

Understanding Demonic Influence

The Misconceptions about Freedom

When I was saved in 1988 my first church was a church of about 300 members. I was unemployed and looking for work every day. I wanted to be around the church all the time, so each day when I was done looking for a job I went to the church. This church was big on deliverance to the point they had a ministry team on staff that did deliverance most weekdays. After I had been there 3 or 4 weeks the team got to know me and saw my hunger for God, so they invited me to join them for a deliverance. Looking back now, a new believer should never be allowed to be on a deliverance team until they are well grounded in the Word and have learned to hear God's voice and direction. Although, I had no idea of the journey God intended for my life.

I noticed that each person that came in for deliverance had their head down and suffered great depression. I observed them through the interview and assessment period. Once the team had finished asking their questions, they asked the person to sit outside the room for a little while so they could discuss the person's responses and determine how they wanted to proceed.

Then they asked the person to come back in the room and what happened over the next 30 minutes to an hour was the deliverance team helped the person identify the different areas the evil spirits had caused oppression in their lives. The person would renounce the evil spirits and then the deliverance team prayed for the person and commanded all the evil spirits to leave. They spoke specifically to the main evil spirits that were the controlling spirits and then in more general terms for the minor ones that gained access through the main ones. To my amazement when they were done the person's head was lifted and they had a big smile on their faces. It was like I saw a renewed hope had entered them again. The truth was that the hope was always there, but the oppression made it difficult to see or feel God's presence. It was at that moment; my heart was broken for people who struggled with oppression, and I asked God to allow me to be part of the deliverance process for the rest of my life.

God directed me to watch some of those people who had been delivered in church each week without them knowing. My shock was after a few weeks I noticed a large part of those people, who had been set free, walk into church with their heads hung down again and they were back in the same condition as before they came in for deliverance to be set free. I asked God why this happened, and His answer was the deliverance team had the wrong goal. The deliverance team's goal was to get people free from demonic oppression. God said, His goal was for people to be set free from demonic oppression and live the rest of their lives with ongoing freedom.

Many people think getting a person free from demonic control is the end goal. Our problem is we are so excited to see them set free, so we think we are done and there is no more problem. Satan is happy if you've work with that understanding. People doing deliverance, work on the assumption that if they speak in the Name of Jesus Christ and command the evil spirits to come out of the person it must come out, assuming the person real wants to be free. They often quote John 8:36 NIV which says, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." Therein lies the real problem. It is true that when a believer speaks in the Name of Jesus Christ and command the evil spirits to come out that the evil spirits must leave. The problem is when the ministry team's main goal is to see the person set free from demonic oppression, they are really setting that person up to fail and fall back under Satan's control. Satan knows how to get back in that person's life. Then he presses in so that the person feels like they will never be free from him again, causing them to stop trying to get free and their hope is severely damaged. This is what torment really looks like. You have not finished the work that John 8:36 is speaking of, until you help the person understand how the evil spirits gained access into their life and which Scriptures and spiritual alertness, they will need to keep the evil spirits from getting back into their life.

Luke 11:24-26 NIV says, "When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left. When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first.'" So, there is a gap between setting a person free and their ongoing freedom. One of the most important truths of the Bible is the word "discernment" which means a person

must use the right Scripture (quoting or paraphrase if they know the true application of that Scripture) when including the Name of Jesus Christ.

The answer to the gap is the person doing the deliverance must listen to the Holy Spirit while talking to the person and find out what evil spirits are there and their assignments in that person's life. The open doors for evil spirits to get in are often attached to events, peer pressure or horrific moments whether it is physical, mental, or emotional, in that person's life. Add to that "reality" is not always the basis they operate on because often a person's perception of themselves or how they think others see them could be misinterpreted. In addition, the person may feel no one loves them which develops the mindset they are unlovable causing the person to rethink their value or worth in life. People's perceptions can take many twists and turns, so the possibilities are endless. Take your time God will guide you to help the person.

Almost everyone who has an evil spirit will have additional evil spirits controlling additional areas of that person's life. Notice how the evil spirit decided to take 7 additional evil spirits worse than itself in with him? There is strength and safety in numbers. The evil spirits in a person's life will cause confusion and make it difficult to determine who is who. Fact, when the person doing the deliverance find multiple evil spirits, the deliverer will always find one of them is the controlling spirit and all the other evil spirits are in that person's life because the controlling spirit help them gain access, "...My name is Legion, because there are many of us inside this man..." Mark 5:9 NLT. Most of the time the evil spirits that manifest so you can tell they are there are not the controlling spirit. The controlling spirit is quiet and, in the background, but always in control. The controlling spirit does not want you to determine who they are and what their assignment is in that person's life. The controlling spirit can help any one of the other evil spirits that are made to leave the person, to get back in later. That is why it is important that you get all of them out the first time.

Consider the words "...**finds the house swept clean and put in order...**" meaning that all the evil spirits are out of that person's life. The person needs to know how the evil spirits got in, meaning whatever path they used to gain access. The phrase "**swept clean**" also means **empty and unguarded**. The only real guard to keep evil spirits out of a person's life is the Word of God. Jesus used the Word of God to

fight off the temptations in Matthew 4. The part we might not have pick up on is **Jesus had to know the Word of God and which Scriptures where the right application of Scripture to overcome each temptation.** One Scripture might not get the job done, Jesus used three different Scriptures to finally rebuke Satan and make him leave. But remember that passage ended in Luke 4:13 NLT saying, “When the devil had finished tempting Jesus, he left him until the next opportunity came.”

Another gap in our understanding is realizing the condition the person comes in. A deliverer will always find guilt, shame, unworthiness and unforgivable clustered together to beat the person down causing depression. You will find unworthiness is always attached to pornography or any other sexual sin, because they do not value their own body. This is the person’s reasoning and why they do not feel they can be helped, or they are unredeemable, so why would God want them anymore.

The deliverer must help the person see that another source of controlling power is causing oppression and negative thinking. Once the evil spirits are gone the person can begin to believe they are redeemable, and God loves them. We all know God loves us no matter what condition we come to Him. Romans 5:8 NIV says, “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” So, the goal as a deliverer is to reassure the person that God loves them, and they are redeemable.

They are now ready to receive the last part needed for their recovery. Knowing the right Scripture’s will protect them and help them reach a deeper relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The person’s hope will become stronger in their life, and they are on the right track to experience real peace. Something a person under Dominic Influence hasn’t felt peace for a long time. Philippians 4:7 NIV describes that peace the best, “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Now they are prepared when evil spirits come back, and they feel strong enough to rebuke them using Scripture while knowing the Holy Spirit will be there to enforce God’s Word. They will be able to stand their ground while God’s Holy Spirit watches over them. So, the truth is God’s real goal is not just getting a person free from

demonic oppression but living a life of ongoing freedom and peace for the rest of their lives.