

Exposing—and Battling—Satan's Deadly Trio

I had been on the mission field in one-hundred-degree weather in a nation known for its false gospel for more than a week—and battling principalities and powers every step of the way.

Laboring to take the Good News to a nation where the spirit of Jezebel wields an especially wicked influence brings an onslaught against your mind and sometimes even unpleasant manifestations in your body. I was not wrestling against flesh and blood, but it sure felt as though I had been in a heavyweight boxing match at the end of some days.

Granted, I was unprepared for the level of spiritual warfare I would encounter in a nation where the effects of witchcraft regularly make headlines. And I was not yet acquainted with the way the religious spirit impels us into morphing the image of Jesus from One who delivers to One who demands super-human performance to find His favor.

Indeed, I had no idea how Jezebel, the spirit of religion and witchcraft—what I now call Satan's deadly trio—work together to put us in bondage, strip us of our God-given identity and derail our kingdom purpose. But I would soon get a firsthand lesson that I will never forget.

Incomplete Revelations

If you run in spiritual warfare circles, you have no doubt battled the spirits of Jezebel, religion and witchcraft. But until you receive the discernment to distinguish the subtle working of each individual enemy—and until you get a revelation of how these three spirits work together to hold people in bondage—you are not fully equipped for war.

Indeed, the danger in any spiritual warfare teaching is sending students running off with new revelation based on partial understanding. When that happens, you are in danger of buffeting the air—or provoking another enemy to attack without ever dealing with the first enemy. In other words, while you are busy dealing with the wrong spirit, the spirit you need to battle continues its assault against your mind.

During my first experience on the mission field, I managed to avoid the strife that was manifesting over room keys, pit stops and other potential conflicts inherent in large missions trips in a country where Jezebel rules. I failed, however, to realize the impact that what I now call Satan's deadly trio was having on my mind.

Despite being trained and equipped to combat forces of darkness, I was actually fighting only half the battle. I focused on binding evil in the atmosphere, but failed to guard my own heart in the inner battle against my mind.

Religion's Subtle Attack

The subtle attack started with "religious" thoughts about how I was doing more work than everyone else and no one appreciated it—or even noticed. In one sense, this was true, and that fact gave me plenty of grist for this demon-inspired mill. I was up two hours before the rest of the team on some days. I did not stop for lunch with the rest of the team on many days. And I ran around the city or stood on my feet during team rest periods on most days.

A humble heart, one that was ministering these things out of generous service, would reject such a "religious" thought at its inception. Instead, my soul meditated on this "injustice" every day for more than a week, as I wore myself out performing the work of the ministry.

This is a good example of how subtle the enemy can be. He does not need to tell you a full-blown lie to bind you. The devil

can bind you with partial truth by twisting your perspective. He does this by shining the light on your wants and your needs, effectively distracting you from God's will and provision of grace for the work He has called you to do.

This shows the partnership the spirit of religion has with another member of the trio, witchcraft. Religion plants thoughts in your mind, and then witchcraft magnifies them, blowing them out of proportion.

Religious Witchcraft Exposed

Religious witchcraft can also cause physical manifestations of sickness—fatigue, weariness and slumber are key manifestations. I went through a season earlier in my walk with God when I was learning about this spirit in which I literally slept my way to this revelation. Every day I would battle witchcraft with a rote prayer. Every day witchcraft hit me back. And every day I ended up sleeping halfway through the morning.

When I finally made the connection, I stopped praying those rote prayers and asked the Lord for discernment in the face of enemy attacks. Thank God, He always delivers from enemy oppression those who turn to Him.

Witchcraft can attack our minds and bodies through words—our own as well as others'. This means that words are not just sounds or vibrations. Jesus said that His spoken words were "spirit and ... life" (John 6:63). Because we are spirit beings created in the image of God, I believe this applies to our words as well. Proverbs 18:21 says that death and life are in the power of the tongue. This means that the words we speak over our own lives, as well as words others speak over us, carry death or life. The force of witchcraft promotes death.

The Message translation says it like this: "Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose" (Prov. 18:21). We should choose carefully the words we speak, but we

do not have any control over what other people say to us or about us. Have you ever noticed the “yuck” you feel when someone attacks you verbally? Even if you give no credence to the verbal bombs—even if you know the accusations or angry tones are untrue and undeserved—those words are containers of poisonous power, and they can affect you.

Battling Vain Imaginations

The enemy can introduce “vain imaginations” into your mind through the words of others or your own negative words spoken about yourself. Either way, the effects of spiritual witchcraft are real. These vain imaginations are thoughts and ideas contrary to the Word of God. Paul speaks of this battle in the mind in 2 Corinthians:

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity, to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:3-5, NKJV).

I mentioned above that the victims of witchcraft often feel tired, oppressed or depressed. That is just how I felt out on the mission field in the stifling heat with little rest and plenty of wrong thoughts.

Click here to download a free chapter of Jennifer's new book, Satan's Deadly Trio: Defeating the Deceptions of Jezebel, Religion and Witchcraft.

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