

A group of children in costumes are holding up their jack-o'-lanterns at night. The background is dark with some lights, suggesting an outdoor Halloween event. The children are in the foreground, and their faces are partially visible as they look at their pumpkins.

WHAT DO WE DO WITH HALLOWEEN?

FOR KIDS + CHURCHES

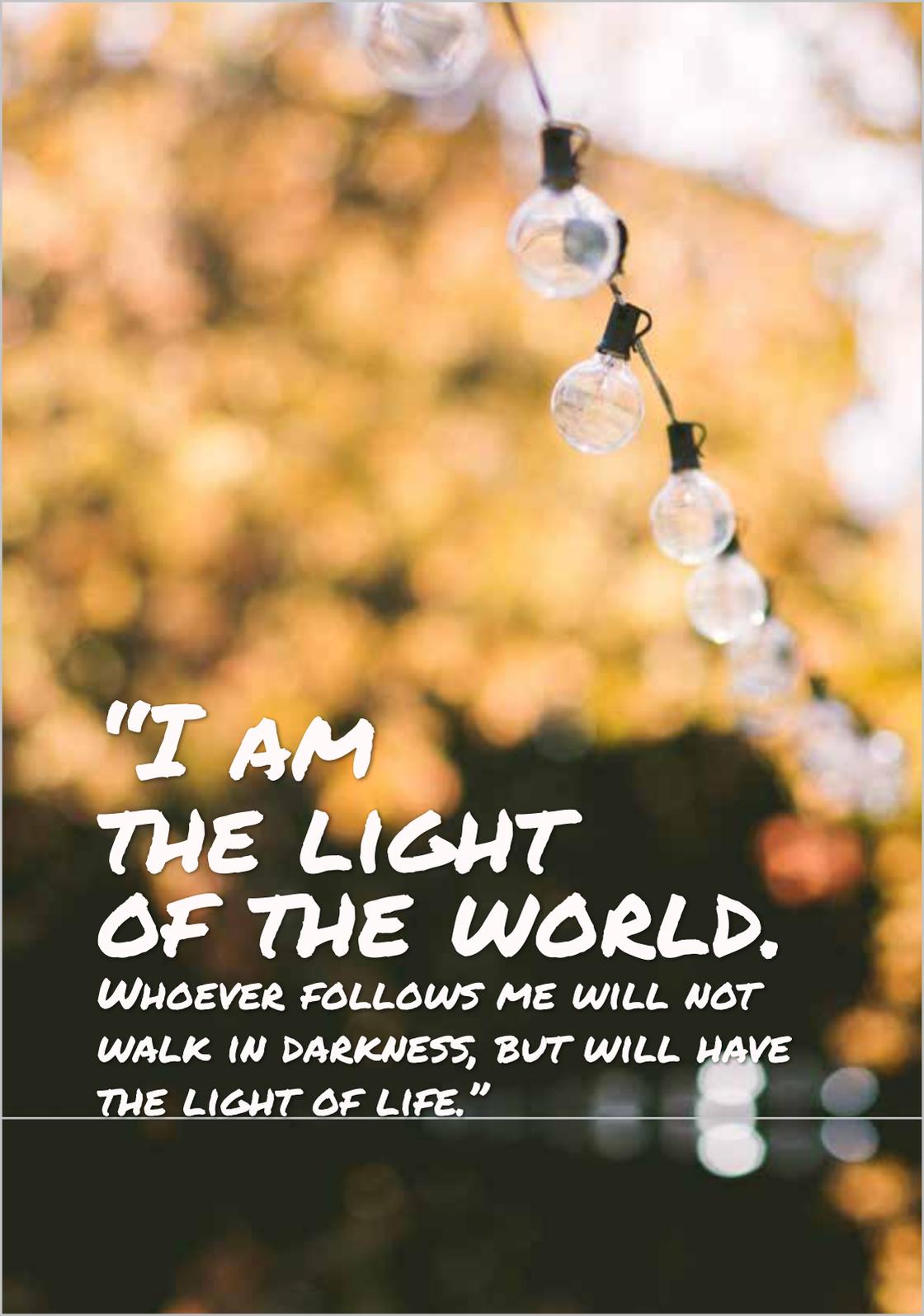
WHAT DO WE DO WITH HALLOWEEN?

Many parents worry about shielding their children from dangerous non-Christian influences. This is especially true at Halloween, which has become a culturally accepted multi-billion dollar holiday. Because of the costumes, sugar filled treats and fun, most children love Halloween. However parents are faced with the dilemma: how much should children participate in a holiday that focuses on scary images, glamorizing death and the occult?

Avoiding Halloween entirely is one option. Another is providing fun Christian alternatives. Parents also have the opportunity to provide children with a faith-based understanding of Halloween. You can use the holiday to help your children discover the differences between God's truth and false beliefs endorsed by popular culture.

We have put together a few ideas to get you starting those conversation with your kids about true love, sacrifice, God's love and what that really means in your life and in theirs.

