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Bondage and Deliverance (Part 2)



Spiritual Warfare - Steve Gregg

Steve Gregg discusses the topic of demon possession and the authority of the Kingdom of God over the Kingdom of Darkness. He emphasizes the message of liberation and provides examples from the Bible that suggest indicators of demon possession, such as fiercely blasphemous behavior. While Gregg acknowledges the existence of demon possession, he also cautions against assuming that all erratic behavior is a result of demonic influence. Instead, he suggests that it is important to depend on God for discernment when dealing with this complex issue.

Transcript

This is our second session talking about the subject of demon possession. In order to put it in its biblical perspective, I'd like to turn your attention to Matthew Chapter 12. Matthew Chapter 12, verses 28 and 29.

Jesus in this place came under criticism because of casting out demons. Of course, it wasn't so much that casting out demons was a thing to be criticized, but it made such an impression on the people that Jesus' critics had to find some other explanation. Therefore, they said that he was casting out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of demons.

Jesus refuted that. As he refuted it, he made this comment in verses 28 and 29. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house? Now these statements go together, although they sometimes are quoted separately to make different points, but they are simply the development of one thought. That is to say, the kingdom of darkness has been supplanted by the kingdom of God. This is made evident by the fact that Jesus is casting out demons by the Spirit of God.

And to illustrate that this is in fact what is demonstrated by his doing so, he points out that you cannot enter into a house or a kingdom and plunder it, despoil it, if it is the house of a strong man, unless someone stronger has come and overpowered him, and in

this case he says, and has bound him. The point being that the powers of darkness, the kingdom of darkness, is greatly disabled by the coming in and the invasion forces of the kingdom of God, of which Jesus was the point man. And he came in and he bound the authority of the kingdom of darkness, disabling Satan from any ability on his part to prevent the kingdom of God from advancing, and the casting out of demons was simply the taking of the spoils of the house.

The binding was already accomplished, the spoiling of the house was in process, or progress. And so what he is saying is that my casting out of demons is proof positive that the kingdom of God has come and has replaced the authority of the kingdom of darkness, and that he who ruled the kingdom of darkness is now rendered, as it were, impotent, in terms of any efforts he may have to try to hinder the advance movement of the kingdom's activities. You know, in the Old Testament, Isaiah complained that there was no deliverance for God's people who had been taken into captivity.

In the context, he was talking, I believe, about the Babylonian captivity and the Jewish people. However, so many of the things in the Old Testament that have to do with war and captivity and so forth serve as types of spiritual realities. I can't help think that the words that Isaiah spoke on this occasion have at least a correspondence to the spiritual realm as well.

In Isaiah chapter 42, it says in verse 22, Isaiah 42 and verse 22, But this is a people robbed and plundered. All of them are snared in holes, and they are hidden in prison houses. They are for prey, and no one delivers.

They are for plunder, and no one says, restore. That is, there is no one coming to their aid, commanding their captors to restore them to freedom. There is no one who is coming to their rescue.

They are trapped. They are in prison houses. They are plundered.

This is the state of the human race, really. I mean, Isaiah may have had in mind particularly the Jews and their captivity, but in the spiritual realm, this is the case with the human race as a whole. Plundered by the enemy.

Robbed. Captured. In prison.

But Jesus came to that prison house, and he captured the jailer, and bound him, and disarmed him, and simply went through and opened the doors, and released the captives. And that was what Jesus began to do. That is what Jesus did because he could, and that is what we continue to do because he did.

And therefore, the casting out of demons for the church, as it was with Christ, is a carrying out of the same mission, the advance of the kingdom of God, which was planted like a small mustard seed in Jesus' day, and has grown ever since into a great tree, or

like a little stone growing into a great mountain. But as it does so, it vanquishes and conquers territories that formerly were held by other powers. Jesus said in Mark chapter 16 and verse 17, these signs shall follow those who believe.

