

An Introduction to Deliverance from Evil Spirits

An article by Frank and Ida Mae Hammond (used by permission).
Copyright © 1997, by The Children's Bread Ministry.

The term 'deliverance' as used here encompasses both the process and the result of one's liberation from demonic bondage. Deliverance is achieved by driving out evil spirits, using the authority of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said,

'In my name they [believers in Him] will drive out demons' Mark 16:17.

Since some who read this article may not be familiar with the scriptural grounds for deliverance, we wish to acquaint them with the basic tenets of deliverance. We also recommend several books that we and others have published on various aspects of deliverance.

Deliverance Basics

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke abound with accounts of Jesus casting demons out of people. A major part of His earthly ministry, perhaps as much as one-third, was devoted to deliverance. His purpose in becoming man, dying on the cross and conquering the grave was to defeat Satan in our behalf.

'The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work' I John 3:8.

Jewish religious leaders were amazed at the authority Jesus exercised over demons. They said,

'He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him' Mark 1:27.

He did not use incantations or any sort of paraphernalia; He merely spoke to these real yet invisible beings and they obeyed Him.

'He drove out the spirits with a word...' Matt. 8:16

Furthermore, Jesus trained The Twelve plus seventy-two other disciples and commissioned them to cast out demons.

Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits...The Lord appointed seventy-two others...The seventy-two returned with joy and said,

'Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.' Matt. 10:1; Luke 10:1, 17

Prior to His ascension into heaven, Jesus commissioned His Church to preach the Gospel throughout the world, confirming the Word with signs following. The first sign mentioned is deliverance: forcing demons to depart from a person in the Name of Jesus.

'And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons'
Mark 16:15-20.

The Believer's Authority

Believers in Christ have been entrusted with a spiritual 'power of attorney': authority to act in the absence and interests of another. All authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Jesus (Matt. 28:18), and He has given us complete power over Satan and the demonic kingdom. Even though we cast out demons, the devil has no power to retaliate or harm us in any way. Jesus said:

'I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions, and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you' Luke 10:1

Deliverance Is For God's People

When a Gentile woman requested deliverance for her little daughter, Jesus refused her and declared that deliverance is 'the children's bread' Matt. 15:26. Only after she expressed faith in Him did He comply with her request, saying,

'Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted' Matt. 15:28.

Likewise, all others, who through faith in Christ become God's children, are qualified to receive 'the children's bread'.

A person who has not acknowledged Jesus Christ as His Lord and Savior seeks or submits to deliverance. He has no interest in the provisions of the Cross. His eyes are blinded and his heart hardened. He is dead in trespasses and sins, following the ways of Satan through,

'the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air' Eph. 2:1.

He cannot benefit from deliverance because, without filling himself with the virtues of the Holy Spirit, the evil spirits could come back seven times stronger than before. 'When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first' Matt. 12:43-45.

Can A Christian Have A Demon?

No distinction is warranted between Christians and non-Christians having demons; the New Testament makes no such distinction. Our hearts are grieved by those who contend that Christians cannot have demons, thus robbing believers of a valid ministry purchased for us by the blood of Jesus.

Can a Christian be Demon Possessed?

Herein lies much of the confusion. 'Having' demons and being 'possessed' by demons are entirely different matters. Possession denotes ownership. A Christian belongs to Christ. He has been purchased by the precious blood of Jesus (I Cor. 6:19, 20).

The King James Bible, and a few other versions, have translated the Greek word *daimonizomai* as 'demon possessed', whereas the word specifically means 'to act under the control of demons'. 'Those who were thus afflicted expressed the mind and consciousness of the demon or demons indwelling them' (Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words). Christians can be influenced and controlled by demons who indwell them, but demons cannot 'possess' (own) a Christian. Demons dwelling in Christians are trespassers without ownership rights; therefore, they are subject to eviction in the authority of the Name of the One who has redeemed such believers unto Himself by His blood (I Pet. 1:18).

Some have questioned, 'How can an evil spirit dwell in a person who has the Holy Spirit within him?' The answer is made clear by remembering that 'your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit' I Cor. 6:19. The Temple in Jerusalem had three parts: Outer Court, Holy Place and Holy of Holies. The presence of God dwelt solely in the Holy of Holies. The three compartments in the Temple correspond to man's tripartite being: body, soul and spirit. For the Christian, the human spirit corresponds to the Holy of Holies, which is the dwelling place of The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit desires us to submit every area of our 'temple' to His control. Other temple areas include the mind, the emotions, the will and the physical body.

Jesus found defilement in the Jerusalem temple; however, the moneychangers and the merchants with doves and cattle were not in the Holy of Holies, but in the outer courts of the temple. Jesus proceeded to 'cast out' all who defiled the temple (Matt. 21:12). This is a perfect analogy to deliverance.

