

Is It Mental Illness or Demonic Oppression?

Karen writes and asks, "How do you know if a person has an evil spirit or if they are biologically ill or, in the case of a Christian, walking in the flesh rather than the Spirit?" Karen, this is a great question, and an important one for us to understand.

Now, when you are referring to someone having an evil spirit I think we need to clarify what could be happening. 1. Someone could be oppressed by an evil spirit, meaning they are being attacked as in the personal testimony I shared about being attacked by a spirit of death. I was being attacked, pursued by a spirit of death. It was clear the enemy was after my life. That's an attack, a heavy attack. 2. Then there is demon possession. When someone is controlled by an evil spirit, their behavior, their character is altered and controlled by a demon or demons.

Concerning your question, "How do you know if someone is biologically ill or walking in the flesh?" I'm not saying that we are to be demon-focused, but we do need to be fully aware of the attacks of the enemy. The enemy, Satan comes to steal, to kill, and to destroy (John 10:10), and his weapon of sickness steals, it kills and it destroys in every way.

Now, having said this, we need to be mature in our faith and realize that we live in a fallen world. Just because someone is sick does not mean they are demon possessed. Jesus warns us John 16:33, "I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." We live in a fallen world. Sickness and disease entered into our world when Adam and Eve willingly fell into sin. This was a consequence of their willful disobedience.

Sickness and disease are tiny, microscopic living organisms that enter into the body and make people sick. But according to Genesis 1:28, we have been given dominion over everything that moves, including these living creatures that we cannot see with the naked eye.

So, to repeat myself, when someone is sick it does not mean they are possessed by a demon, but they can be oppressed—pursued by a demon that attacks with sickness and disease.

But there are times when people are possessed with demons. Here are some common behaviors to discern demon-possession:

1. Is the person violent?
2. Do they hurl insults and obscenities at others without being provoked?
3. Do you hear strange voices or sounds such as growling, hissing, or clicking with their tongues coming from them?
4. Do they flip back and forth into different personalities?
5. Do their ears flap, do they slither like a snake or display other bodily movements that are not humanly possible otherwise?
6. Is there a darkness in their eyes that was not there before?
7. Are they riveted with an unnatural fear that wasn't there before?
8. Do they cut themselves or try to harm themselves? Are they preoccupied with blood, horror movies, death or suicide?

These are some common behaviors of someone who is demon

possessed.

The last part of this question is equally important. How do we know if sickness is caused because someone is walking in the flesh rather than the Spirit? This is a matter that the Church doesn't want to address either, but needs to.

People can be sick because of irresponsible behaviors, such as smoking which can cause cancer; indulging in a diet high in sugar can be a cause of diabetes; eating too much salt can cause high blood pressure; and the list can go on and on. But the reason remains the same: When people are controlled by the flesh, rather than by the Spirit of God which exercises moderation or abstinence, it can cause sickness and disease to manifest in the human body.

But the good news is found also in John 10:10, where Jesus says of Himself, "I came that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." And healing and divine health are part of the abundant life that He offers us by His redemptive blood.

Becky Dvorak is a prophetic healing evangelist and the *Destiny Image* author of *DARE to Believe* and *Greater Than Magic* and, soon to be released, *The Healing Creed*. Visit her at .