The Discipleship Ministry Team - Children
South Pacific Division



**"I AM
THE LIGHT
OF THE WORLD.**

**WHOEVER FOLLOWS ME WILL NOT
WALK IN DARKNESS, BUT WILL HAVE
THE LIGHT OF LIFE."**

ALTERNATIVE IDEAS





Explore children's fears regarding death

Kids often ask tough questions that make adults uncomfortable. When topics such as death and the devil arise, let your home be a safe place where children can express their fears. Then turn to the Bible for answers.



Family worship week

Read aloud Ephesians 6:10-20 and discuss how God keeps us safe. Let children dress up in this armour; for example, wear the belt of truth to recognize Satan's lies and resist his temptations.



Reverse Trick or Treat.

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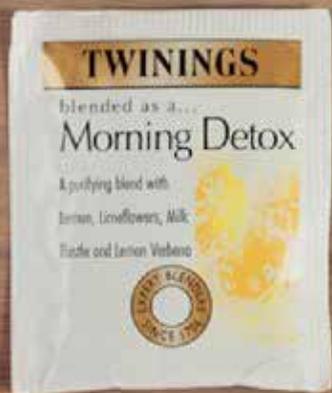


Printed message/Bible verse with gift attached

Print a little card (the size of a business card) and attach a chocolate, packaged cookie, candy or anything else that is economical and message appropriate.

Ideas here

<http://www.whimsicledesignstudio.com/2013/10/15/free-halloween-treat-bag-toppers-with-bible-verses/>
<http://www.itsalwaysautumn.com/2013/10/30/i-am-a-child-of-god-free-printable.html>
<http://fellowfellow.com/free-printable-gift-tags/>
<http://pizzazzerie.com/holidays/freebie-halloween-treat-gift-tag/>





A little sunshine service idea:

With the change of seasons comes the often unavoidable sickness that does the rounds. While being sick is never fun for those sick it provides a wonderful opportunity for those who are well to serve.

If a family member or a person in your community (neighbor, teacher, work colleague, church member) is sick consider as a family sharing God's love and the message of Easter by doing one of the following:



Make and deliver a meal: When you are sick the last thing you feel like doing is eating or cooking food. So be sure to make food that is easy to eat (soup, soft rolls etc.).



Put together a get well soon package: Include things like, tissues, tea (ginger, peppermint, chamomile are good options), cough lollies, a book, fresh lemonade, lemons or flowers.

Put it all together in a little package, write a get well soon note, print out a pretty tag and deliver.

Cute printables free from here:

<http://www.theprettyblog.com/house/diy-serving-tray-a-little-sunshine-to-brighten-up-a-winters-day/>

Church community service ideas:

Have the kids in the Sabbath school classes create something to give to all the adults in church or to their neighbours to tell them that they love them and appreciate them. For example:



Mystery Tour of Surprises

On the weekend of All Saints' Day (Halloween), take kids on a two-and-a-half hour mystery tour. Arrange enough transportation for all the kids in your program. Plan approximately five stops and arrange for kids to receive a treat or enjoy an activity at each stop.

- Hospital – deliver flowers to patients;
- Community pool – take a dip;
- Park - pick up garbage and/or play a game;
- Soup kitchen – help serve food;
- Homes – have a snack.

At each stop, the children can also give as well as receive. For example, they could sing a song, make a food donation, or deliver handmade cards.



Big picnic

A before Halloween plan a big church picnic. Invite the community. Have activities (scavenger hunts, photo booth, sports, crafts etc.). Use this a opportunity to get to now the people in your neighborhood.

Idea here <http://www.theprettyblog.com/house/4-free-easter-printables/>



Donation drive

Many different organizations are looking for donations the year round. Simple things like:

- Clothes, blankets to your local women's/men's shelter
- Blankets to the animal shelter
- Canned food to the food kitchen or international aid agency
- Money to aid agencies such as ADRA

<https://www.adra.org.au/adra-appeal/>



Nature Walk/Scavenger-hunt

Choose a local park or trail that your family would enjoy exploring. Then, embark on a scavenger hunt for the most beautiful leaf, the smoothest rock, the most interesting stick, etc.

After the allotted time have everyone share their entries for each category and vote on the winners. You'll be amazed at what each person has found.



Light party

As a church hold a light party. Have an evening BBQ, have an evening worship about how we are called to be the light of the world. After sunset play games like spotlight, serve hot drinks or light fireworks (if legal in your country) and sparklers. Use this as a time of worship and making positive memories with all ages of your church community.



Hold a Church Agape feast:

An Agape Meal involves a meal, fellowship, praise and worship opportunities. It builds on the experience of those early Christians who met often for fellowship, to share the Lord's Supper and to worship God in praise and awe (Acts 2:42-47). This could be anytime during the weekend.

There are a number of things you can include in an Agape Meal. It can be as simple as a meal and Bible reading or you can include some of the following.

A fellowship meal: With an array of fresh fruit, finger food, nuts, dried fruit, dips with crackers or vegetables, cheeses, a variety of breads, fruit drinks, soups, etc. The meal should be simple, colorful and attractive.

Worship and praise: Integrate into a relaxed time of fellowship.

Foot-washing: Just as Jesus did with His disciples (John 13). Make sure to include a brief explanation of what Jesus did would lead into the time of "washing each other's feet."

Prayer: Include a time of prayer. Do it individually or as a group.

Idea modified from <http://www.newchurchlife.com/agape-meal-ideas/>



