

This Might Be Why You're Under Constant Demonic Attack

"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through dry places seeking rest, but finds none. Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then it goes and brings with itself seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it be also with this evil generation" (Matt. 12:43-45).

Many use this verse to caution Christians, but the context is rejecting Christ: "The unclean spirit leaves for a time, but when he returns, he finds Christ is not there to shut him out; the heart is swept by outward reformation ... and the man becomes a more decided enemy of the truth. Every heart is the residence of unclean spirits, except those which are temples of the Holy Ghost, by faith in Christ" (Matthew Henry).

But there is a very important principle we can learn: We must fill our heart with the things of God. The demons returned and found the heart void of God, void of truth: "No good parallel has been cited for the journeying in waterless places, but the imagery is probably based on the idea that the demons will move naturally in realms where conditions are antithetical to human well-being, and devoid of the blessing of God" (John Nolland).

Nolland is spot-on. Demonic activity "will move naturally in realms where conditions" are opposed to our "well-being and devoid of the blessing of God." They look for and feed in environments where God is absent, such as our entertainment choices. Most of today's entertainment choices hinder our relationship with God. We either provide fertile ground for Satan to work or fertile ground for the things of God to grow.

Ephesians 4:27 tells us not to give the devil a foothold. A foothold is a secure position that allows him to make further progress. And our mind is the battlefield.

We pray and ask God to do something but often forget about our responsibility to obey. We have responsibilities, yet we are totally dependent on God. We must do our part, but we can't do His. When we abandon God's plan for our lives, we abandon His covering, His shelter, His protection. How can we position ourselves in the will of God and not give the devil a foothold?

Expose sin. Sin grows and flourishes in the dark but loses power and influence when exposed. The website "Setting Captives Free" says, "When your sin is hidden, many things happen. First there is deception in that you can 'handle' this yourself (pride). When you are at that point, you no longer look to the Lord for your help. Then there is shame because you are living a deceptive dual life."

Eventually, we get to the point where we cannot even look another Christian in the eye because their lifestyle convicts us. One online contributor to "Setting Captives Free" wrote, "Because of the overwhelming shame and guilt I felt, I ran to alcohol to numb myself because I didn't want to feel the very things the Lord was using to get my attention ... My heart began to get harder and harder. Sin is debilitating, exhausting and paralyzing ... Fortunately, there is a way out!"

Safeguards keep us from falling. Safeguards are guardrails through the canyons of life. Drastic change requires drastic measures. When people fall, it's often because they use a baby gate to guard a lion. We can be quick to repent, but unless safeguards are in place, we'll fall again. Once a person goes back to sin, life doesn't get better. It may at first—one of the enemy's deceptions is to delay the consequences—but eventually "the last state of that man is worse than the first."

Here are a few helpful suggestions: 1. There are apps that allow parents to monitor text messages that kids send and receive. There is definitely a healthy level of freedom and privacy that we shouldn't infringe on, but accountability isn't infringement. 2. There are also apps that monitor unaccounted time. Sadly, we don't always want change bad enough; we enjoy freedom without responsibility. 3. There is also website accountability available that can send all the websites visited to your spouse or a friend.

Checking in with those who love you and will help is also another great safeguard. Keep in mind that true friends build up, they don't tear down. If friends are influencing you to drink, supplying you with addictive medications or drugs, emailing or texting porn or causing you to stumble in any way, they're not friends. They are pulling you away from God; end the relationship. I'd rather be lonely and loving God, than have friends who pull me away. Or as an old preacher once said, "I'd rather be lonely going up, than have company going to hell."

Avoid triggers that motivate sin. Some practical examples involve avoiding the internet when alone or turning a lonely Friday or Saturday night into a night of worship, prayer and the study of God's Word. Many churches, such as ours, meet on Saturday nights for this very reason. You can wake up in the morning filled with the Spirit, versus waking up depressed and suicidal. You'll go to bed with God on your mind, versus waking up and not remembering what happened.

Finally, avoid places that fuel lust. This isn't rocket science: "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6). How do you spend your time and money? This speaks volumes about what you truly cherish—the things of God or the things of the world. Seek Him. He will not let you down. {eoa}

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This article originally appeared at .