



NEIGHBOR
COLLECTIVE

SESSION GUIDE

Week 6 // Should Christians Celebrate Halloween?

Things You'll Need Before You Start:

- Bible & Journal
 - Candle & Match/Lighter
 - Bread, Juice/Wine
-

1. INTRODUCTION

Announcements:

Want to contribute? Email justin@neighborcollective.org

Next virtual hangout: November 3, 2022 @ 8 PM EST

([Click here to learn more](#))

Make sure to engage in the private FB Group: [Click Here to access.](#)

2. SH'MA

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 Hebrew: *Sh'ma Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad. Baruch shem k'vod malchuto, l'olam va'ed. V'ahavta et adonai elohecha, b'chol l'avcha, u'vchol nephshecha, u'vchol m'odecha.*

English: Hear Israel, The LORD* (YHWH) our God the LORD (YHWH) is one. Blessed be the name of His glorious Kingdom forever and ever. And love the LORD (YHWH) your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your strength.

***When LORD is spelled with all caps it means that in Hebrew it is referencing the name of God which is YHWH. We believe from sufficient scholarly research the best way to pronounce the name is Yahweh. Many Jews and some Christians have refrained from using the name at all so as to not misuse the name (Exodus 20:7). If you don't feel comfortable pronouncing the name YHWH, we say Adonai (Lord) to replace it in Hebrew. Many also call YHWH "HaShem" which means "The Name."**

3. LORD'S PRAYER

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.
For yours is the Kingdom,
and the power, and the glory forever.
Amen!"

***The Lord's prayer can be found in [Matthew 6:9-13](#) except for the final line. Learn more about the Lord's prayer and why that final line was inserted in [this article here](#).**

4. CANDLE LIGHTING

Matthew 5:14: *"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*

Candle Blessing: "Blessed are you, LORD our God, King of the Universe, who sanctified us in his commandments, and commanded us to be a light to the nations, and who gave to us Jesus our Messiah, Light of the World."

Let's pray together: LORD we pray that the lights we now kindle will inspire us to use our lives to heal, and not to harm. To help, and not to hinder. To bless, and not to curse. We ask that You would free us from the selfishness and bitterness that keep us from loving you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. Release us from the pride that keeps us from loving our neighbors as ourselves. As we walk into this world as the light of the world, we ask that you would guide our footsteps, protect us from the enemy, and that we would use your light to share your lovingkindness, with the world! Amen.

5. THE ORIGINS OF HALLOWEEN

by Jared Beadle - [Click here to check out the full article with audio.](#)

- Many Christians see Halloween and Christianity as two opposing forces, but that's not originally the case.
- Samhain was an ancient pagan Celtic Fall festival held on October 31st that celebrated the end of fall and the beginning of winter, as well as the start of a new year.
- Samhain and Halloween existed at the same time, but one did not influence the other. Samhain did not influence the Christian roots or customs of Halloween and Christians did not influence Samhain with their costumes.
- Although Halloween is a Christian holiday that originated in the church, some of the traditions and beliefs behind it didn't start with the scriptural foundation.
- Believe it or not, the roots of the theology actually lie in the Old Testament, specifically with the Feast Tabernacles or Sukkot.
- The early church calendar was based from the Jewish liturgical calendar and the celebrations were split into Spring Feast and fall feasts. The spring feasts are what Jesus fulfills in his actual life, but the intention of the fall feasts is to point to what God is going to do in the future. We aren't just talking about a physical harvest, but also a spiritual harvest when God will gather all people.

- 609 AD Emperor Phocas gave the Pantheon in Rome to Pope Boniface IV who dedicated it on May 13th – St. Mary and All Martyrs.
- Eventually this day of dedication moved to November 1st and became a celebration called the Feast of All Saints.
- By 1000 AD it evolved into a three-day long festival called Allhallowstide from October 31-November 2nd. A time to remember the dead, the saints, and faithfully departed Christians.
- By the 1500s many customs we know today began forming – such as “souling” which is what is now today Trick-or-treating.
- Eventually people began dressing up as scary monsters on Halloween to mock evil in the face of Victory of Christ’s Cross and a reminder that evil and death will no longer have dominion.
- Allhallowstide was one of the biggest events of the year for the church which is why Martin Luther used this day to nail his 95 theses to the door.

