

**Halloween** is the time of year that millions of boys and girls dress up in their favorite costumes to go house to house and shout, "**Trick or Treat!**" Certainly, the treats are plentiful, which is sure to make any child happy, but what about tricks? Have you ever been tricked? Anytime you fall for something or believe something that isn't true, you have been tricked. There are many things we may believe now, or have believed at one time or another that simply aren't true, and may have consequences beyond this life into eternity. The God of the Bible, who created the heaven and the earth, (**Genesis 1:1**), has given us his word, which lays out all truth. Jesus, while praying to God said, "**Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.**" (**John 17:17**) If we believe anything that is contrary to what God said in his word, then we have been tricked. Have you fallen for any of the following tricks?

**TRICK #1: Good people go to Heaven, while bad people go to Hell:** It is true that bad people go to hell, "**The wicked shall be turned into hell.**" (**Psalms 9:17**) However, the belief that "good people" go to heaven is built upon false assumptions. The truth is that there are no "good people." The bible very clearly says, "**There is none righteous, no, not one.**" (**Romans 3:10**) and "**For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.**" (**Romans 3:23**) God gave his law in the Old Testament of the Bible, and if we break his laws we commit sin and fall short of his standard of righteousness. "**How many sins does it take?**" you may ask. "**For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.**" (**James 2:10**) Think about your life for a moment in light of God's law, the Ten Commandments. How many times have you lied (**Exodus 20:16**), dishonored or disobeyed your parents (**Exodus 20:12**), stolen (**Exodus 20:15**), coveted something that belonged to someone else (**Exodus 20:17**), or committed idolatry by putting anything in your life as more important than God (**Exodus 20:3**)? Not only that, but God's law goes beyond committing a physical act, and condemns those who also commit sin in their heart, as Jesus taught: "**Ye have heard that it was said...Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.**" (**Matthew 5:27-28**) If

you're honest with yourself, you would see that you have an immeasurably large sin account for which you will be judged. "**For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing.**" (**Ecclesiastes 12:14**) "**For the wages of sin is death...**" (**Romans 6:23**)

**TRICK #2: You can earn your way to heaven with good works:** The Bible says "**Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.**" (**Romans 3:20**) A lifetime of self-sacrifice and good works will not pay for even one sin. In fact, God is disgusted by our attempts to earn favor with him: "**All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.**" (**Isaiah 64:6**) Think about it this way: If someone were to commit a horrendous crime, like murder, in this nation, a good judge would not take into account the criminal's good deeds and let him off the hook or reduce his sentence. God is the same way, except because he is holy, even the smallest of sins is infinitely worse in God's sight than murder is in our sight. Whether it's charity, church attendance, keeping the commandments, baptism, confirmation, believing in God (**James 2:19**), prayer, religious rituals such as the Lord's Supper or confession, or just trying to be a good person, they are filthy rags before God and are not accepted as payments for sin. "**There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.**" (**Proverbs 14:12**) Even if you were to live a sinless life from this point on, your past sins demand an account to God.

**TRICK #3: The Devil (Satan) isn't real:** One of the Devil's greatest tricks is to get people to believe he isn't real. If that doesn't work, he is happy when someone merely thinks of him as someone in a red suit with horns, a tail and a pitchfork, perhaps as the king of hell, and many do. The bible says, "**Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.**" (**1 Peter 5:8**) The devil is alive and well on earth doing his best to take as many to hell with him as possible. It's not just him, but he has a legion of devils (fallen angels) that do his bidding and work for the destruction of many. Speaking of a future event, the Bible says, "**And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which**

**deceiveth the whole world...and his angels were cast out with him.**" (**Revelation 12:9**) Notice that the devil uses deception to ensnare the souls of men. It has been his method since the beginning. His first words recorded cast doubt on the truth. "**Yea hath God said?**" (**Genesis 3:1**) The tricks listed in this tract, and countless others, are deceptions devised by the Devil to lead men to eternal destruction, and people are sometimes too willing of a partner to go along with them.

