

Release from Bondages

The prophetic words of Isaiah the prophet in Isaiah 61v1-3 are fulfilled in Jesus' ministry. Part of the promise was, 'He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners'. The Apostle John endorses the ministry of Jesus, 'So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed'. Knowing Jesus as liberator is not simply to heed some philosophical speculation, but to live the life of an overcomer. Praise the Lord! All too often, worship services are like a funeral dirge, rather than a clarion sound of triumph.

Many Christians and non Christians desire control over vices and unhelpful thought patterns. Some turn over a new leaf vowing that they will never succumb again - but all to no avail.

There is a way to freedom, originating through the accomplished work of the *Cross of Jesus Christ* and the *power of the Spirit*.

Discussion among scholars on the word *demonization* suggests its meaning ranges from that simply of a temptation to that of full possession.

temptation ⇒ oppression ⇒ possession

Scholars may disagree as to whether a Christian can become demon possessed or not, but most would agree that they can certainly become oppressed.

How bondages develop

- Scripture makes it clear that 'the sins of the parents are passed down

to the children to the third and fourth generation'. Therefore, unhealthy and sinful behavioural patterns may result from the *sins of the parents*. This is observable when many relatives have a problem with similar sicknesses, most get divorced or have a problem with alcohol or gambling. The glory of the Cross is that Jesus dealt with every curse in His own body. By faith the individual appropriates this wonderful truth (Colossians 2v13-15) and experiences freedom.

- The *desires of the flesh* give rise to bondage. In this instance it is unacceptable to blame demons or Satan. Paul shares his agonising dilemma as his spirit and the desires of his flesh wage warfare (Romans 7). Again the victory is found through Christ (7v25).

- Finally bondages may arise from direct *Satanic or demonic* activity. Jesus experienced this in Matthew 4, but He conquered through the power of the Spirit and the right use of Scripture.

If a person overindulges in the 'flesh' (Galatians 5v19-21) it may lead to demonic oppression and then possibly possession.

Sometimes these attacks are obvious while at other times they are not recognised. This is where discernment is necessary.

On one occasion when returning from a holiday I received an anonymous letter, quoting Scripture but a Scripture of curse

and death. Not the most pleasant news to come home to. However this curse had no resting place with me as Proverb 26v2 says, 'Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest'. Leadership today can let themselves be vulnerable to curses - passed on by witches and others who do not want us to prosper. Never receive these into your spirit.

- Assure them of your love and confidentiality.
- Emphasise the importance of keeping Jesus as Lord of their life.
- Insist that they must learn relevant Scripture and use it appropriately. The Word of God is a very useful sword (Ephesians 6v17).
- Make another appointment time with them within the next few days for follow up.
- Sometimes there are counter attacks. Warn them of this so they will not be caught off guard.

Breaking bondages

1. A person must truly want to be set free. In some cases, particularly if there is a strong bondage to be broken, prayer and fasting is necessary (Matthew 17v21).
2. Full repentance is a must. Resentments and jealousies are common obstacles as to why many more people are not set free.
3. The person ministering deliverance must have discernment. They must discern whether the problem is simply a matter of the flesh dominating or whether there is a demonic stronghold.
4. In prayer the person must own Jesus as Lord and Saviour and renounce any wrong behaviour. If while this is happening, some unusual behaviour is exhibited, it may be through demonic influence or simply as an emotional response from the individual. If it is demonic, rebuke it and cast it out in the name of Jesus. Identifying the demon by name helps but is not always essential.
5. Before that person leaves;

Never assume that mentally ill people are always troubled by a demonic influence.

Points to note

- Never counsel a person of the opposite sex unless another person of the same sex is present.
- It is useful to have more than one person ministering with you. They can give support and learn from you.
- The authority a person has in his own life, will determine the authority he has over the demonic. If there is little personal authority then their ministry will probably be ineffective.
- Give God the glory for what He has done.
- Never assume that mentally ill people are always troubled by a demonic influence. Normally ongoing medication is necessary and the ministry approach used should be low key.

Never encourage a person to come off medication unless they first have their doctor's approval.

- Never assume that ongoing counselling is inappropriate. People who have been sexually abused usually need wise, ongoing counselling with a skilled counsellor.
- If a person disrupts a worship service because of some manifestation it is helpful to remove them to a side room and to pray with them there. Unhealthy disruptions can bring glory to Satan.
- People not immediately set free must aggressively take control of their life and stand against passivity. They must constantly meditate on and obey God's Word day and night (Psalm 1v2).

Notes