Defilement is not in the spirit of a Christian but in the 'outer courts' of his mind, emotions and body. There can be defilement in the Outer Court while the presence of the Lord remains in the Holy of Holies. Jesus is highly displeased with such a condition. He wants His temple cleansed and every defiling demon cast out.

Balance Is A Key Factor

Not every problem is demonic. For example, Jesus healed people without casting out demons. Not every demonic problem is exclusively demonic; there are also fleshly attitudes and activities, which must be crucified. Corrupt flesh and unclean spirits are companions; you rarely find one without the other. Any one who receives valid deliverance cannot expect to retain his deliverance apart from disciplined living. His tongue, mind, emotions, will, physical appetites, finances and his spirit-man must remain rigorously disciplined.

'Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control' Prov. 25:28.

The enemy has ready access to the life of one whose walls of discipline are not solidly constructed.

Why Seek Deliverance?

Why should a person want deliverance for himself? Is needing relief from torment, defilement, addiction or compulsive behavior a valid motivation? We know our Lord wants us to be free from every oppressive bondage, but seeking to be conformed to Christ's likeness is always the highest motivation. We should hate everything in us that detracts from this process and gives advantage to the devil.

Prerequisites for Deliverance

The Word of God lays down three absolute prerequisites for those who seek deliverance from oppressing evil spirits.

First, one must repent of all sin.

Repentance is a firm resolve in the Lord to forsake sin and turn about to walk in the ways of God. Ongoing sin in one's life is an open invitation to demons. Yielding to sin is yielding to a 'whom', a person: namely, the devil.

'Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are the one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness?' Rom. 6:16

Second, there must be unqualified forgiveness toward all others no matter what they have done, how many times they have done it, or whether they continue to offend.

Forgiveness of oneself is also mandatory. Anyone who has any reservation about forgiving any other person is turned over to tormenting demons until he pays the debt of love's forgiveness.

'In anger his master turned him [the unforgiving servant] over to the jailers until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart' Matt. 18:21-35 (Brackets ours).

Third, there must be a complete separation from every association no matter how casual with the occult, cults and Eastern Religions.

This separation includes the destruction of all books and paraphernalia associated therewith. (Deut. 7:25-26; 18:9-13; Acts 19: 19-21).

Judged By Its Fruit

One day a group of proud, pious Pharisees challenged the validity of Jesus' deliverance ministry. They accused Him saying,

'It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons' Matt. 12:24.

In the midst of a particularly pointed response, Jesus challenged His critics with these words:

'Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit' Matt. 12:33.

Indeed, let deliverance be judged by its fruit! After three decades in deliverance ministry on four continents, we have found that deliverance is a VERY fruitful ministry. In the books we have written, we have shared many examples of persons who have been set free from bondage in their minds, emotions and physical bodies.

Some of the most dramatic and instantly recognizable fruit of deliverance has occurred in children to whom we have ministered. Many parents have said to us, 'Our child is not responsive to training, discipline or love'. It is not unusual for all such negative traits to be completely reversed after only one thorough session of deliverance. This change is tangible fruit of deliverance!

It is a tremendous benefit to children when, by casting out oppressing demons, those resistant to discipline become pliable; those who could not be cuddled are now receptive to touching love; the rebellious and stubborn become governable; the devious are made trainable in truthfulness and honesty, and the restless and agitated become peaceful. Consider the quality difference that deliverance can make in a person's life. Parents, too, are greatly benefited by the changes that deliverance makes in a child, for many frustrations and hassles are terminated.

Each child that is born into this world is a unique individual. God has designed each one with a personality all his own. One of the greatest challenges parents face is training and nurturing each child so that the full potential of his special personality is developed and channeled in the ways of God. When evil spirits hinder or block this process, conscientious parents can become perplexed and discouraged.

Children are the most valuable assets that a family, church or society has. Our objective as Christian parents and ministers should always be to lead our children to love and serve Jesus Christ so that they will not be captured by the Antichrist system of this world.

If we expect to be free from the oppression of evil spirits, we must engage in spiritual warfare, utilizing every resource which God provides. He has counseled us,

'Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes' Eph. 6:10-11.

We have been given three offensive weapons by which to cast out every oppressing spirit:

1. The name of Jesus. 'Jesus' is the name of absolute authority. His name is above all other names. The authority of Jesus' name is given to every one who believes in Him for salvation through the forgiveness of sins. Thus, every believer has the right to say to demons, 'Go! In the name of Jesus', and the demons must obey.
2. The power in His blood. The blood that Jesus shed on the cross is incorruptible - it never dies and never loses its power. To use the blood of Jesus as a weapon, tell the devil and his demons what His blood has done for you. It has ransomed, redeemed, atoned, justified and sanctified you.
3. The Word of God. His Word is called 'the sword of the Spirit' Eph. 6:17. We use the Word in warfare when we read or quote aloud applicable scriptures to the devil. This is what Jesus did in the time of His wilderness temptations. He said, 'Satan, it is written....'