**TRICK #4: Halloween is harmless fun:** While nothing is inherently wrong with eating candy, having fun, watching parades or partaking in family friendly activities, the themes of darkness and death that are inseparable from Halloween are offensive to God. Those themes are in direct opposition to the attributes of God and who he is. "**God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.**" (**1 John 1:5**) Another example of God's law specifically condemns the things glorified by Halloween: "**There shall not be found among you any... that useth divination (fortune telling), or an observer of times (astrology), or an enchanter (casts spells), or a witch, or a charmer (supernatural influence), or a consulter with familiar spirits (ghosts), or a necromancer (summons the dead) For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.**" (**Deut 18:10-12**) Halloween essentially mocks God, and takes something abominable and makes it fun and attractive for children. He wants us to have nothing to do with these. "**Abstain from all appearance of evil.**" (**1 Thessalonians 5:22**)

**The Truth:** God, in his love and mercy, has provided for you a way to be forgiven by sending his Son, Jesus, to die a bloody death on the cross as your substitute. "**But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**" (**Romans 5:8**) During his life on earth, Jesus perfectly kept all of God's commandments and then was punished on the cross to satisfy the demands of God's justice for your sin. Even in your rebellion, Jesus took the punishment you deserve so you could be forgiven. "**But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities...and with his stripes we are healed.**" (**Isaiah 53:5**) He was buried, and rose again from the dead on the third

day, conquering death and proving his death was acceptable to God as a payment for sin. "...he [God] **hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him [Jesus] from the dead.**" (Acts 17:31) This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In order for the blood of Christ to be effectual in saving your soul, it is required that you obey the first words of Jesus' earthly ministry: **"Repent ye, and believe the gospel."** (Mark 1:15)

**REPENT!** **"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."** (Luke 13:3) Repentance is humbling yourself and admitting not just your guilt, but also your spiritually lost condition before God and that you deserve his eternal wrath in the lake of fire. Be sorry for your sin and rebellion against God, confess it, and hate it. **"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation."** (2 Corinthians 7:10) Surrender, and turn from going your own way in life to going God's way by submitting to Jesus as your Lord. Repentance also means to recognize that you have no merit, good works, or attributes that play a role in your salvation. Until you realize you are lost and utterly helpless to contribute anything to your salvation, you will not receive grace and forgiveness. **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."** (Ephesians 2:8-9) You must recognize that your only hope of redemption is to trust solely in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ as a payment for your sins.

**BELIEVE THE GOSPEL:** **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."** (Acts 16:31) Believing the Gospel means to believe that Jesus died and shed his blood to pay for your sins in full, that he was buried, and rose again from the dead on the third day. It means to trust him as your only hope of salvation. The very moment that you repent and believe the gospel, you will be **"born again."** Jesus said, **"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."** (John 3:3) Being **"born again"** means to have a conversion experience in which God supernaturally changes your heart and transforms you from a child of disobedience into a child of God. **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."** (2 Corinthians 5:17) You will have a new

nature, new desires to love Jesus Christ, to obey his word, to be with other Christians and to live for him every day. Loving God will manifest as a willful obedience to his word in your life. **"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."** (1 John 5:3) You will never be without sin, but you will no longer love your sin, live for your sin, or be in bondage to your sin; no matter how much power it has over you now, you will have victory over it. **"For sin shall not have dominion over you:"** (Romans 6:14)

**TRICK #5: You can repent and get saved later:** You are not promised tomorrow. Your life can end tragically at any time and it would be eternally too late. Why take the chance? Also, repentance is a gift from God (Acts 11:18) You cannot repent without God granting you repentance (2 Timothy 2:25) However, God further hardens those who resist and harden their own hearts against the truth, and they may never come to a place of repentance and saving faith. **"He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted..."** (John 12:40) Earnestly and humbly seek the Lord through prayer and by reading and believing his word (use a KJV Bible), and ask him with your whole heart until he gives it to you. **"Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."** (Luke 13:24)

**How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"** (Hebrews 2:3) Today may be your day of salvation, friend. Do not wait! The author begs you on Christ's behalf to repent, to believe the Gospel, and call upon the Lord Jesus Christ to save you before it's eternally too late! **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."** (Romans 10:9,10,13)

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