

Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
Fearless – Episode 86 – Halloween

Cissie Graham Lynch:

00:00:00 It's been on the radio and my kids are singing the Disney song, "This is Halloween. This is Halloween." So in today's episode we are gonna discuss, should we as Christians celebrate Halloween.

Hi, I'm Cissie Graham Lynch. Welcome to *Fearless*, helping you have a fearless faith in a compromising culture.

MUSIC TRANSITION

Cissie Graham Lynch:

00:00:34 On today's episode of *Fearless*. I thought I would take a little bit of a break from the elephant in the room series. And then I started laughing because this might be my most controversial topic every year. And I get the most pushback. I get the most feedback on this subject and it, first time it kind of shocked me a little bit, but we're gonna talk about Halloween <laugh>. Every year I post pictures of my kids dressed up for Halloween and us going trick or treating. And the comments I get on social media are wild. They, it definitely took me by surprise the first year. And then I think it was like, last year, I'm like, here we go again. I'm gonna post these pictures of Halloween and it did not fail. I, um, had a lot of people say that they couldn't believe that I would celebrate Halloween and that my grandparents would just be devastated and highly disappointed in me. <laugh> and I say that with like, laughter. I don't take offense. It's hard to offend me. I don't take offense to like social media comments at all. So I thought on this mini episode of *Fearless*, we would discuss Halloween. And as a kid I'll just come out, we celebrated Halloween. Um, I laughed at the comment that my grandmother would be disappointed because in one of the pictures I posted was of me as a hippie, um, growing up and my grandmother actually gave me that dress. And I had stated that in the comment, but somehow they still thought my grandmother would be disappointed in me. But we did celebrate it. Um, I kind of, my mom gave us rules for Halloween. I'll get in that in a little bit, but I do remember one time it was in October and we were at the Billy Graham Training Center at the Cove. And I can remember my outfit exactly. And one of our friends, he was a pastor's son goes, "Mom, do you see what Cissy's wearing? She's wearing a Halloween outfit." <laugh> And um, their family didn't celebrate Halloween. And my grandmother was there and they asked her opinion like, "Ruth, would you be okay with Halloween and celebrating it?" And they weren't. They were just trying to get wisdom from my grandmother and how she would celebrate it. And she always just had a, my grandmother had a great sense of humor. There's nobody that knew the Bible better than my grandmother, but she never like took life too seriously. She always had humor with it, which I love. Cause I think in our world right now, we can just be kind of too serious. She goes, "Christians, they're always ruining and spoiling all the fun." <laugh> And I love that because she just thought Halloween was a great time for kids and a great time just for neighborhoods and just to have a fun time and not to ruin that kind of fun. So, but on today's episode, I really wanted to look into it because there were a lot of concerns of my family celebrating and you know, should we celebrate it? Should we allow our kids to dress up? Should we hand out candy? Should we go trick or treating? Like, what should we do?

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So, did some research and I'm sure people have different opinions of the history of Halloween, where it came from. And they just might grow up with different stories. But something I learned recently was that there are many scholars and historians out there who say that Halloween has always been a Christian holiday. That might be a shocking statement. Once again, if y'all disagree, I'll put all these referrals into the show notes where you can see where I read it. In Ireland and Scotland, it was celebrated on the liturgical calendar as a time to honor the saints of those who had been martyred for their faith. And additionally in the early church history, church leadership designated All Hallows Eve as a time to remember believers who had passed. So it was a time to remember those who had passed before them. And because of the Celtic practices of the beginning of the new year on November 1st, you can see where some of the confusion is with how people think about the holiday on October 31st. But that was not the intent of the early Christians who reserved October 31st as an important time of remembrance of those who had passed away. And while there have certainly been cultures who have had various feast around this time of year, sometimes it's the season of harvest and like a time of thanksgiving. And then there are definitely cultures that have a darker meaning when it comes to this time of year. But Halloween under its present name has long been a time of a Christian reflection of the powerful lives and those of the faithful who have gone and passed before us.

And I tell you those things not to like stir up controversy. I don't wanna offend anybody here. I just thought it would kind of be fun because I've had people ask me and submit questions on the podcast. Do you celebrate Halloween? What are your thoughts on it? And I do celebrate Halloween. I think it is a great time for Christians. And here is one reason why I love it. Halloween is the only day of the year where we see like neighbors being neighbors, where doors are open up, neighbors are in the streets. The neighborhoods we go to neighbors are like sitting in chairs, handing out coffee. Some of 'em are handing out other drinks that I don't participate in, but they're like handing out stuff to the adults and to the children. And everybody seems to be happy and talking to one another, where on a normal day people's blinds are closed. The doors are locked. You don't even know your neighbor's name. And I just think it's a great time that we, especially as Christians open up our doors to our neighbors. And some things I would encourage you for Halloween as Christians have the best candy on the block, have just like incredible candy where people wanna come to your house. If you wanna hand out a tract, hand out a tract. I know some friends that have done that, like a cool little Bible book that goes with the candy, get creative in what you do. I know, um, when I was little, there was this poem about a pumpkin and scooping up all the bad stuff and the light being placed inside of you, like pass that out when you hand out candy. So there are great ways. Get involved in churches. I'm so thankful for churches now that do the trunk or treat and people, the communities are now coming. Cuz I grew up in the nineties. I don't know if people remember where I think like sharp objects were found in candy and you weren't like my parents got so strict on where I was allowed to go trick or treating. So we could always go to the festival at the church. And we did have rules. And so maybe set up rules for your family with Halloween. My mom did not allow us to be

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anything like satanic. I couldn't be a witch or anything wicked. First off my family's not creative. So I happened to be like the same thing every year because my mom would just pull out whatever was in her closet. I was a hippie many years, a hobo. But so set up rules for what you can dress and not dress. And then I just encourage you, even if you think it was something you that shouldn't partake in, turn it into good. Turn it into a fun night with your family, teach your kids about being good neighbors and opening up your home to those around you. And once again, kind of like in the words of my grandmother, lets don't spoil everything as Christians. There are things that we should take hard stands on, but in this world, lets don't spoil all the fun and I hope you have a great Halloween.

MUSIC TRANSITION

Cissie Graham Lynch:

00:07:58 Thank you for joining me here on Fearless. As always, I encourage you to follow me on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Also, if you've missed any old episodes and would like to get caught up, you can check them out on CissieGrahamLynch.com.

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