

7 Signs of the Spirit of Affliction

When praying with someone with a disease, it may become apparent you're dealing with something spiritual in nature. Luke makes reference to what is called an "afflicting spirit." He writes, "And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years and was bent over and could not straighten herself up" (Luke 13:11).

This is an evil entity assigned to cause distress and disease and, ultimately, destroy a person. Not everything going on in and around a person is "*biological*." Sometimes an afflicting spirit is the unrelenting root of a person's illness.

Though many from the West would discount this, the Bible reveals that pain, seizures, paralysis and other problems can emerge from despicable forces of darkness (Matt. 8:28; Mark 1:23-24; Luke 6:17-18; Acts 19:13-16).

I was recently discussing this reality and somebody asked me how I was able to recognize when darkness is at work in someone's life. They wanted me to share some of the leading indicators. In response to their question, I mentioned that afflicted people often experience:

1. Feelings of shame or guilt that do not yield to God's forgiveness
2. Mental torment, accusatory voices in the mind
3. Embracing an ungodly coping mechanism that makes things worse
4. Recurring nightmares and frightening thoughts
5. Personal, family or spiritual problems that don't respond to prayer or other godly strategies
6. Physical or psychological problems that don't respond to medicine and normal medical treatment

7. Pain intensifying or moving around

Whenever unsettling realities like this are being encountered, you need to consider whether you are facing a “*spirit of affliction*.” When the rhythms of life are badly out of sync, there’s often more going on beneath the surface. Press in and prayerfully consider what is really going on.

It comes down to this: Every believer must be positioned to confront the “*spirits of affliction*,” demanding that they leave in the name of Jesus. Some sicknesses will never adequately subside until we deal with the reality of their perilous origin. {eoa}

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