

Does the Deliverance Doctrine Need Some Balance?

I may get some flak and pushback from the demon chasers, but this has been an increasing burden in my heart to bring balance to some of the excesses and extremes and abuses I'm seeing in the so-called deliverance "ministry" today.

Every 25-30 years, there are cycles of extreme teachings and practices that come around in the body of Christ. I saw the craze over demons and deliverance in the 1980s. For example, in that decade during the height of the teaching on spiritual warfare with demons over cities, one zealous group dressed in Army fatigues and rented the 60th floor of a building so they could be closer to the prince of the power of the air and do battle with him. Zero Scripture on this, folks. Not even close.

It's Happening Again Today

The same sort of thing is happening today. Due to the emphasis and momentum of the popular movie, "Come Out In Jesus Name," we are seeing virtually the same craze. I'm not going to contest any results or fruit that is coming forth from any of these deliverance efforts. I rejoice when people are truly set free. But undoubtedly, there has been error through overemphasis.

Although a demon can oppress and harass the mind or body of any believer, that believer cannot have a demon in his spirit. The Holy Spirit does not share the same dwelling place with any demon. If a true believer is being oppressed or harassed by a demon, then he had to give place or access to it. If you set him free and then don't teach him how to close that door and stay free he could become worse later.

Furthermore, the human will is stronger than any demon. If

even a sinner doesn't want a demon, he more than likely won't have one. As a sinner, I was deceived and blinded by Satan, but I never had a demon. And if I did, when I came to repentance and surrendered to Christ, that demon scattered and never returned.

You cannot override another person's will. If he in fact has a demon and refuses to repent and renounce any sin or disobedience or rebellion that opened the door to demons, you really can't help him. Even when you discern a demon in someone's life, your authority is still limited. You can pray for them and even command the demons away from them, but if they willfully live in sin and rebellion and never repent, those demons don't have to obey you. At best they may find relief for a time, but when the demons return, they will yield again to them, and the cycle begins all over again. Sadly, I'm afraid this happens more often than deliverance ministry folks would like to admit.

No Demon Talk in the Letters to the Churches

You cannot find a case in the New Testament of a demon being cast out of a believer. No one in the Gospels was a believer yet, so don't look for examples there. In the book of Acts, neither Simon the sorcerer nor Ananias and Sapphira qualify as having a demon. (They both have been used as examples of needing deliverance.) They had a serious heart problem influenced by demonic deception, but they didn't have a demon.

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Some members of the body of Christ in Ephesus, before they came to Christ, were involved in deep occultic practices (Acts 19 records that they burned their books on the occult when they came to the Lord). So we would expect Paul to write about demons extensively in his letter to the Ephesians, but we

don't see that. Instead, we see prayers for the eyes of their understanding to be opened, for them to be strengthened by the Spirit of God in their inner man and so on.

Works of the Flesh or Devil?

We must not mistake or confuse a work of the flesh for a demon. I find that most believers have flesh problems, not demon problems. The devil gets credit for many things, much to his delight.

☒ In fact, even when naming the works of the flesh, no works of the devil are mentioned. Even "witchcraft" or "sorcery" as well as idolatry and several sexual sins mentioned in Galatians 5:19-21 are not called "demonic" but "works of the flesh."

I'd rather hear a donkey bray in a tin barn at midnight than to hear some Christians espouse the deliverance ministry and call it a priority in the body of Christ. Frankly, that is demeaning the finished work of Christ and the power of His blood. The devil gets much more credit for the private sins of believers than he is responsible for.

I hope this teaching is a blessing and brings clarity to this topic.

*In his book **Cast It Out**, Pastor Greg Locke gives believers the call to set people free. {eoa}*

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Bert Farias' books are forerunners to personal holiness, the move of God, and the return of the Lord. They also combat the departure from the faith and turning away from the truth we are seeing today. "The Tumultuous 2020s and Beyond" is his latest release to help believers navigate through the new decade and emerge as an authentic remnant. Other

materials/resources are available on his website, Holy Fire Ministries. You can follow him personally on Facebook, his Facebook ministry page or Twitter.