

6 Ways to Determine if You Need Deliverance Ministry

Brian was an angry young man. It took very little for him to fly off the handle. His fits of screaming and yelling at those he loved made everyone miserable.

When interviewed, he shared about his terrible childhood. His father was a cruel man who consistently tore him down with unloving and unkind words. In an attempt to hide his pain, Brian put up a wall.

This went on for many years, but as he got older the pain seeped out and anger began to blossom. A **stronghold** had been established.

A stronghold is anything—an attitude, a thought process, a belief—that holds us in defiance of God's will or His ways. Many strongholds are **demonic** in origin. In 2 Corinthians 10:4, the apostle Paul tells us to pull them down using spiritual weapons.

You may ask, If Brian's father was the instigator and Brian the victim, why does Brian have a stronghold? The reason is that Brian became angry and **unforgiving**.

His thoughts got away from him, and he began to believe the lie from hell that he had a right to his anger. Bad memories reinforced his thinking, and a fortress was erected.

Strongholds exist in the darkness, where Satan resides. Ignorance and deception are his pathways. It takes the **Word of God** to shine the light of truth on strongholds.

When revelation comes, a choice must be made: "Will I hang on to my anger or release it?" If we release it, repentance follows. If not, the walls of the stronghold grow thicker, and

the conscience is seared and becomes less sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

The root of the Greek word for “seared” means “to cauterize and render insensitive.” When sin is not repented of, the conscience loses sensitivity to it.

Continuous resistance to the **Holy Spirit** makes it increasingly difficult for an individual to come to repentance because he no longer feels any godly sorrow. He may have some remorse because of the consequences of sinful activity but not enough to convict him to get on his knees and cry out to God for **forgiveness**.

A Need for Deliverance

When a believer has reached the point at which his conscience has been seared and he is no longer able to hear the convicting voice of the Spirit that would bring him to repentance, he is in need of deliverance. Much of deliverance centers around uprooting strongholds and breaking their power over our lives.

We begin the deliverance process by making use of the Word and the blood of Christ. This is an essential step in preparing the believer to be set free.

The Bible tells us that “the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12, NKJV). Its power is inexpressible in human terms.

The Scriptures are the very **breath of God** and as such are accurate, defining and perfectly sufficient (see 2 Tim. 3:16). Scripture reading and study is essential to break down the hardness of the heart that has come about through a gradual searing of the conscience.

In the **Old Testament** sacrificial system, the blood of the

offering was sprinkled on the tabernacle and its vessels to sanctify them, making them fit for service (see Heb. 9:21). In like manner, as we avail ourselves of the blood of Jesus Christ—the perfect and final sacrifice—our conscience is cleansed, and we become sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

As the living Word of God begins to awaken our heart and cleanse our conscience, we are drawn by the love of God to again serve Him faithfully. The Word of God awakens and illuminates—the blood of Jesus thoroughly cleanses.

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:22).

“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb. 9:14).

If we fail to prepare someone for **deliverance**, we may be wasting our time. People can be dragged to the altar, but they can't be made to repent. True **repentance** comes through the illumination and conviction of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God.

Without **conviction**, there can be no godly sorrow; without godly sorrow there will be no repentance. When there is no repentance, there will be no true deliverance.

Deliverance is not something that can be formulated. Simply following a routine of saying this and doing that will not bring true deliverance.

Jesus is the deliverer. If we do not come to Jesus on His terms, we are only playacting. We might put on a good show, but it will be without substance, and we will be only mocking the Word.

To determine if you are in need of **deliverance**, ask yourself the following questions:

- Are you using physical, of-this-world means to address spiritual issues?
- Are you continually argumentative or contrary—usually on the verge of anger?
- Are you listening and following words that contradict God's Word?
- Is your thought-life in disarray? Is it running loose and undisciplined?
- Are you walking in known disobedience to the Word?
- Are you violating, neglecting or causing pain in a relationship?

If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, there is a good possibility a **stronghold** exists in your life. The stronghold may have been initiated by some pain or hurt you endured, perhaps many years ago. Whatever the cause, it's time to exercise your authority in Christ to break its hold so you can be healed and **set free**.

Chris Hayward is president of *Cleansing Stream Ministries*. He and his team train churches to practice biblically sound deliverance ministry. He lives in California with his wife, Karen. For more information log on at .

Adapted from God's Cleansing Stream by Chris Hayward, copyright 2003. Published by Wagner Publications, 877-924-6374. Used by permission.