



# NEW HEART BEAT DEVOTIONS

*“What better time of the year to tell children that evil, death, and the devil is real, but Jesus came to save, protect, and give them eternal life.”*

## **All Hallow's Eve or Halloween?**

*When my boys were small, we took them trick or treating in the neighborhood. One year, we had a fake table and a candy bowl with a hole in it. My son would be under the bowl and scare kids with his hand. I also remember going to and being in York's Halloween Parade and every year we watched the local parade just outside our door. But how did this begin and how should we as Christians respond?*

*Samhain, which translates "end of summer," occurred at the end of October. It was the final harvest of the year and was marked by a celebration. It was considered the ancient Celtic New Year. The Celts also believed this magical time created an opening for the dead. At Samhain, the souls of those who had died during the year could now travel into the otherworld. To prevent souls from coming back to harm those living, the Celts would put food on their porches and wear costumes and masks. Spirits who were not suitably "treated" would "trick" those who had neglected them. Bobbing for apples was one practice the pagans used to divine the spiritual world's "blessings" on romance. Also, the spirits could be warded off by carving a grotesque face into a gourd and setting a candle inside it.*

*In 835 AD, the Catholic Church, in an attempt to do away with the pagan holiday, established November 1st as All Saint's Day, in celebration of all the saints who do not have their own holy day. All Saint's Day was also known as "All Hallows' Day" because the Old English word for "holy person," is "Hallow". The evening of "All Hallows' Day" became known as "Hallow Eve".*

*In the 1920's and 30's, Halloween became a secular community centered holiday which was celebrated with parades and town wide parties. By the 1950's, vandalism tricks had to be brought under control and a very large number of treats were handed out. In the 60's and 70's, you had to be careful of harmful items in the treats. Today, you must worry about physical harm to kids. Recently, communities and churches started having events to provide safe places for children to enjoy the season. Each year you see more and more people decorating their homes for Halloween and more horror movies. Halloween is the country's second largest commercial holiday with more than \$2 billion spent on candy and \$6 billion on costumes and decorations each year.*

*So, how should Christians respond to Halloween? Christians should not respond like superstitious nonbelievers. They should respond with caution, wisdom, and gospel compassion. This can be done with a "No participation" policy, with alternative activities and even with a safe and limited participation. [Martin Luther](#) used October 31 in 1517, to nail his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of All Saint's Church and started the [Protestant Reformation](#). Whatever our level of participation, it should be God honoring, safe, loving, nonjudgmental and a possible way to share the Gospel.*

*For more in-depth study on this this subject go to: [Grace to You: Christians and Halloween](#)*

Granddaughter  
First  
Halloween  
Age 2  
Miss Piggy



*Charles L Stambaugh  
Mt Wolf, PA*

*I Cor 10:31 "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."*

*Do not be tricked  
by the Devil.  
Jesus is the  
only treat.*

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