In my name they shall cast out demons. Therefore, Christians are commissioned to find those who are still in the prison house. Jesus has provided the key and an open door, but you know what, if a person is hallucinating that the door is shut, even if the door is open, they remain a prisoner.

The door is open, the pardon is signed by the king, but if people never walk out of the prison, they live and die prisoners. They are deceived. It is the devil's task to keep them deceived.

You know, in the book, *Eternity in Their Hearts*, Don Richardson documents a number of very fascinating cases of missionary experience where, this has not so much to do with demon possession, but it is interestingly related to what I am saying, missionaries sometimes would come to peoples who had never been evangelized at all, had had no exposure to the gospel from Christian missionaries, and yet they would find that these people already, although they worshipped idols and demons, they knew, they knew because their ancestors had known, and there was some vague memory of the fact that there is a true God, and that this true God is not these demons that they were worshipping. And yet they told the missionaries, some of them after they were converted, they said, the reason we still worship the demons, even though we knew they were not the true God, is that we were afraid that if we worshipped the true God, the demons might punish us. And therefore, we had to pacify them.

And this is the mentality of the pagan. They don't know that the demons can't punish you if you are a servant of God. Now to the extent that you are not serving God, maybe then you are vulnerable, but if you are wholly committed to God, the demons simply cannot do you significant harm.

They may afflict you in body or in some other way, but they cannot do you harm in any way that matters. And therefore, we have a message of liberation. This is a liberation movement that Jesus started.

He said to his disciples in Luke chapter 10, and beginning at verse 17, we read there of the disciples returning from one of their short-term outreaches. It says, Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name. And he said to them, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. That is, the ability to cast out demons, great as that may seem, is

really eclipsed by the much greater marvel that we are citizens of heaven and that we have our own salvation.

And this should be the thing in which we rejoice. Don't rejoice in the fact that the demons are subject to you. I wonder why not.

It seems like that's something to rejoice in too. Maybe Jesus means, don't only rejoice in this, but also rejoice that your names are written in heaven. Or maybe he means rejoice far more that your names are written in heaven than in the fact that demons are subject to you.

Or maybe what he's saying is, don't let your rejoicing be in your victory over demons, because, by the way, that is not something that is always about, you don't always get the same results. But if your rejoicing is in the fact that your name is written in heaven, that's a constant that will never fail you. It's something that you can always rejoice in.

In any case, we do see this. Jesus promised his disciples that he was giving authority to trample on serpents and scorpions and all the power of the enemy. Since this was uttered to the 70 and not merely to the 12, I am assuming that his words apply to Christians generally.

There are some things Jesus said to the 12 and gave them special authority and special commission that other people don't have, but this was uttered to the 70, which is a much more varied group and not necessarily all apostles. So I suppose that we can take that as a promise to all Christians generally. Now, there are several practical issues that I believe need to be asked and answered if we're going to have any kind of effect in casting demons out of people.

One thing, of course, we need to realize is that not everybody who is unsaved is demon-possessed. I mean, there are people who are unsaved and are not demon-possessed. They may be under control of the devil in some measure, but they are not experiencing the phenomenon that we call or that the Bible refers to as demon possession.

Remember in our last session I said it's not the easiest thing in the world to define demon possession because the word demonized or daimonizomai or daimonizomai would be is a word that we don't have any real obvious interpretation for except based upon its usage. And when you read of its various occurrences in the New Testament and consider what is being described there, the impression is that a wide variety of circumstances that a person may find himself in may be described as being daimonizomai, demonized. And that being so, it apparently is not just the case that one very specific obvious condition is what is always referred to by that title.

Furthermore, I pointed out that there appear to be various degrees of severity. There are people who function more or less normally in society, but they have a physical handicap

until the demon is cast out. And then they don't have even that abnormality.

There are people who don't have physical handicaps, but have erratic behavior occasionally. There are others who seem to be so thoroughly dominated by demons that they never have a sane moment. These, I believe, since they're all called by the same name, daimonizomai, that these must be different degrees or species of the condition.

