

all Saints Day, all Hallowmas, all Hallows' Day (now 1)

Hallowe'en, or all Hallows Eve \_\_\_\_\_ oct. 31

October: "When the frost is on the pumpkin and  
the fodder in the shock." - James Whitcomb Riley.

~~Hallowe'en~~ assumes the character of the frolicsome festival  
as we now know it rather than the solemn  
preparation for All Saints Day, the idea being that  
on this night the ghosts of the dead prowled.

All Saints Day developed perhaps 1300-1500 years  
ago, to honor the memory and pray God's  
blessing on the souls of the many good  
Christians, martyrs and leaders of the past,  
who ~~was~~ came to be called saints.  
This was for a host of lesser-known saints  
~~for whom there~~ for no one of whom was  
there a special day of honor and prayer.  
Later, the day before All Saints Day  
came to be a day in which to prepare prayers  
and set up places of worship for All Saints Day.  
It was the evening before the day to Hallowe'en (or Hallow)  
all Saints. This was Hallowe'en evening, later to be  
Hallowe'en.

More recently, the idea of Hallowe'en has been  
that the ghosts of the dead can prowl their  
old haunts on earth, how fun and even play  
pranks on the living on Hallowe'en, before getting  
~~to~~ to the more serious activities of All Saints  
Day, ~~personal~~ personal prayer, repentance, worship  
and dedication on All Saints Day.

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The present observances connected with Halloween are believed to have originated among the ancient Druids, in what is now England. They believed that on that evening Saman, the Lord of the Dead, called forth hosts of evil spirits. The Druids lit large fires on Halloween, apparently for the purpose of warding off these spirits.

Among the Celts, another British Isles ancient culture, Halloween was regarded as a good time to examine your future hopes and plans and chances. The Celts believed that the spirits of the dead revisited their earthly homes on that evening.

After their conquest of Britain the Romans added to the Halloween traditions features of the Roman festival held on November 1 in honor of Pomona, goddess of the fruits of trees.

The concept of ghosts and witches is still common to all Halloween observances. Traces of the Roman harvest festival survive in our customs of playing Halloween games involving fruit, such as pulling for apples in a tub of water, and in the decorative use of pumpkins which are hollowed out, carved to resemble grotesque faces, and illuminated by candles placed inside.

Trick or Treat

So we see that ~~Halloween~~  
~~is the month of which ends with Halloween.~~  
Halloween is an observance which has origins  
reaching well into fairly early American history.  
From two major historic sources, Christian and  
church history in Europe and superstitions  
of the Druids and Celts in the British Isles -

Today we carry on a combination  
of the two in the childish Halloween  
practice of "Trick or Treat."

The way we use it, either the ghosts  
and goblins at the door get a treat of good  
chocolate, or you get a trick such as  
egg on your nose or crayon drawing on  
your coat. ~~Just~~ a few years back the two  
tricks might have included ~~something~~ overturning  
the outdoor toilet, and today the old paper  
still grasses the trees, fences and buildings, in  
long white streams on the morning after Halloween.

This idea of Trick or Treat can be thought  
of more seriously. Tricks can be the way we  
treat other people badly, or the way they  
treat us badly. Tricks can be the selfish and  
silly choices we make for ourselves which result  
in unhappiness and ~~full~~ failure.

Treats can be the enjoyment of people  
we really like and love, their presence, the  
things they do for us, the things we do for them.  
As in the early Christian All Hallow's Eve,  
A treat can be the recognition of God's love  
for all who believe in him and love him.  
(? Illustration ?)

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The biggest treat that can happen to anyone  
 was well described by the apostle Paul in the  
 Scripture we read: "I bow my knees unto the father of our  
 Lord Jesus Christ... that he would grant you... to be  
 strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;  
 that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that  
 ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able  
 to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge,  
 that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."  
 Truly - or treat.

Life is one or the other, at all times.

It can be a treat ever more often if you do  
 indeed live with "the love of Christ" in the fullness of  
 God." We call that kind of living "Christian faith".  
 It is a real treat. Try it.