In times of battle against the devil, the anointing of the Holy Spirit should be sought and anticipated. The power channels for the Holy Spirit's anointing are the gifts of the Spirit. Of special importance in spiritual

warfare is the gift of 'discerning of spirits'. By means of this gift there comes a supernatural insight in the spiritual realm so that one is able to know the presence, nature and activities of evil spirits. The gift of discerning of spirits guides the deliverance minister in his work. He need not call upon lying spirits to identify themselves, for the Holy Spirit has already revealed to him who they are. (See: Acts 1:8; I Cor. 12:7-11).

Furthermore, the gift of 'faith' arms one with strength to speak to evil spirits with absolute assurance of victory over them. Jesus taught that by speaking in faith one can remove a mountain. Demons indwelling a person represent a mountainous problem that demands removal. The Bible says,

'Covet earnestly the best gifts' and 'desire spiritual gifts' I Cor. 12:31; 14:1.

An effective way to begin a deliverance ministry is for the person seeking deliverance to verbalize specific prayers and confessions. Such prayers will affirm the candidate's relationship with Jesus Christ, make definite request of God for deliverance and serve the forces of darkness their eviction notice.

Deliverance Prayers and Confessions

General Confession & Prayer

'Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that you are the Son of God. You are the Savior come in the flesh to destroy the works of the devil. You died on the cross for my sins and rose up from the dead. I now confess all of my sins, known and unknown, and repent of each one. I ask You to forgive me and cleanse me in Your blood. I do believe that Your blood cleanses me now from all sin. Thank You for redeeming me, cleansing me, and sanctifying me in Your blood.'

Forgiveness Prayer

'Lord, others have trespassed against me, but in obedience to Your command I now forgive each person who has ever hurt me in any way. As an act of my will I now forgive (name them, both living and dead). Lord, bless each of these; I love them with Your love, and I ask You to forgive them also. And since You have forgiven me, I also forgive and accept myself in the name of Jesus Christ. The curse of unforgiveness has no more power in my life.'

Occult Confession Prayer

'I confess as sin and seek Your forgiveness for every occult involvement. I confess having sought from Satan the help that should only come from God. I renounce every occult activity; I renounce Satan and all his works. I loose myself from him, and I take back all the ground I ever yielded to him. I choose the blessing and not the curse. I choose life and not death.'

Loosing From Domination Prayer (Breaking Soul Ties)

'In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I now renounce, break and loose myself from all demonic subjection to my mother, my father, my grandparents and any other human beings, living or dead, who have dominated and controlled me in any way. I thank You, Lord, for setting me free.'

Psychic Heredity and Bondage Prayer

'In the name of Jesus Christ, I now renounce, break and loose myself and my family from all hereditary curses, and from all demonic bondage placed upon us as the result of sins, transgressions or iniquities through myself, my parents or any of my ancestors. I confess the sins of my forefathers.'

Loosing From Witchcraft & Related Powers

'In the name of Jesus Christ I now rebuke, break and loose myself, and my family, from any and all evil curses operating through charms, vexes, hexes, spells, omens, jinxes, psychic powers, mind control, bewitchments, witchcraft or sorcery, that have been put upon me through any person, or from any cult or occult source. I command all such demonic powers to leave me in the name of Jesus. I am the head and not the tail. I am above and not beneath.'

Come To Jesus, The Deliverer, Prayer

'I come to you, Jesus, as my Deliverer. You know all my problems -- the things that bind me, that torment me, that defile and harass me. I now loose myself from every dark spirit, from every evil influence, from every satanic bandage, from every spirit in me that is not the Spirit of God, and I command all such spirits to leave me now, in the name of Jesus Christ. I now confess that my body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, redeemed, cleansed and sanctified by the blood of Jesus. Therefore, Satan has no place in me, and no power over me, through the blood of Jesus.'

Breaking Curses Confession

'In the name of Jesus Christ I confess all the sins of my forefathers, and by the redemptive blood of Jesus, I now break the power of every curse passed down to me through my ancestral line. I confess and repent of each and every sin that I have committed, known or unknown, and accept Christ's forgiveness. He has redeemed me from the curse of the law. I choose the blessing and reject the curse. In the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, I break the power of every evil curse spoken against me. I cancel the force of every prediction spoken about me, whether intentionally or carelessly that was not according to God's promised blessings. I bless those who have cursed me. I forgive each person who has ever wronged me or spoken evil of me. In the name of Jesus, I command every evil spirit of curse to leave me now.'

Commitment to Christ

'Heavenly Father, I am your child, redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus. You have given me life, and I now give my life to you. My heart's desire is to glorify your Name. I am an ambassador for Christ and a minister of reconciliation. In Your strength I will love, obey and serve You all the days of my life. Amen!'