

Lesson #12

Deliverance: A Model for Ministry (2)

A. *Six reasons why Christians avoid deliverance ministry*

1. Christians avoid deliverance ministry because they have been offended by those who have taken it to unbiblical and damaging extremes.
2. Christians avoid deliverance ministry because they wrongly believe that deliverance is a special ministry for special people with special spiritual gifts. Whereas all Christians may be involved in deliverance ministry, it is both wise and helpful (although not essential) if someone with the gift of discerning spirits (1 Cor. 12:10) is present. Deliverance is best done with a *team* of like-minded believers.
3. Christians avoid deliverance ministry because of a wrong interpretation of 2 Peter 2:10-11 and Jude 8-9. These texts do **not** mean that we, as Christians, are forbidden to rebuke or verbally resist or pronounce judgment against demonic beings. Neither unbelievers (the "false teachers") nor even the holy angels have the authority which we have received by virtue of our being in Christ. In Christ, with his authority, we both can and must resist and rebuke the Enemy. See Luke 10:1-20; Acts 5:16; 8:7; 16:16-18; 19:12. Jude makes no attempt to extend to Christians the restriction placed on Michael.
4. Christians avoid deliverance ministry because they wrongly assume that Christians cannot be demonized. Every case of demonization involves someone under the influence or control, in varying degrees, of an indwelling evil spirit. The word "demonization" is never used in the NT to describe someone who is merely oppressed or harrassed or attacked or tempted by a demon. In every case, reference is made to a demon either entering, dwelling in, or being cast out of the person. Matthew 4:24 and 15:22 at first appear to be exceptions to this rule, but the parallel passages in Mark 1:32ff. and 7:24-30 indicate otherwise. Hence, to be "demonized", in the strict sense of that term, is to be inhabited by a demon with varying degrees of influence or control.
5. Christians avoid deliverance ministry because they are afraid of encountering the demonic.
6. Christians avoid deliverance ministry because they are ignorant of their identity and authority in Christ.

B. *A Practical Model for Deliverance*

(1) *Pray for Discernment*

I again emphasize the value of having someone skilled in deliverance and gifted in discernment present with you. Those who are new in deliverance ministry often presumptuously and incorrectly connect demonic spirits with certain emotional and/or psychological symptoms and bizarre behaviors. Whereas we don't want to ignore demons if they are present, even greater damage can be done by assuming that they are the cause of a problem when they aren't.

Some important steps in the process of discernment:

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to open your spiritual eyes and speak to you regarding the individual.

- Pray with your eyes *open*. The presence of a demonic spirit will often lead to physical, visible manifestations.
- Learn (by experience) the signs and symptoms of oppression and demonization.

(2) *Instruct the person*

- Take time to explain to the individual what you are doing and why. This will help alleviate their fears.
- Explain to them that *if* they have a demon, this does not mean they are dirty, more sinful than other Christians, sub-spiritual, or unloved of God.
- Instruct the person to cooperate with what is happening by constantly giving you feedback: what they are feeling, thinking, physical sensations, intrusive thoughts, violent or sinful impulses, etc.

(3) *Articulate your Authority in Christ*

- Begin by verbally declaring the authority of Christ and His supremacy over all demonic spirits.
- Read aloud (or have the person do it) Luke 10:17-20, Ephesians 1:15-23 (esp. v. 21) and Colossians 2:9-15.
- Direct, authoritative prayer and Bible-reading should stir and agitate demonic spirits if they are present. Ask the person if they are hearing or feeling anything unusual when you read the Bible or speak of Jesus and his blood.

(4) *Explore the possibility of other than demonic causes*

- Never assume too quickly that the problem is demonically caused.
- Conduct an interview of sufficient depth that you explore the possibility of other potential sources for the problem such as: physiological (have they had a physical examination recently?), prescription medication (are they on any?), other organic causes, stress, fatigue, circumstantial issues, relational dynamics, etc.
- Be aware of the fact that even if the presenting problem is caused by something other than a demonic spirit, the Enemy can still aggravate, intensify, and exploit such factors.

(5) *Ask the right questions*

- Ask the person to give you a personal testimony of faith in Christ. Do they struggle in doing so? Are they able to affirm without agitation or hesitation their submission to the Lordship of Jesus?
- Ask the person if they experience any special hindrances when they engage in spiritual activities such as praying, reading the Bible, worship, etc.
- Ask the person if at any time he/she is feeling anger or hate toward you. Do they feel prompted to assault you either verbally or physically?
- Determine as best you can if any behavior or beliefs of the person may have opened the door to demonic activity. Focus particularly on *family history* (any involvement of ancestors in the

occult or unbiblical practices) and *personal sins* (idolatry, witchcraft, unforgiveness, sexual immorality, etc.). If something in particular is discovered, lead the person in a prayer of confession, repentance, and repudiation of whatever it is that may have led to demonic intrusion. In short, lead them in a prayer by which *they* close any doors that may have been opened.

(6) *Confront the Enemy*

- I have found the most effective strategy is to engage the person in eye-to-eye contact. Explain to them that whereas you will be looking at them, you will not be speaking to them. You will be addressing any demonic spirit that might be present.
- Look directly into their eyes and say: “In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and through the power of His shed blood and resurrection life, I take authority over any demonic spirit either present in or around _____ (name of person). In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I command any and every demonic spirit to leave _____ (name of person) and never return.”

Note: These commands and prayers for deliverance may take any number of forms. You may want to be specific in naming any sins which may have led to the problem. You may want to pray for the Holy Spirit to shine the light of revelation and truth into the person’s heart and mind, dispelling all darkness and confusion, etc. You may wish to pray prayers of protection over the person. Remember: the key is not in particular words or formulas, but in the simple, irresistible authority of the risen Christ in whose name you act.

- If there is a demon present, you can usually expect some form of resistance or physical manifestation. Encourage the person to report to you any impressions, thoughts, emotional impulses, physical sensations, voices, etc. that occur in the course of your prayer.

(7) *Assessment*

One of three things is true.

- The demon(s) really did leave. Its departure may be loud, violent, and visible, or silent, simple, and unseen. Don’t be too quick to draw conclusions about whether it left based on how the person felt or reacted. If you suspect it might still be present, repeat the above procedures.
- The demon(s) is still there. If it is still present, there are three possible reasons: (1) the person doesn’t want it to go; (2) the demon(s) has moral grounds for staying; or (3) this is an especially powerful demon that requires more prayer, faith, fasting, and concentrated effort on the part of all involved.
- The demon(s) was never there in the first place.

(8) *Concluding Prayer*

It might be helpful to close with a prayer such as this:

“Father, I thank you that _____ (name of person) is your child, redeemed by the blood of Christ Jesus, forgiven and justified by faith in His name, and indwelt by the precious and powerful Holy Spirit. Guard him/her. Protect him/her. Surround your child with your angelic hosts. Fill him/her with a renewed sense of your love and the peace that surpasses all understanding.”