And so I'm not going to suggest that I know every case that we could describe as such a case of being daimonized. I will say this, though. I feel more comfortable using another terminology that is found in scripture of daemonic control in the life of the believer.

And that is the word bondage or slavery. A person who is daimonized is in some measure enslaved. And I've already said about the general topic of spiritual warfare that insofar as we lack truth, we are not free.

So that bondage to error and bondage to the devil are experienced in some degree by most people, but we wouldn't necessarily equate this with being daimonized. But I think the cases that we would call daimonized are probably extreme cases where the bondage has taken on a greater dimension. But deliverance from bondage is the same.

It comes through the same warfare. It comes through the same truth, through the same authority as any other kind of release from bondage. If you look at 2 Timothy 2, verses 24 through 26, Paul said to Timothy, And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel, but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient in humility, correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive or into bondage by him to do his will.

People need to be gotten out of captivity. Now, it sounds like Paul is indicating that everybody who opposes the gospel is in some measure a captive, needs to be freed from captivity. There is in some measure a bondage in all persons whose lives are not under the authority of Christ.

In Hebrews chapter 2, verses 14 and 15, Hebrews 2, verses 14 and 15, it says, Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared in the same, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetimes subject to bondage. We talked about this verse on an earlier occasion, that Jesus through his death came that he might release those who had been subject to bondage. To whom? Well, to the devil, who was destroyed at the cross.

And therefore, those whom the devil had kept in bondage through fear of death, could be set free. Now once again, this is not referring specifically to people who have a condition that we would call demon possession, just sinners in general, just people who

were slaves of sin. But I think that bondage to the enemy can take on a variety of forms.

It seems to me that bondage may come simply from allowing oneself to be deceived on a particular point, and acting upon that misinformation on a regular basis. In so doing, a person acts under the influence, as it were, of demonic deception. It seems to me that such deception may be only in some small area of the life, but there may be several small areas of the life, or a lot of them, or a lot of big areas of the life.

It seems to me that whether a Christian or a non-Christian is subject to it, it would be the same thing that a Christian is in bondage in so far as that Christian is deceived. Now this is not the same thing as demonization, maybe. It's hard to say for sure.

But it seems to me that eventually, if enough of the territory in a person's soul is under bondage, then that person is almost entirely under the control of evil forces and demons. At some point, I believe the Bible would make the distinction between a demon being in a person and not being in a person. The Bible nowhere specifies exactly at what point that threshold is crossed.

It seems that a person might be very much harmed by demonic powers from external attack, and from deception whispered in the ear, as it were. But there's perhaps a different situation described when the demon actually comes to live inside. Now, do we really have biblical warrant for saying that demons live inside of people? I think so, although it's not always the case that demonized people are said to have the demon in them.

But we do know of cases where Jesus and the Apostle Paul in addressing demonized people told the demon to come out of them, which suggests that the demon was in them. In one particular place, Jesus said in Matthew chapter 12 that when a demon goes out of a man, he travels over waterless places seeking rest, and finding none, he comes back, and if he finds his house empty and swept and garnished, he brings back seven worse demons than himself. And it says the latter state of that man is worse than the first.

This is Matthew 12, verses 43 through 45. It specifically refers to the person, the demonized person, as the house, which the demon is expelled from and comes back to and moved back into. It's imagery, of course, but nonetheless, the house image suggests that the demon lives inside some people.

The Bible nowhere says exactly how it is that demonic bondage, which exists probably in some small measure in almost everybody, insofar as we all have some wrong ideas, we all have some beliefs that are not fully based upon Scripture, more than we are aware. Yet, the Bible doesn't tell when demonic bondage crosses that threshold into the devil actually moving in, a demon actually living inside of a person. It would appear that the cases in Scripture where demonization is the term that is used, generally speaking, are

those where the demon has come to live inside.

