

Praying for Deliverance

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE BELIEVE
BY JOHN EDWARDS



**LIFE
COMMUNITY
MINISTRIES**

Knowing our enemy

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE BELIEVE



Evil spirits exist

The Bible makes it clear that evil spirits exist and the public ministry of Jesus from his baptism to his crucifixion was constantly involved in setting men, women and children free from the tormenting presence of evil spirits. To read through Mark's gospel gives us an understanding of how many people needed deliverance, that is spirits cast out from their bodies.

There is the same need in the world today, many people are "demonised". Demonised is a more correct word than possessed.

The scriptures use two words "spirits" and "demons". These are not different beings but the same. This is clear from how different gospels report the same incident using both words. Compare Matt 15:22 with Mark 7:25, and Mark 5:2 with Luke 8:27.

The word "devils" in the AV should be "demons".

There is one Devil who is Satan but many demons.

Where do demons come from?

The Bible does not give the origin of demons.

Probably there was a host of created beings that lost their bodies and now seek to find other bodies to indwell.

Demons have the characteristics of personality, they have knowledge, they speak, experience fear, have a will and self awareness.

They are not fallen angels who have their own bodies.

Where are they?

Evil spirits are on the earth seeking to enter people or to dominate those they have entered. Outside of a body they are restricted and frustrated and this is probably why Jesus said that when a spirit is cast out it wanders in “dry places”.

How are we to deal with them?

We are to resist whatever pressure they bring against us, bind their activity with prayer and spiritual warfare and cast them out when they have entered a person.



Biblical Response

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE BELIEVE

Only on what the Bible teaches

Our knowledge of the spiritual realm is to be based on what the Bible teaches. It is unwise to base what we believe on our own experiences or what we have been told by others.

The question we need to ask always is “does this agree with God’s Word”.

Satan is a deceiver and the “father of lies” who will try to bring confusion and error to frustrate those who would be involved in spiritual warfare and deliverance.

What allows evil spirits to enter people?

Jesus spoke of the human body as a house that evil spirits try to make their own. See Matt 12:43-45.

If there is an open door to the house then spirits will be able to get in. The open doors that let spirits in are sin, circumstances of life and inheritance.

That does not mean every time there is a sin a demon will come in. However sin makes us vulnerable and persistent sin very vulnerable.

Sin would include what we do, what we say and what we think. For example those who are involved in sexual sins will be giving place to spirits that dominate their lives with lustful thoughts, imagination and acts. Involvement in Occult activity and witchcraft invites spirits in.

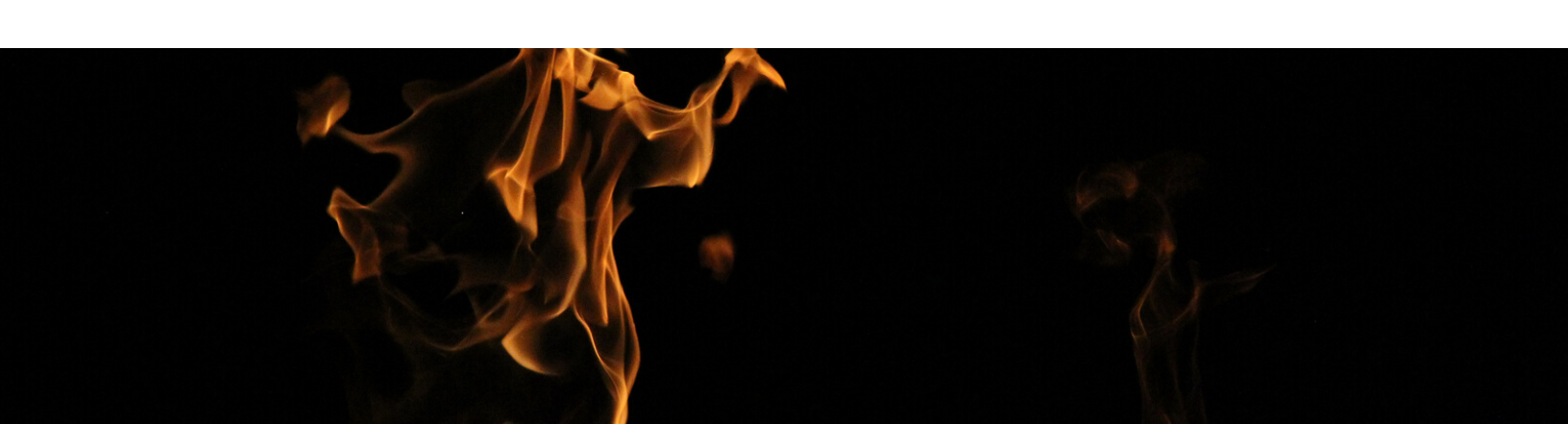
Circumstances of life would include accidents, times of trauma and shock. Many are dominated by spirits of fear that came in at such times. Grief and bereavement with the emotional turmoil they bring could also be an open door.

