

## **Why do the churches of Christ in the US celebrate the pagan holiday of Halloween?**

By Bob Young

It is that time of year again. I sometimes feel that I am a lone voice in an overwhelming flood of well-meaning secularism, but I feel compelled to share what I see.

When I was in Central America earlier this year, the question in the title of this article was asked by a new Christian from Nicaragua. Allow me to give some background. This new Christian is studying to become a preacher. His religious background is in the Assemblies, but he became disenchanted with what he perceived as a lack of Bible study and application. He was thrilled when he found a fresh Bible emphasis in the churches of Christ in Nicaragua. He tells everyone he can about Jesus. He is already an effective evangelist, even as he studies to improve his knowledge and ministry skills. But he is troubled by what he has learned as he has come in contact with Christians from the United States. He sees U.S. Christians with secular, even pagan, understandings—at least according to his worldview.

As the gospel moves south, Latin American Christians, many of them recent converts, have numerous interactions with United States missionaries and Christians who are part of short-term mission groups. These Christians who travel to Latin America represent the U.S. church. The intersection of contrasting worldviews raises hard questions that we North Americans must come to grips with if we hope to influence the world for Jesus. I fear that in our nation, we live in such a secular culture that we are hardened and incapable of seeing the secular influences around us. At times, we cannot see secularism in our own lives. Sometimes, unfortunately, we cannot see secularism even when it shows up down at the church house.

I encourage you to study and think. When are we influenced by secularism more than we are influencing our secular culture? What are we communicating? We should at least take time to think about it before we casually reject the question. Wrong activities done with pure motives are still wrong—at least that's what we have been telling our religious neighbors for years!