Now, I don't really know if a person has the demon living inside is in worse condition than someone could conceivably be who is continually tormented by demons on the outside, but it does seem to be a category of its own where the demon has to be made to leave, has to be told to come out, at least that is the pattern of Scripture. Such is usually referred to as exorcism. Now, not necessarily in the Bible, but in language generally, we speak of the casting out of demons or the expelling of demons from a person as an exorcism.

The Jews, even before the time of Christ, had exorcists who attempted to cast out demons. Many pagan religions have their exorcists as well. The Catholic Church throughout its history has had exorcists.

And I know of some Protestant denominations, I think Anglicans and a few others have an order in their church of exorcists. I guess they consider it to be like a special calling or a special career or something, going around casting out demons. In the charismatic realm today, there are people who are said to have a deliverance ministry.

This is another word for what used to be called or sometimes are called exorcists. Now, I don't really know if the Bible says that there is such a thing as legitimate exorcists in the sense of a special class of people in the church set aside to go around casting out demons. I do know that some people have greater discernment of demons than others do.

There is a gift of discerning of spirits that not everybody apparently has in equal measure. I remember thinking in my teenage years when I first became aware of demons, I really wished that I had the gift of discerning of spirits because I felt that if I had it, I could just tell whenever I was around a demon-possessed person that they were in fact possessed and I could just cast all the demons out of everyone I run into. I even imagined going into mental hospitals where I assumed there were probably a number of demon-possessed people.

I'm not saying everyone in those hospitals is demon-possessed, but the people who are demon-possessed usually end up in those kinds of places in our society. I thought I could probably go in there and if I could just discern who had a demon and who didn't, I could just cast out those demons and it would be all that easy. I was a bit naive.

First of all, I'm not so sure that a person with the discerning of spirits, as Paul uses the term, necessarily has the gift of being able to always tell when demons are present. In fact, Paul uses that term in close association with the gift of prophecy. The word discernment or discerning there is the same word that's used elsewhere of the need to judge prophecy.

I'm not sure if discerning of spirits is anything else than the gift of being able to assess the legitimacy of prophecy. I may have been wrong in the first place as to what the discerning of spirits even is, but the second thing is I assumed that if all it would take is to know there's a demon in that person, I could just cast it out in the name of Jesus. I found out that that's not always as easy as it sounds.

I have, in fact, in my life, cast out a few demons, I believe successfully, and I have attempted to cast out demons on occasions where I know I was not successful. I don't know why I wasn't successful, but I know I was not, so I'm not as naive as I used to be and I do think that every time you meet a demon-possessed person, it's just so simple as you just cast out the demon. We will talk a little later about why sometimes it doesn't work, but I don't really know that the Bible says that there are a class of Christians who are exorcists or who have deliverance ministry.

As it seems to me, Jesus said to the 70, all of them, I give you authority to trample on serpents and scorpions. All of the 70 were coming back claiming that the demons were subject to them. This was probably the total number of followers of Christ at the time.

Therefore, I'm of the opinion that, although I can't be certain about this, that there probably are not people who are specially called to deliverance ministry. I say I can't be certain because maybe there are some and I don't know it. I do think, however, a lot of abuses have occurred in that realm.

Now, you people are young enough, most of you, that you probably weren't around in the heyday of deliverance ministries. The heyday of deliverance ministries was in the late 70s, at least in California. California is usually the first to get these weird things and then they spread out from there all over the country and the world.

Deliverance ministries had their heyday in the mid to late 70s. There were people in most charismatic circles who were holding special meetings for deliverance. Virtually everybody who came in the door was handed a barf bag because it was a given.

If you came to the meeting, you were going to get demons cast out and you were probably going to vomit them out so you had better have a barf bag. Literally. They would hand out barf bags to everyone in the meeting.

Then the person who was conducting the meeting who was thought to have a ministry in deliverance would begin to command demons to come out and people all over the room would start gagging and coughing and vomiting and falling on the floor and so forth. It's an amazing thing. Virtually everybody was thought to have demons, Christian or otherwise, and almost all of them were thought to need exorcism.

