

Hounds of Hell Aren't Family Pets: A Prophetic Dream About Radical Freedom

Fear. Lust. Anger. Hatred. Suicide. Oppression. Hopelessness.

Spirit-filled Christians are not immune to overwhelming assaults of the enemy, but we should be victorious at the end of the battle. Sadly, in today's dark world, even some of the most passionate Believers are experiencing defeat after defeat. Many would admit that they have been unable to break free from strategic, continual, tormenting and demonic oppression. They force a smile on their face for Sunday morning and let it fade away as they walk out the doors at the end of the service. Depression and despair have dug into their soul and refuse to let go. They pray in tongues and stand in faith with no effect at all. It seems that God has abandoned them. The truth about their situation, however, is quite different.

The Dream

"Be sober and watchful, because your adversary the devil walks around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8).

I had a significant dream last night. It's a call for Christians to awaken and to repent and break alliance with unholy things.

Standing in the corner was a terrifying form. It was watching, threatening, alive—though death screamed through its countenance. This being was so grotesque and evil that no true Christian would ever consider for a moment that it had anything of worth to offer. Quite the opposite. The terror

that accompanied this otherworldly entity would make anybody frantically run while crying out for God to save them. No, there was nothing alluring about this beast whatsoever, until ...

In the dark, haunting room that both the demon and I were having our silent confrontation was a dog. It was a fairly large dog, very possibly a German shepherd. It was peacefully resting, curled up on the floor. It looked up at me, and I wanted to move over and pet this new friend. I could tell he was gentle and playful and would make a great new addition to my family. It was a bit strange to be thinking along these lines with manifested evil standing just a few feet away, but strangely, the thought of having a new, furry friend brought some comfort. This made the evil force in the room happy indeed.

The demon suddenly took on the form of a wispy spirit. What looked like a misty cloud flew around the room and then entered the dog. It knew it would never be received in its previous terrifying form. It had to become familiar, alluring and convincing instead of repulsive.

The animal that was moments ago wagging its tail, almost smiling at me, as excited as I was to have a new friend, was possessed by horrifying evil. No longer an innocent pet, this hell-hound arched its back, fiercely growled and exposed its razor-sharp fangs, ready to devour me. I could smell the stench of darkness emanating from this demon-possessed animal. Destruction was its assignment, and death was sure.

As a Spirit-filled Christian, I was well versed in the truth that "No weapon that is formed against you shall prosper" (Isa. 54:17a). I understood that I have been given authority over the domain of darkness. In that moment, boldness rose up within, and I lunged at the beast. I grabbed its upper jaw with one hand and the lower with the other, risking slicing my flesh on its teeth. Just like a lion tamer, I put my face

right in its mouth. Just like a warrior in prayer, I started intensely and loudly, praying in tongues, right down the throat of that dog.

The prayer had power, and it had effect. The animal settled down, and I backed away.

No more than 10 seconds later, evil manifested again as the dog arched its back, opened its jaws and prepared to attack.

Again, I aggressively ran toward the dog, grabbed its fangs, prayed in the Spirit and watched it again settle down.

This cycle repeated itself over and over. It was exhausting. It was ineffective. True victory never came, and relief was only momentary.

My new family pet, furry, playful, innocent, was anything but. I wanted to enjoy my new friend, presuming I had enough spiritual strength to deal with the evil that came with it. I did not.

“But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts” (Rom. 13:14).

Finding Radical Freedom

“For freedom Christ freed us. Stand fast therefore and do not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Gal. 5:1).

Do not be deceived. None of us is strong enough to resist the onslaught of a very evil, demented and deadly spirit if we entertain that spirit. Not only must it be cast out, but it must be rejected in every form, in every area of our lives.

As I stated above, innumerable Spirit-filled Christians find themselves bound up, oppressed and without strength for a permanent deliverance in their lives. Yes, they are spiritually minded. They understand the power of prayer. They

believe in the authority granted to them by Christ. They do their best to function as spiritual warriors, but at the end of the battle, they are beaten, desperate and hopeless. The enemy wins time and time again.

We cannot allow ourselves to be deceived into thinking that evil is less threatening just because it takes the form of something familiar.

Many are in a cycle of warfare with the enemy, attempting to function spiritually, appearing to be bold and fearless as they engage him. However, they can never win unless they completely cancel their agreement with evil.

Both the spirit and the dog must go. Both the enemy and whatever vehicle it uses to entice us must be eradicated from our lives. Now.

I have heard pastors, leaders and seemingly solid Christians tell me that cursing and violence in movies don't bother them. Occasional nudity doesn't either. They refuse to watch sexual situations, however. That's where they draw the line.

They wonder why they can't live free from lust. They can't imagine living a life with no unrighteous sexual images (which would be anybody real or imagined other than their spouse) dancing through their minds.

They are watching the movies; they are entertaining the dog. The enemy is manifesting through unrighteous forms of media, something that seems so common, so familiar, so innocent, playful, something that's a part of American culture.

"You have heard that it was said by the ancients, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away. For it is profitable that one of your members should perish, and not that your

whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is profitable for you that one of your members should perish, and not that your whole body be thrown into hell” (Matt. 5:27-30).

Others continually wrestle with anger and hatred while playing violent video games. The spirit of hatred is nicely packaged along with the dog: the video game, a familiar part of most people’s lives.

The truth is clear. We cannot keep the dog and eliminate the spirit. We can’t watch nudity in media and stay free from lust. It’s more than cause and effect. The enemy chooses certain vehicles and methods to anoint as he works to facilitate his plan of destruction in our lives.

We need to cast the spirit completely out of our lives and never allow ourselves to be deceived into enjoying what they have to offer again.

Discernment must increase. Holiness must increase. The dog must go.

Only then will we find true freedom.

For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light—for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth—proving what is pleasing to the Lord. And do not have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; instead, expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things are exposed when they are revealed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore He says: “Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light” (Eph. 5:8-14).