

Deliverance and Demons

By Pastor Alan Utting



'There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them.' C. S. Lewis

This article serves as an introduction to the topic of deliverance and follows the discussion on the You Tube clip on 'spiritual warfare'. During that talk I shared my first encounter with a demon troubling a wonderful Christian lady and in this talk I want to give some brief advice on how to minister to people oppressed by the evil one.

These are prophetic words providing hope through the ministry of Jesus (Isaiah 61v1-3).

'The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners.'

Jesus says in John 8:36 'So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.'

Ministering to individuals in this area requires discernment and sensitivity. If you suspect or discover that the person you are ministering to has a demon oppressing them, here are some suggestions for handling the situation:

1. Treat the individual with respect. This is not an opportunity to practice techniques for future ministry. Confidentiality is important.
2. Make sure you are walking in personal surrender to the Lord and maintain an attitude of prayer. Sometimes it requires prayer and fasting.
3. There is no specific formula from Scripture on how to minister but be open to the Holy Spirit's guidance. The Bible does give you some examples how this happens as mentioned below.
4. Your authority does not come from shouting; however, speaking with a firm voice is good.
5. Do not pray alone. If possible, have a mature believer accompany you. If ministering to a person of the opposite sex, it is wise to have another person of the same sex present.
6. Don't necessarily expect a demonic manifestation. We walk by faith not by sight.
7. Understand the importance of the cross in defeating the work of the evil one, 'And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross' (Colossians 2:15).

A suggested procedure:

1. Always affirm the person as they may feel nervous and fearful.

2. Ask the person requiring ministry if they know the Lord and are surrendered to Him. If they are not a Believer gently explain the gospel. Also remind people of the above Scriptures to build up their faith and confidence.
3. If appropriate have some worship music playing quietly which brings glory to God and invite the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you.
4. Take your time, don't rush.
5. Invite the Holy Spirit in prayer to lead you in this time together.
6. Don't look for spectacular activity, as a quiet surrender may be all that is needed. However, if there is some manifestation, seek to discern the name of that spirit and command it to go in Jesus' name. 'The Name of the Lord is a strong and mighty tower'.
7. In my experience, there is no need to go searching for demons. Praying and exalting the name of Jesus may cause a reaction, especially if you thank God for the work of the cross (as in Colossians) and the blood which brings protection and freedom.
8. Some examples.
(Mark 1:23-26) Jesus encounters a man with an unclean spirit in the synagogue. He commands the 'spirit to come out' of the man, and the spirit obeys.

(Mark 5:1-13) Jesus encounters a man possessed by a legion of demons in the region of the Gerasene. He commands the demons of 'legion' (by name) to leave, and they enter a herd of pigs.

(Acts 16:16-18) In this passage, Paul encounters a slave girl possessed by a spirit of divination. She follows Paul and his companions, declaring that they are servants of the Most High God. After several days, Paul commands the spirit to come out of her in the 'Name of Jesus Christ', and the spirit immediately leaves her.

9. I sometimes get them to repeat my words of prayer out loud. In that prayer I exalt Jesus as Lord and appropriate the blood of Christ for their protection and deliverance. I sometimes have found in this situation that it takes great effort on their part to say, 'Jesus'. Stay with it until they can repeat that name freely.
10. It is possible to have an apparent manifestation which does not go away. In this situation, I strongly encourage them to claim the promises of God. They need an active rather than a passive faith to overcome. Over time I have seen that work.
11. Counter attacks may come back to the person seeking deliverance and they need to learn to resist that in the name of Jesus.
12. When the session has finished, mention that you want to have a follow up with them to see how they are going and make sure you do that. If another session is required don't be discouraged as even Jesus on one occasion had to pray a couple of times in restoring eyesight before He saw success (Mark 8:24,25)

Faith and perseverance are essential components in the journey of spiritual freedom.