

The Vine This Month

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## HOM Editorial

Have you ever wondered why Halloween, known as a time of witches, ghouls and goblins, is celebrated by millions of people in multiple countries as a fun time for kids? Last Saturday night, we were walking to the hawker centre for dinner when I saw a number of parents with their children coming out of the CC. The children were in various costumes and some of the adults were wearing witches' hats. They comprise of local Chinese and Malays and a number of China and Indian nationals. The universality of this event boggles the mind when you think of the many excuses you hear of Christianity being a "Western" religion. Isn't Halloween a Western celebration?

The word Halloween is derived from the term, "All Hallows Eve," which falls on Oct. 31. Halloween is the eve of All Saints Day which falls on the next day, Nov. 1st. Some say that the origins of Halloween can be traced back to ancient Ireland and Scotland. On Oct. 31st the Celts celebrated the day, the time of the crop harvests and the annual change of season. There was much superstition associated with this time of change, including the belief in fairies and that the spirits of the dead wandered around looking for bodies to inhabit.

Later, around the 5th century, as the Catholic Church developed, it took over the celebration. Nov. 1st became "All Hallows Eve" where all the saints of the Catholic church were honored. So, it appears that the origins of Halloween are a mixture of old Celtic pagan rituals superstition and early Catholic traditions.

The above short history of Halloween was extracted from a website: *Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry CARM.org*.

Do Christians celebrate Halloween? *"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak."* (1 Corinthians 8:9) However for Lutherans, we have something more important to celebrate on Oct 31<sup>st</sup> – REFORMATION DAY.

*Martin Cheah*