Feeling unloved or unwanted particularly when young can let spirits of rejection in. Those spirits then dominate the person persistently with those destructive emotions.

Inheritance. Some are subject to evil in their lives because of what their families were involved with in past generations. Particularly in the area of idol worship, occult practice, using charms and fortune telling.

Anger and violence can also be inherited and have spirits that are present.

See Genesis 20:5 and Num 14:18.



What do they seek to do?

When evil spirits enter they attempt to dominate the person, to control their thinking and their emotions.

When someone is demonised they still have their will and can resist the pressure from the spirits but it can be a struggle, a constant battle. Demons will entice to evil, bring deception to the mind, enslave, torment (physically, emotionally and emotionally). They will bring compulsion and dominate by taking away peace, bringing obsession, alcoholism and suicidal thoughts. They will seek to defile debasing what God intended as a temple for the Holy Spirit.

How are demons cast out?

There is only one way to expel demons and that is the Bible way. The only hope we have is the victory Jesus won for us on the cross. Spirits leave when they are commanded to leave in the “Name of Jesus” the command spoken by faith.

It is what is said in the Name of Jesus that is effective. Any other methods used have no basis in God’s Word and are generally superstition. When the disciples could not set a boy free Jesus told them it was because of their unbelief. Matt 17:20. However Jesus made the point that “this sort” needed prayer and fasting. It would follow that prayer and fasting would build up their faith.

It was those casting out that were encouraged to fast. There is no place for anointing with oil here, special washing, eating special foods, dressing in certain clothes, special prayers. The order “come out in the Name of Jesus” is all that is required.

Who can cast them out?

Jesus said to his disciples “these signs shall follow them that believe in my name they shall cast out demons” Mark 16:7.

The authority is given to the believer man or woman, acting in faith.

There is not a special office or position in the church that gives a person the authority to expel demons.

We need to ensure that when we are seeking to set people free from evil spirits it is done in a way and place that will not bring discredit to the gospel and those involved should act with wisdom.

It is unwise for a man on his own to pray for a woman and if the particular culture of the people could be offended by certain ways of doing things try not to give offence

Should we seek to send the demons somewhere?

We have no warrant from the scriptures to say anything but “come out”.

On one occasion Jesus commanded a spirit to leave a child and not go back in. Mark 9:25. There were probably circumstances in that lad's life that made him vulnerable and Jesus was prompted by the Holy Spirit to say what he did.

Are some demons stronger than others?

The spirit that troubled the boy the disciples failed to deliver Jesus spoke of as “this kind” Matt 17:21

When Jesus used the picture of demons returning to an empty house he spoke of those who were “more wicked” Luke 11:26

We must not be intimidated by this thought as no demon is stronger than Jesus and he has promised us power over “all the power of the enemy” Luke 10:19

Persistence in the casting out is often necessary.

Our faith will grow and the more assurance we will have the more we are involved in this work.

What about manifestations?

Generally evil spirits prefer to stay hidden but there are times when they are obliged to reveal their presence. Because of the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus as he moved amongst the people often demons were obliged to manifest. The man in the synagogue who shouted out Mark 1:23. Some were thrown to the ground as they encountered Jesus. Mark 9:20, Mark 3:11.

When demonised people are in a place where the Holy Spirit is present or with people who have the anointing of the Holy Spirit there is often a physical reaction. People might start to tremble or shake, fall to the ground, cry out, seek to get away from the place or people. At times there may be no evident manifestation but when prayer is made for that individual it can trigger a reaction. Because there is a manifestation does not mean the person is set free it shows that the evil spirit is present. What is inside needs to come out.

