

Psychiatrist Unveils 'Demonic Foes,' How to Know if it's Mental Health or Spiritual Oppression

Dr. Richard Gallagher is a respected psychiatrist from New York, who has spent the last 25 years observing and working with Christian exorcists and clients who either have been under demonic influence or believed there was a possibility that they could be.

As a Pentecostal/charismatic Christian, I believe the Bible teaches there are principalities and powers. I believe Jesus cast out demons and I believe that still happens today as shown in the recent documentary "Come Out in Jesus Name."

When I learned of Dr. Gallagher's work and the fact he approaches it from the perspective of a trained psychiatrist I was intrigued and wanted to interview him on my Strang Report podcast.

Gallagher has experienced firsthand what the Scriptures describe about demons being cast out of people, and he has interacted with individuals who have personally claimed to be possessed. He's recently released a book called *Demonic Foes*, which uncovers much about the crossroads between the spiritual and psychological realms. I found the subtitle intriguing: "My twenty-five years as a Psychiatrist Investigating Possession, Diabolic Attacks and the Paranormal."

One thing Gallagher pointed out was how spiritual attacks are well-recorded across history, meaning that this phenomenon of the spiritual and the mind have been crossing paths long before our time.

"If you really understand this subject from a scholarly point of one really looks at this subject matter of demonic attacks historically," Gallagher told me, "the evidence is actually quite you read cultural history and ancient history, including of the pagans, pretty much all these cultures not only believed in evil spirits, but they also, the vast majority, reported cases of possession."

Through his years of looking at the psychological side of spiritual attack, Gallagher has seen and interacted with an array of people, including one man who asked him if he wanted to speak to the spirit he was possessed by.

"Occasionally I will engage with a demon," Gallagher said. "Because I am trying to figure out if this is, you know, psychosis or dissociative identity disorder or something. Well, anyway, there's one gentleman came by—he was a very articulate person, I had already recognized that he was a very sane person. And he said to me, 'You know, I'm possessed by you want to have a conversation with Zeus?'"

Understanding how to deal with rather frightening and unusual circumstances is something both psychiatrists like Gallagher and the church must be prepared to deal with.

"Most of the by the church, the person goes into a trance before the demon speaks, but there are what they call lucid possessions where the individual can be aware of the voice speaking through them," Gallagher says. "And I declined to speak to Zeus. But it showed me not that Zeus exists, but that demons, yes, have throughout history have often pretended to be different gods."

It's these ancient, pagan spirits like Baal, Ishtar and Moloch that author Rabbi Jonathan Cahn discusses in his book, *The Return of the Gods*. These demonic principalities were around long before us, tormenting anyone they possibly could.

For a high-caliber academic like Gallagher to acknowledge the

historical facts of their existence is uncommon in the upside-down world we're living in right now. Lack of knowledge and understanding about the spiritual realm among Christians and non-Christians is one of the reasons I go into this topic in more detail in my new book, *Spirit-Led Living in an Upside-Down World*.

Gallagher also made the clear distinction that while demonic possessions can and do occur, the issue of strongholds that must be uprooted from people's lives requires not only guidance from a spiritual perspective, but also from a clinical, mental wellness standpoint.

"Things like addictions, you know, can come from psychological problems; they can come from sinful tendencies," Gallagher said. "I've treated a lot of people with addictions—very sick—successfully, without sending them to an exorcist or something. You have to be very careful of ascribing all human or psychiatric problems to the demonic."

My interview with Dr. Gallagher was incredibly powerful and eye-opening, and I believe all people can learn something from it. To watch the full interview, [click here](#).

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