Although they didn't use that term very often. Deliverance was the term more commonly used. It was not uncommon in those days to begin to suspect every aberration of

behavior, every nervous tick.

Everything was caused by demon possession. Among those who were especially into it, this became a real rage. It was a real rage in the 70s.

I knew a guy who had one of his deliverance ministry guys staying in his home while he was conducting meetings locally. My friend was sitting in the living room with him and my friend just kind of cracked his knuckles like this, you know, just kind of stretching out and cracked his knuckles and the guy said, how long have you been doing that? And implied that the guy had a demon of knuckle cracking. I had another friend who saw an advertisement in a Christian magazine for a Christian magazine somewhere down in Texas.

My friend hitchhiked down there and arrived there to go to this discipleship school and when he arrived he had hitchhiked through Arizona and Texas and stuff and he was kind of hot and sweaty and greasy and a little bit long-haired and his clothes were kind of dirty and they told him he had a demon of long hair and a demon of stinkiness and a demon of dirt, I think, too, if I'm not mistaken. I mean, there literally got to be such excesses that everything was considered to be demonic if the light bulb burned out. I mean, people literally talk as if you turn on the faucets in the kitchen and demons will come out.

And there were some who, this is no exaggeration, it got to be that everything that was a problem in the Christian's life was considered to be a demon. In reaction to this, there were many who didn't buy into this and they began to say, no, none of this stuff is demonic. You'd hear people talking about having a demon of lust and a demon of pornography and a spirit of anger and a spirit of whatever, you know, various things.

And it was considered by some that if you just get this demon of lust cast out, you wouldn't have any more problems with lust or immorality. But those who did not buy into this idea, typically, in my opinion, pendulum swung and reacted to it and they said, no, none of that stuff is demonic. That's all the works of the flesh.

All you have to do is read Galatians 5 and you can see what the works of the flesh are and they are sorcery and immorality and blasphemy and fits of rage and so forth. These are not demonic. These are just the flesh.

Now, frankly, I think that in the time when this issue was so volatile and people were taking sides against each other in it, it occurred to me that maybe both sides were a little extreme. The Bible certainly does not say that there is such a thing as a demon of anger or a demon of lust or a demon of pornography or a demon of alcoholism or anything like that, but the Bible also does not say that there isn't. I don't know whether such demons exist.

I don't know whether there are demons of these particular things. But simply to quote the scripture that says these are works of the flesh does not, to my mind, rule out the possibility that demons may get involved in there, too. I mean, a person, Christian or otherwise, struggles with the flesh and demons simultaneously.

Generally speaking, and the world, too. And just to say that the flesh lusts after these things does not mean that demons would never come alongside to encourage the flesh or to bring the flesh into bondage. The Bible seems to say that when a person submits to sin, they become by stages more in bondage to sin.

And if that is so, I will give you a scripture for that. There is not only one, but this is one, just to establish a point before I go further. In 2 Peter chapter 2, talking about certain false teachers, Peter says, in verse 19, these false teachers, it says, While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption.

For by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. Now, if you are overcome by sin, then you become in bondage to sin. And if you are overcome by temptation and by deception and by demonic influence, it seems to me that in some measure you become in bondage to that.

At least temporarily. I am not saying that freedom isn't available. And that bondage could easily take the form of works of the flesh, although I am not saying it must.

I am just saying there is nothing in the Bible that forbids it. I think that the deliverance controversy served the enemy well because it made people who took demons seriously look ridiculous and caused people who wanted to be more biblical to distance themselves from the excesses almost to the point of denying the activity of demons altogether. And as C.S. Lewis made clear in his book *Screwtape Letters* in the Introduction, he said the two errors that people make about the devil, on the one hand, is to become overly fascinated with him, and on the other hand to deny his existence altogether.

