

'THE REALLY GOOD LIFE'

(*The Life of Christ Series*)

Gospel of Luke

Pumpkin Time

A sure sign of autumn to many is pumpkin picking. An annual ritual of fall for some people is a trip to the country just to find a pumpkin patch to purchase the round, orange gourds to turn into home decorations or into a tasty pie for the year's end holidays. Unfortunately, some carve spooky faces and designs into pumpkins for the pagan Roman Catholic festival of Halloween. It's common to see these 'jack-o-lanterns' everywhere for this festival of death and darkness.

Happy Reformation Day!

Sola Scriptura
SCRIPTURE ALONE
Sola Fide
FAITH ALONE
Sola Gratia
GRACE ALONE
Solus Christus
THROUGH CHRIST ALONE
Soli Deo Gloria
GLORY TO GOD ALONE

Using a pumpkin like this to ward off evil spirits is a superstition forbidden by the Bible for all true followers of Christ (*1 Thessalonians 5:21-23*, etc.). Although some try to sanitize this practice by redefining Halloween in general, the Bible is clear about abstaining from heathen holiday practices (*Deuteronomy 18:9-13*, *2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1*). Christians would be better off using the day to recall **REFORMATION DAY** (October 31st, 1517) the Protestant movement to rid Christianity of any association with pagan Halloween and heretical All Soul's Day.

But, getting back to pumpkins, a tract I read once compared pumpkin carving to the Christian life. It compared purchasing a pumpkin with Christ's purchase of believers when He came into the world to die on the cross in order to pay for us with His atoning blood. The comparison continued in describing how once we have been purchased by Christ, He cuts us from the vine and lifts us up from the dirty world in which He found us. Having separated us to Himself the Lord then cuts away all the inner goop and gunk of the old life, cleansing us and making more room for the Holy Spirit to replace the muck of the past with His invisible presence. The paper went on to how the Lord carves the cross into our hearts and sends out the light of His love to dispel the darkness and draw others to Himself as we '*let our light shine before men*' (*Matthew 5:16*).

More could be written about this analogy, but you get the idea. Christians and churches are obliged to follow the example of the pumpkin by being cleansed of this world and filled by His Spirit to let the light and beauty of His truth radiate out through us to a lost and hopeless world that needs Jesus, not kooky, spooky holidays masquerading as compromised Christianity (*2 Corinthians 3:18*, *Ephesians 5:11-14*). We are called to evangelize the world with truth and light (*Ephesians 5:8-10*), not superficially Christianize the world's pagan holidays and the heretical doctrines of Catholicism (*2 Corinthians 11:13-15*). Like the gooey, sticky, twisted insides of the pumpkin, all that stuff needs removal not decoration and celebration (*1 Peter 1:13-16*, *1 John 3:2-3*).

God has chosen us out of the world to be something separate and special for Himself (*Matthew 13:44-46*). He wants us to '*...depart from iniquity*' and be '*vessels for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work*' (*2 Timothy 2:19-21*). Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (*1 Corinthians 3:16-17*, *6:19-20*) for God's exclusive use in glorifying Him, serving the brethren and reaching the lost with the gospel. This week is the festival of death, darkness and the devil – may God give believers courage and boldness to not blend in with the world but to be pleasantly different for the Savior (*1 Peter 4:3-5*).

'Teach Us to Pray'

(Return of the 12 – Prayer – >talk.to.Me @ God.com<)

Luke 11:1-13

The Prayer Pattern

(The Disciples' Prayer)

“Now it came to pass, as (Jesus) was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” So He said to them, “When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your Name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.” **11:1-4**

The Prayer Passion

(The Disciples' Persistence)

“And He said to them, “Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him’ and he will answer from within and say, ‘Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you.’” I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. “So, I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”

11:5-10

The Prayer Parable

(The Disciples' Persuasion)

“If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Of if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him! **11:11-13**