

Keys to Freedom: Recognize the Source and Kick the Demons Out

There are several categories of people who are in need of deep-level healing and several types of problems to address. The first category of people consists of those who sin by holding on to negative attitudes toward others, toward themselves and/or toward God.

It is sin, in the end, that is the problem. To adequately deal with the sin in our lives, however, our definition of sin needs to be much broader than the usual definitions. It will include holding on to such emotional reactions as unforgiveness, anger, hatred, bitterness, resentment, fear, shame, guilt, self-rejection, self-hatred, death wishes and many other attitudes that negatively affect our relationship with God.

Such attitudes usually arise when people react to someone sinning against them. When people are physically, emotionally or sexually abused, they naturally react in anger. But such a reaction is not a sin (see Ephesians 4:26).

It is the holding of the anger, allowing it to become unforgiveness, that is sinful and internally damaging. When such reactions are ignored, they fester and cause problems more serious than the original wounds. They become infected and refuse to go away.

Those who have intentionally or unintentionally harbored such attitudes need freedom from the internal damage produced by them. For example, someone harboring unforgiveness and anger or hatred over a period of time sustains great emotional damage, and in addition gets infested with demons.

Such was the case of a woman in her mid-thirties who had lived for most of her life with an intense hatred toward her father. That hatred (which, by the way, her father rightly deserved) had caused a severe case of diabetes and resulting blindness, as well as digestive problems that required a colostomy.

Those who harbor negative attitudes toward themselves constitute a second major group who need deep-level healing. Many people suffer from self-condemnation, self-rejection and even self-loathing. In spite of the value God puts on us, a value we often know only in our heads, our feelings toward ourselves may be quite negative. Frequently the roots of such attitudes lie in the fact that we were not wanted as children. Much of Jane's self-rejection appeared to be rooted in her mother's attitude while Jane was in the womb. Abuse during childhood or adolescence is another frequent source of self-hatred.

Third, many people are holding anger toward God. These individuals, too, need deep-level healing. They often reason that, since God is all-powerful, the fact that He allowed them to experience bad things must mean He doesn't love them. Like Job, they feel that God is unreasonable and capricious. They fail to see the extent to which God has limited Himself by granting free will to humans and to Satan.

The Presence of Demons

A further set of reasons for needing deep-level healing stems from the activity of demons in human life. We will go into more detail on this in chapter 5, but should mention here that demons take advantage of people by attaching themselves to the emotional and spiritual garbage that is already there. They then become a part of the emotional and spiritual garbage we have to confront. The major job of demons is to attach themselves to the garbage in order to make bad things worse. They try to cripple anyone they can—and harass those they cannot cripple. They are especially concerned with crippling

or harassing Christians, lest we discover the power God has given us and become a threat to their activities.

In addition to the emotional and spiritual “garbage” to which demonic “rats” can attach themselves, demons can be inherited. Many people have individuals in their ancestry who have given themselves to Satan through participation in occult organizations or through dedications to the gods or spirits of their ancestors. Family spirits and other spirits are regularly passed down through bloodlines. I would estimate that well over half the people I have cast demons out of have had at least one inherited demon.

And then there are the increasing number of people who have themselves made commitments to spirits through involvement in New Age or other occult organizations. These also need deep-level healing.

Furthermore, many have been cursed or have cursed themselves. I work with missionaries a lot, and I often find that someone in their area of service has cursed them. Children who are not wanted often carry a curse of unwantedness, consciously or unconsciously put on them by their parents. Self-cursing is often engaged in during adolescence by teenagers who are not pleased with the way their bodies look or are developing. “I hate my _____” constitutes a curse, and frequently is all the legal right a demon needs to enter and live in that person.

So, Let's Seek Freedom

Most of the people who come to see me are keenly aware of their sins, according to the narrower definition of sin used by most Christians. And they have confessed those sins to God, sometimes over and over, but often have little sense of release. They come knowing in their heads that they are forgiven, but not feeling free. The reason is usually found in the fact that their wounds have emotional and/or spiritual roots that do not go away simply through repentance.

It is the roots that I seek to deal with, then, in ministry. I assume that present issues have roots, usually early in life, and that if we can bring healing to those roots, the present feelings and behavior will be affected positively.

*Excerpted from **Charles H. Kraft's** book, Two Hours to Freedom. Charles H. (Chuck) Kraft is retired from the faculty of the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller Seminary (formerly the School of World Mission) after 40 years as professor of anthropology and intercultural communication. He taught anthropology, communication, contextualization, and spiritual dynamics (inner healing, deliverance, and spiritual warfare) to missionaries and prospective missionaries. He is the author of more than 30 books and numerous articles in the fields of his expertise.*