And it seems like the deliverance controversy in the 70s tended to make the church polarize into these two tendencies. On one hand, people made the devil everything, and on the other hand, they almost denied that the devil has any activity in the life of the believer at all. It seems that the Scripture at least allows us to consider that bondage to the enemy takes many forms.

One of those forms actually includes a demon living inside of a person needing to be cast out. And we need to take that into consideration. But how do we know if a person, a particular person, has a demon? Are there any ways of knowing for sure that somebody actually is possessed? Well, the Bible, as I said earlier, doesn't really give a catalog of symptoms anywhere.

But let me just give you some ideas here. Some of them are actual cases from anecdotes in Scripture of demonized behavior, and some come a little bit from cases that missionaries have noted. But I'm going to try to stick pretty close to the ones that the Scripture would seem to confirm.

There is one man in the Bible who was actually possessed by Satan himself. The devil entered him. And that was Judas.

That man hanged himself. And it may be inferred, although I don't want to infer more than can be inferred, but it may be inferred from this that at least one way that demon possession may manifest itself is in suicide or suicidal tendencies. In this book about Blumhart's battle that I told you about last time, the girl in question, in the midst of the period of time that she was being afflicted and undergoing deliverance through this guy's labors, she ran up to the attic and almost jumped out the window.

In fact, she caught herself and didn't do that. And then all of a sudden she took a rope and she made a noose and tied it to the rafters and almost hung herself. But then she kind of snapped out of it and didn't.

And when she came to her senses and she saw it, she realized she could never have tied a noose in her right mind so skillfully as it was tied. It was totally done under the influence of the demons. Now, I realize that that is something based on an experience, not based on a specific scripture.

But we do have a biblical case of Judas of whom it specifically says Satan entered him. And we know that he committed suicide. Whether that was the devil's inspiration in his life to commit suicide or not, we can't be sure.

But I think that if a person is suicidal, it's the devil who is the one who definitely wants to destroy, to rob and to kill and to destroy. And I suppose that it should not be surprising if a demon-possessed person has suicidal tendencies at times. It may be that we should be cautious and not assume that every suicidal person has demons.

But we don't want to be so cautious as to rule out suicidal tendencies as an indicator that someone might be so afflicted. Another thing that is found in scripture, this is in the most severe case recorded in scripture. In Matthew chapter 8, the man who lived among the tombs in Matthew 8, 28 it says when Jesus had come to the other side of the lake to the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two demon-possessed men coming out of the tombs exceedingly fierce so that no one could pass that way.

There was a fierceness, a violence of behavior. These men were very aggressive and fierce and violent so much that they terrorized the region. They apparently didn't go into town and bother people but people steered clear of them.

They were afraid of them because they were so fierce. I have faced demon-obsessed

people who manifested tremendous fierceness. I remember in Santa Cruz when we were running a coffeehouse on the street for street people there was a particular guy who came one time and he was just really, I mean without any provocation, he was just totally angry and fierce and threatening.

I remember he was holding a rock that he picked up out of a planter nearby. I think it was just an ordinary rock but he kept calling it his magma. He was kind of, he was whacked out.

But he got right in my face, like inches from my face. He was shouting and screaming. His eyes were wild and he had this magma in his hand.

He kept threatening he was going to hit me with this thing which it seemed to me he could possibly have done if not restrained by God. But I wasn't really very afraid because I knew that this man was demonized. There was no question about it.

I did rebuke the demon. I told it to be quiet and I told him to come out. The demon I think did not come out but it did have to be quiet and eventually the man calmed down briefly.

But this man, I mean you can tell unless you're overly skeptical about such things. You can tell by the countenance of some people and the expression on their face and the wild and fierce look in their eyes. Let's just put it this way.

Many times if a person is demonized you can see it in their face. I'm not going to say that every time you see someone whose face scares you a little bit that you're looking at a demon possessed person. But I'm saying that there is something terrifying about some cases of demon possession.

Now these symptoms don't all occur in every case. There's a man who wanders around on 3rd Street and in this town that some of you have encountered that I'm quite sure is demonized. And he's kind of a weird case.

