection of money for its programs a part of Halloween."

I remember when I was a child looking forward to going out door-to-door asking for candy from perfect strangers at times. Then over the years some very unkind people started putting razors in apples, later drugs in some candy, making it dangerous for the children to eat the candy after they walked around for hours gathering it. Then some well-meaning Christians decided to have an alternative to the children possibly getting bad candy, so they decided to bring Halloween into the church. Some decided to have elaborate haunted houses set up to entertain the children and draw them away from what the church thought was a danger. But what about the spiritual danger of bringing in such an unholy celebration into the body of Christ?

If Christians had to counter the dangers of bad candy, why couldn't they celebrate "All Saints Day?" If children have to dress up, they can dress up as Bible characters, and adults should explain to the children why Christians should not celebrate Halloween. I do not think this would warp the child's psyche. The children of the church could then invite un-churched children to a celebration that uplift the saints of old and the many martyrs of the Christian faith. **Prov. 22:6** "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." **Ps. 34:11** "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you **the fear of the LORD.**" God holds man accountable for teaching truth to their children.

Content on "Halloween" and "All Saints Day" from **Encyclopedia Britannica Deluxe Edition**.

Should Santa Have a Part in Your Celebration of Jesus' Birth?

Does your pastor or someone else dress like Santa and come into church to entertain the children at Christmas? If so, how does this fit in with the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ? I hear church people saying all of the time, "Jesus is the reason for the season." While spending the majority of their time explaining to their children, to be good or Santa will not come to see them, or being concerned about decoration, gifts, parties, and they might even actually spend a little time talking about Jesus. Since Jesus' birth is the reason Christians celebrate, even though He was probably not born in December, then the celebration should be all about Jesus. Why do

Christians have to always bring in to our Christian celebrations things that have nothing to do with the spiritual aspect of the celebration? I believe all we are doing is watering down the spiritual facet to fit in, when the Word of God commands us to come out from among them. 2 Cor. 6: 17 "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean [thing]; and I will receive you." So I would ask: are we who are in Christ Jesus walking after spiritual things or are we still walking after the flesh? Are we trying to fit in with the world so as not to draw too much attention to ourselves? Businesses use this Christian holi-

day to get their largest revenue of the year, while disallowing the name of the One whose birth is supposedly being celebrated to be mentioned. I wonder what Jesus thinks about Christians who celebrate in that manner. How many people overindulge financially during Christmas, only to pay for it over the next 12 months or longer? How many people buy things they really do not need as if buying gifts is what Christmas is all about? The greatest gift God could ever give is Jesus, and I feel it is high time Christians in the true churches of God cut out everything else and let Christmas be totally about **Jesus**.



Do Easter Egg Hunts and Easter Bunnies Infiltrate Your Celebration of Jesus' Death on the Cross?

How do you explain Easter bunnies and Easter eggs to your children without completely misleading them? Every modern Christian holiday seems to be wrapped in a cultic practice of some sort. If we look at the controversies about Easter and when and how it should be celebrated, why make it more confusing for our children? We need to tell them where the idea of coloring eggs came from and how the bunny was later added as the one who actually laid the eggs and hid them.

The **Encyclopedia Britannica Deluxe**

Edition explains those origins: "The use of painted and decorated Easter eggs was first recorded in the 13th century. The church pro-

hibited the eating of eggs during Holy Week, but chickens continued to lay eggs during that week, and the notion of specially identifying those as "Holy Week" eggs brought about their decoration. The egg itself became a symbol of the Resurrection. Just as Jesus rose from the tomb, the egg symbolizes new life emerging from the eggshell. In the Orthodox tradition, eggs are painted red to symbolize the blood Jesus shed on the cross. In the United States, Easter egg hunts are popular among children, and in 1878 Lucy Hayes, the wife of President Rutherford B. Hayes, sponsored the first annual Easter egg roll on the White House lawn. The custom of associating a rab-

bit with Easter arose in Protestant areas in Europe in the 17th century but did not become common until the 19th century. The Easter rabbit was said to lay the eggs as well as decorate and hide them. In a way, this was a manifestation of the Protestant rejection of Catholic Easter customs."

