

09-12-21 St. Peter Lutheran Church, Doss, TX Deliverance

Mark 9:14–29 14 When they returned to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd surrounding them, and some teachers of religious law were arguing with them. 15 When the crowd saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with awe, and they ran to greet him. 16 “What is all this arguing about?” Jesus asked. 17 One of the men in the crowd spoke up and said, “Teacher, I brought my son so you could heal him. He is possessed by an evil spirit that won’t let him talk. 18 And whenever this spirit seizes him, it throws him violently to the ground. Then he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So, I asked your disciples to cast out the evil spirit, but they couldn’t do it.” 19 Jesus said to them, “You faithless people! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.” 20 So they brought the boy. But when the evil spirit saw Jesus, it threw the child into a violent convulsion, and he fell to the ground, writhing and foaming at the mouth. 21 “How long has this been happening?” Jesus asked the boy’s father. He replied, “Since he was a little boy. 22 The spirit often throws him into the fire or into water, trying to kill him. Have mercy on us and help us, if you can.” 23 “What do you mean, ‘If I can’?” Jesus asked. “Anything is possible if a person believes.” 24 The father instantly cried out, “I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!” 25 When Jesus saw that the crowd of onlookers was growing, he rebuked the evil spirit. “Listen, you spirit that makes this boy unable to hear and speak,” he said. “I command you to come out of this child and never enter him again!” 26 Then the spirit screamed and threw the boy into another violent convulsion and left him. The boy appeared to be dead. A murmur ran through the crowd as people said, “He’s dead.” 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and helped him to his feet, and he stood up. 28 Afterward, when Jesus was alone in the house with his disciples, they asked him, “Why couldn’t we cast out that evil spirit?” 29 Jesus replied, “This kind can be cast out only by prayer.”

Let the spirit of witchcraft be revealed!

Pastor Haage in San Antonio at Cornerstone Church invited Derek Prince, a pastor who does deliverance, to Cornerstone. Prince opened the service with these words before anything else began. Multiple screams were heard in different parts of the sanctuary and several people ran out. Some left because they were disturbed and not because they had a spirit of witchcraft on board. In one of Prince’s lectures, he said the predominant evil spirit in the United States is the spirit of witchcraft. What is witchcraft you might ask?

One explanation is that we must first look at the root of witchcraft in order to understand the powerful lure that it has upon so many people. The Bible tells us

that it comes from a desire for our flesh to be satisfied. Witchcraft and Demon worship appeal to immoral lusts and passions. Things that are common in witchcraft circles are sexual promiscuity, drug use, criminal activity, and murder. Witchcraft is not limited to these alone. A great host of ways that have been proven to destroy lives are associated with this deviant spiritual activity.

(<https://focusonfreedom.wordpress.com/personal-issues/deliverance-from-witchcraft>) Paul wrote the Galatians (5:19-21) ¹⁹ *The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;* ²⁰ *idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions* ²¹ *and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*” The Jezebel spirit is similar. It is described as “... not a demon but a principality which particularly targets people of God. That is both directly in themselves, and indirectly through others. It can get in through uncrucified flesh and fear. Highly intelligent and devious, this seducing spirit is adept at using all sorts of manipulative tactics, especially flattery.” 1 Kings 19 mentions Jezebel putting out a hit on Elijah. In a broader way, when we look at Jezebel, she was a faithful wife to King Ahab. Jezebel is described in the Bible as the daughter of a pagan king who married a king of Israel, King Ahab. In the Bible story, Jezebel wrote letters falsely accusing the owner of vineyard, arranging for him to be killed so her husband could have his vineyard which he coveted. Manipulation is the key word and the spirit of witchcraft is similar in description.

As Christians therefore we should carefully abide by the words of our Lord Jesus Christ in the scripture and emulate him in his deeds. *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.* (Luke 4:18) He read the scripture in His home synagogue and when He finished, He said, this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” Jesus’ mission besides our salvation on the cross was to preach the gospel for the salvation of human spirit and to cast out the Devil and heal the sick. That is the deliverance of the soul and body from demonic manipulation, oppression, or possession.

Through Him, every believer has the same power and authority as Jesus himself exercised during his earthly ministry. John’s Gospel reported Jesus saying: *“Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.”* (14:12) **Deliverance** is the act or process of releasing, salvaging or setting free any affected area of the life of a person such as health, finance, marriage, destiny,

career, or business from the possession, oppression, influence, manipulation of Satan or any of its agents, through the power in the name of Jesus Christ.