But he's got kind of a fierce countenance about him and kind of a fierce manner. I don't know that he's ever done anyone harm. I'm not really sure that demon possessed people end up doing very much physical harm to anyone but themselves.

But they sometimes seem like they're awfully hostile and awfully fierce and violent type people. Perhaps something more obvious as an indicator of demonic powers or demonic possession is demonic powers. When a person has supernatural powers and if it's not the power of God then it can be assumed that it is the power of Satan.

Paul and Silas and Timothy encountered a woman in Philippi recorded in Acts chapter 16 who was able to tell fortunes until the demon was cast out of her then she couldn't. It was a demonic possession that allowed her to function in this supernatural knowledge which she was not able to continue once she was delivered. It got Paul and Silas in

trouble and thrown into jail because they made this woman incapable of making her masters a living anymore.

But in Acts 16.16 we read of it. Now it happened as we went to prayer that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us who brought her masters much profit by fortune telling. This girl followed Paul and us and cried out saying these men are the servants of the Most High God who proclaim to us the way of salvation.

And this she did for many days but Paul greatly annoyed turned and said to the spirit I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out that very hour. But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities and then they were later put in prison.

Now here is a case where a girl had the ability to divine, to tell fortunes, she was clairvoyant. And this power was given by a demon. When the demon came out she no longer possessed this power.

The man of the tombs himself we read was supernaturally strong. In Acts chapter 8 where the story of that man is told in Luke chapter 8 verse 29 it says that he had often been chained with fetters and yet he had broken the chains and no chains could hold him. That's supernatural strength.

A demon possessed person may not always exhibit supernatural strength but when you see such supernatural abilities in a person who is not a person of God not operating through the power of God pretty good indicator you are dealing with a person who is possessed by demons. One of the things that seems to be associated with demonic possession is blasphemy. When a person curses God and curses Jesus the name of Jesus very hostile in their language in their abuse of God and of Jesus.

This can be, I think frequently is one of the indicators of demon possession. Once again a person is quite capable of blaspheming without being demon possessed but it is one of those things that is aggravated or a more aggravated behavior in a demon possessed person. Jesus when he was accused of blaspheming was accused at the same time of having a demon.

Now this is his enemy speaking so you might say we can't trust their opinion about things. But as a matter of fact they had encountered demon possessed people before. The Jews had their exorcists.

They knew of the phenomenon of demon possession. And they were of course mistaken in suggesting that Jesus was blaspheming. He was not blaspheming.

But because they judged him to be blaspheming they considered he must therefore have a demon. They obviously in their minds associated demon possession with blasphemy

from whatever experience they had with the phenomenon. We read of this for example in John 8, 52 and 53.

Then the Jews said to him, now we know that you have a demon. Abraham is dead and the prophets and you say if anyone keeps my word he shall never taste death. Are you greater than our father Abraham who is dead? And the prophets who are dead? Who do you make yourself out to be? They clearly were implying that his statements about himself were blasphemous.

And therefore said now we know you've got a demon. I mean this kind of blasphemy must be demonic. While we don't have any actual statements from reliable sources in scripture saying that blasphemy is a normative demonic manifestation we do know that blasphemy is associated with the power of Satan in a man's life in at least two other places.

In 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 in speaking about the man of sin who comes as it says according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. It says that in verse 9. It says of that same individual in verse 4 that he opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped so that he sits as God in the temple of God showing himself that he is God. This is blasphemy.

That's in fact the very blasphemy that the Jews accused Jesus of doing claiming to be God which of course he was God but the fact is them not accepting his testimony considered that to be blasphemy. That this demonized individual this man of sin in the power of Satan is characterized very predominantly by blasphemous claims. In Revelation 13 where we read of the beast once again without endeavoring at this point to identify who the beast might be we can say this much the beast in Revelation is an embodiment of Satan It says of the beast in verse 5 and he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies and he was given authority to continue 42 months.