So let's straighten out the celebration of Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, and ascension and not confuse our children with what the modern world incorporates into it. Why not be completely satisfied with the celebration of Jesus' payment for our sins without being conformed to this world? (See **Rom. 12:2**)

Is the Church Really Coming Out From Among Them?

I believe God's Word is perfectly clear as to entering into any celebrations that do not exalt Jesus. However, I often hear, "It's for the children—they don't understand all of the bad things that surround the history of whatever they are celebrating." When your child is very young as a parent they expect the truth from you. If you raise your children up celebrating getting money after losing a tooth, by a visit from the tooth fairy, then speak of the Easter Bunny who brings candy and lays eggs and colors them, later to tell them their Christmas gifts came from Santa, what will they think when they find none of this to be true? Then if

you begin telling them about Jesus will they think this is just another fairy tale or fable? **2 Cor. 6: 14-7:2** "14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in [them]; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 **Wherefore come out from among them,**

and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean [thing]; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2 Receive us; we have wronged no man, **we have corrupted no man**, we have defrauded no man." Would God consider our joining in on such celebrations being unequally yoked or corrupting another? That would be for you to judge and to be accountable for your decision.

SEPTEMBER 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 DCC/ PF	5	6	7
8 DCC/ RJPM	9 BCC/ RJPM	10	11 DCC/ RJPM CBS	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 DCC/ PF CBS	19 Food Bank	20	21
22	23 BCC/ RJPM	24	25 DCC/ RJPM CBS	26	27	28 Day of Jubilee
29	30 BCC/ RJPM					

Prayer Corner

Pray people do not get offended with these articles, they are only meant to help us to continue to be separate from the world and the ways of the world, and to not incorporate them into our worship.

Pray for less of the world and more of Jesus in all of the activities of the churches.

Pray that instead of making the church more comfortable for the world to come in, the presence of the Holy Spirit will make the world less attractive to us or them.

Pray for our everyday life to always reflect the life Jesus would live in us.

Pray that when we refuse to do the things expected of us by the world, that instead of animosity; they feel a need to explore what makes us different.

Pray for the DOC to continue to allow and encourage God's Word to be taught and preached in the prisons, as well as for those in charge of the jails.

Be thankful to God, remembering all of His blessings, as we praise Him for allowing us to continue in His service as He leads.

The initials BCC stands for Buckingham Correctional Center; all services are held from 6:30 to 7:45 PM.

DCC stands for Dillwyn Correctional Center; all services are held between 6:00 and 7:30 PM.

RJPM stands for Rehoboth Jail & Prison Ministry.

PF stands for Prison Fellowship.

CBS stands for Community Bible Study, from 10:00 to 11:30AM, held by Chaplain Ron Baker.

Sunday service and 5th Monday is a worship service. The other services are generally a Bible study.

Offerings & Donations

are tax deductible since Rehoboth is a non-profit organization. They can be sent to the address below and will be used to further the Jail & Prison Ministry.

Ministry Address

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Mission Statement

To establish and strengthen the Christian life of inmates and their families by providing opportunities for worship, instruction, nurturing of children, fellowship, service, mutual aid, brotherly counsel, and to establish and strengthen the Christian life of evangelism. To bring the Gospel to the unsaved and to lead them to faith in Christ followed by membership in the body of Christ.

OCTOBER 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 DCC/ PF CBS	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 DCC/ RJPM	10	11	12
13 DCC/ RJPM	14 BCC/ RJPM	15	16 DCC/ PF	17 Food Bank	18	19
20	21	22	23 DCC/ RJPM	24	25	26
27	28 BCC/ RJPM	29	30 DCC/ PF	31		