In our Gospel for today, Jesus, Peter, James and John have just come down from the mountain on which He was transfigured. V.17 says: *One of the men in the crowd spoke up and said, “Teacher, I brought my son so you could heal him. He is possessed by an evil spirit that won’t let him talk. 18 And whenever this spirit seizes him, it throws him violently to the ground. Then he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid. So, I asked your disciples to cast out the evil spirit, but they couldn’t do it.”* Later they ask why they couldn’t do so after Jesus delivers the young man from the evil spirit. He said this one only comes out by prayer and some translations add “and fasting.”

Two chapters earlier in Mark’s Gospel, we read: *7 Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits. 8 These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. 9 Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. 10 Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. 11 And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.” 12 They went out and preached that people should repent. 13 They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.”* They were about preaching, healing and delivering. In our Lutheran tradition, we have pretty much focused on preaching and avoiding deliverance and healing, leaving that up to the health care specialists.

A pastor from a church in Ft. Walton Beach Florida was asked by the medical staff at the local military base in Pensacola to come and see one of their patients. The doctors and psychiatrists could not help her. He went with an elder of the church and entered the patient’s room. The door was locked behind them. They met the patient. They identified themselves and she grabbed both by the collar and lifted them up off the floor. The pastor said, “In the Name of Jesus Christ, put us down.” She said, “OK” and sat them down.

Years ago, when working in a regional cancer hospital in Alberta, Canada, I was asked by a patient to perform a wedding at his farm. His fiancé turned out to be a Buddhist and said that in no way should the Holy Spirit’s Name be spoken in the wedding service. That shocked me but I said I would perform the service. Prior to the service, I began to read up on deliverance ministry because I did not know what I was walking into. At the wedding, I did not want to default on the Holy Spirit, so I opened the service “in the Name of the Triune God.” I figured that covered the Holy Spirit. I didn’t get a negative reaction from the bride and the service continued

without anything remarkable happening. One of the things I've taken from my studies are the words of Jesus about binding and loosing. In deliverance, you bind the evil spirit or oppressive spirit and rebuke Satan in Jesus' Name and then loose the opposite God-pleasing spirit. An example would be to bind the spirit of infirmity and loose the spirit of health or bind a spirit of fear and loose a spirit of trust in Christ.

Where does this leave us? I truly believe that we need to pray and ask the Lord how He wants us to use deliverance in ministering to others or in releasing spiritual oppression within ourselves. If you feel called to exercise this ministry, remember that the person needing deliverance must want to be delivered. Always have several other believers with you. Note that demons are strong, filthy, like Satan. They are pride filled and can live in a person at the same time. They are not to be feared in Christ. Demons get into people when a person goes through a trauma, through drug use or alcohol abuse. A man visited a medium after his wife died. The experience led him to suicidal depression. To protect yourself, do not indulge in carnal appetites and avoid psychics, mediums, fortune tellers, voodoo, yoga anything that would lead you away from Jesus Christ. Your best weapon is to plead the blood of Jesus over anything you experience as evil.

To keep one's deliverance, it is vital to stay in God's Word, to praise God often, to protect and guard your thought life, cultivate right relationships, being personally accountable to other committed Christians. An example of wrong relationships is when one who is delivered from drug addiction hangs out with friends who do drugs and so easily can become addicted again. Avoid media that support evil or fear. There are a lot of horror movies that are evil. If you say, a movie can't hurt you, think twice. I know of people who've had dreams of the horror they've watched and it has not contributed to their lives. I knew of someone who developed a phobia of clowns from a horror movie involving a clown. Halloween is this coming month and it seems that evil is pervasive on what was once a "hallowed evening" prior to All Saints Day, Nov. 1. Guard your thought life. Don't take it for granted.

I'm giving you a lot of information. But remember, Christ is the victor over sin, death and the power of the devil. So, prayer, staying in His Word, getting to know Him better are vitally important. When we are afraid, we look for solutions. The illusion of control invites us, but submitting to Christ as Lord of your life is what really deals with our fears. The Apostle Peter writes (I, 5:7) "*Cast all your care on Him, for He cares for you.*" Deliverance – not an easy topic to address but an important one to do so. Amen