Most evil spirits leave by the mouth with an expulsion of breath. A person may cough, yawn, cry out seem to vomit, wail, belch. Those driving out the evil spirits need to be aware of these reactions. The person seeking freedom will be aware that something is gone. Usually there are a number of spirits present in the person and the time of deliverance can be a process.

As you pray for someone you may need to calm them down and then you encourage them to expel what is there. Usually manifestations can be controlled by the demonised person with an act of their will. In the process of deliverance you are commanding the demons to leave but also encouraging the person to be positive and cooperate.

No need to shout

When we cast out evil spirits we have no need to shout. Authority does not depend on volume generated. If the process is calm it is often more efficient and quicker.

The objective is not to provoke manifestations but to simply get the demons out.

Dont enter into conversations with demons

It is not right to enter into conversations with demons even when they speak out of a person. Their motivation is always to deceive and they are liars.

The evil spirits that are the most common.

Many people automatically link all demons with the occult or witchcraft but this is not the case. There may be such demons that need expelling because of these practices but there are spirits a lot more prevalent in peoples lives such as fear and rejection.

We need to understand that when a persons life is dominated by certain emotions such as fear, anger, panic there is generally a spirit that needs casting out.

How to tell if someone needs to have spirits cast out.

When demons manifest in a public meeting it is evident deliverance is needed. But there will be many, the majority, who will not manifest in this way but request prayer for they believe they might need deliverance. If the subject is treated in preaching and there are testimonies given about deliverance people will look for help. As they share their problems and the areas where they believe they need prayer it will become evident. Someone who has persistent fears needs a spirit of fear casting out.

Your doctor if you went to consult him would ask “what’s the problem, what are your symptoms”. It is much the same when someone asks for deliverance. “What is the problem? When did it start?” Etc.



The gift of “discerning of spirits”

One of the nine spiritual gifts listed in 1Cor 12:10 is “discerning of spirits”, a revelation from the Lord. The Holy Spirit is able to bring a supernatural awareness and understanding of spirit activity and presence usually of demons. Our natural abilities, our senses, are enhanced and quickened by the Holy Spirit. It may be given for one to see the evil spirits, to hear them, feel their presence and even smell them. This is discernment given at the discretion of the Holy Spirit for the individuals understanding and direction. Those who are involved in deliverance should seek in prayer for this gift to operate and to be attentive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. This discernment when needed can also come as a “word of knowledge” what we are confronted with comes as a thought or picture to our mind.

Those who will be the most readily set free are those who cooperate with those praying. For people to be set free from evil spirits there needs to be a desire for freedom, an acknowledgment of the authority and power of the Lord Jesus and a willingness to cooperate with the help offered.

The heart attitudes of the one seeking freedom should be honesty as to their need, repentance of any wrong acts and thinking, forgiveness of those who have hurt or offended the one wanting release and active entering in to the process of deliverance. Passivity can be a hindrance to getting free.

Dangers for those who pray for deliverance and practical advice.

Don't let those you pray for monopolise your time. Don't pray for too long and become over tired. Deliverance is part of our service and we need a balance in our daily walk. If you lose your joy it is an indication that something is wrong.

Don't let any success you have make you proud. The victory is the Lord's. Resist the temptation of doing everything on your own, we are to be workers together.

How to keep free

When evil spirits have been cast out they will seek to return to what they consider is their home. Luke 11:24 Those set free have a responsibility to keep free and may well profit from some practical advice on this.

They need to close the door that let the demons in previously.

Sometimes a change in lifestyle is needed. Some practices may need setting aside, it may mean a distancing from previous companions if they could be a bad influence.

Those who minister deliverance can not control peoples lives but can offer advice on what is needed to keep free. Those wanting to progress in their Christian walk after deliverance should make a point of reading God's Word, developing an attitude of praise and thanksgiving and be involved in a fellowship of Believers where they may be supported and encouraged.

For those who seek to minister deliverance they need to be part of a local fellowship and have those they can share and pray with. Have also those who will be able to speak encouragement and counsel into their lives.

When evil spirits manifest in public meetings and they are not readily cast out rather than dominate the meeting it is better that the person is ministered to where they are not a distraction.