6. SONG: “WITH US”

VERSE 1

Not a king adorned in splendor, robed in glory
 But a baby in a manger born to save
 Not a warrior who fights His way to power
 But a friend who faced the cross to set us free

CHORUS

You are with us
 You are with us
 In every moment
 You are with us
 You are Jesus
 You are Jesus
 In every moment
 You are with us

VERSE 2

Wrapped in rags, receive the gift of heaven
 With a word You bring the dead to life again
 You were there from the beginning of creation
 With a promise to be with us in the end

Bridge

When we don't understand
 We know You're working
 For our good, For our good
 We're trusting in Your plan
 Your purpose always wins
 You are with us, You are with us

CHORUS

You are with us
 You are with us
 In every moment
 You are with us
 You are Jesus
 You are Jesus
 In every moment
 You are with us

“With Us”

LC Worship

Courtesy of Life.Church

7. COMMUNION

You will need the elements at this point if you're wanting to participate. Please know you do not have to participate if you would rather not. [Click here to learn more about communion.](#)

Why do we take communion every week? Because it's a reminder of what Jesus accomplished for us both on the Cross and in the Resurrection: Forgiveness of sins, reconciliation to our Creator, and new life in the resurrection.

[Click here to view the different views on communion.](#)



How have you loved Jesus and your neighbors well this week? How do you need to love Jesus and your neighbors better this week? Take some time to examine yourself before we take communion.

Scriptures To Consider:

[Isaiah 53:4-5](#)

[Acts 2:42-47](#)

[1 Corinthians 5:6-8](#)

[Mark 14:22-26](#)

[Luke 22:14-20](#)

[John 6:52-58](#) (See [article here](#) for more insight)

[1 John 1:8-9](#)



Blessing The Bread

Jesus, our Messiah, was afflicted and He was pierced for our transgressions. On the night that He was betrayed, Jesus took the bread of affliction and broke it and said, "This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me." Let's bless the bread:

ALL: "Blessed are you, LORD our God, King of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth, and who gave to us Jesus our Messiah The Bread of Life."



Blessing The Cup

Then Jesus takes the third cup of the Passover, the cup of Redemption, and He said, "This cup of the New Covenant which is done in my blood, do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

ALL: "Blessed are you, LORD our God, King of the Universe, creator of the fruit of the vine, who gave to us Jesus our Messiah, and who gave His life to establish the new covenant."

8. HOMILY

Should Christians Celebrate Halloween?

Ephesians 5:8-17

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. This is why it is said:

“Wake up, sleeper,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

Be very careful, then, how you live —not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.



Questions to consider: Am I being wise and am I making the most of this opportunity to share the love of Jesus with others?

Colossians 4:5-6

“Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

Halloween is not an event to be scared of, but an opportunity to take advantage of.



Questions to consider: How am I loving God and loving my neighbor in this decision? Is there an opportunity here to share Jesus with others and be a light in the world?”

Ephesians 6:10-18 (The Armor of God)

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people."

9. BLESSING

Blessing (Numbers 6:22-27 + Justin's Addition):

"May the LORD bless you and keep you. May the LORD turn His face toward you and shine upon you and give you grace and peace as you go throughout your week. And may you always remember, no matter how dark it gets, Jesus will always be there when you need him. No matter what. Jesus will always dwell by your side."

BE BLESSED THIS WEEK!

Want To Get Involved?

Thank you so much for being a part this week! If you'd like to help us out, here's what was need:

1. We're in need of people who love worshipping and can record worship music. Or have their own music already recorded that they would be willing to let us use in these sessions.
2. We'd love for you to lead some of the sections (For example, you would film yourself using your phone blessing and lighting the candle, or saying the Lord's prayer. And we're open to other spiritual practices that help you grow with Jesus).
3. If you know how to edit videos, use Wordpress sites, and/or love social media and would like to help out, please reach out!

You can email us at info@neighborcollective.org or use the form on the [website here](#).

Would you be willing to share your feedback? It's completely anonymous and will help us make these sessions better in the future. It should only take a minute or two and [you can fill it out here](#).