Now again none of these passages specifically say that demon possessed people necessarily blaspheme but you can see that the Jews thought of blasphemy as a sign of demon possession and they were not unaware of cases that they had encountered of demon possession and both the man of sin and the beast who are clearly embodiments of Satan or of Satan's power they are said to be blasphemers it seems that when you find someone who is fiercely blasphemous that may perhaps along with other data go into the data bank to yield the conclusion that we may be looking at a person demon possessed in a case like this. Now there's a range of behaviors that we might generally just call insane which are found in demon possessed people sometimes in scripture the man who leaped up in the synagogue when Jesus began speaking the man who had been sitting quietly and normal until then and began saying we know who you are Jesus you've come to torment us before the time etc. etc.

what would we call that man today if we weren't apprised of the existence of demon

possession there's no question about it he'd be called paranoid schizophrenic I mean any psychiatrist that got this man on his couch would call him a paranoid schizophrenic I mean it's classic but the man in the tombs was even worse he was plain psychotic you know insane you know out to lunch kind of a guy all kinds of things that today might be classified as insanity or mental disorders I have in biblical times been associated with demon possession in Matthew 17 and verse 15 a man was describing his son's condition and he said Lord have mercy on my son for he is an epileptic and he suffers severely for he often falls into the fire and into the water now here it calls him epileptic actually in the Greek the word that is used here is lunatic the word lunatic comes from the word lunar has to do with the moon it was thought in ancient times that an insane person was moon struck just as the moon would affect the tides it would affect the moods and the sanity of certain people maybe this is where the idea of you know werewolves you know coming out when it's a full moon came from I don't know but whatever the source of those kinds of legends ancient people thought that people who were nuts were moon struck affected by the moon therefore the word that is used here in the Greek the man says my son is afflicted by a demon he is moon struck and the word in English that means that is lunatic in other words the man was acting in a bizarre or the young boy we don't know his age insane sort of a way now I believe there are other causes of what we might call insane behavior besides demon possession I will not say that everybody who is classified as insane necessarily has a demon you know you can act you can come you can act very bizarrely very erratically even if you are quite sane under certain conditions too much sleep loss over an extended period of time can make you totally irrational most of you probably know there are cases that the counselors know where someone hasn't slept for five days or something like that and they just talk just the same way a demon possessed person does but give them enough sleep and they are normal and there are other things that might make people act irrationally or bizarrely but certainly when we read of demon possession many of the cases I can't say all of them not all of them but many of the cases in scripture their behavior was what we today would call clinically insane and so things like lunacy paranoia schizophrenia those are the words that are used nowadays those kinds of diagnoses today in many cases are probably applied to people who are really possessed by demons I wouldn't necessarily apply that too generally to everything that is called a mental illness because almost everything that is not normal is called mental illness these days but certainly cases of schizophrenia where a person is hearing voices telling them to kill themselves and things like that where they have multiple personalities in some cases to tell you the truth I have no doubt in my mind that we have demon possession in those cases not that I am the final authority on it but I would proceed in such cases on the assumption that we are looking at demon possession in cases like that then of course in addition to all of those things I have mentioned all of which are behavioral things we talked about suicidal tendencies and aggressive, fierce, violent behavior occult powers supernatural strength blasphemies insanity these things are all behavioral things there is yet another category of demonized people in scripture that don't necessarily have any of those symptoms or if

they do the scripture is silent on it and those are as I mentioned earlier people who have merely physical disabilities physical handicaps but they are caused by demons look at for example Matthew chapter 12 in verse 22 it says in Matthew 12, 22 then one was brought to him who was demon possessed blind and mute and he healed him so that the blind and the mute man both spoke and saw now it specifies he was demonized but it doesn't indicate this man's behavior was anything remarkable there's no signs of insanity here there's no signs of fierceness or blasphemy or any of that the man is simply blind and mute he's disabled he's handicapped he's got a physical disability and this is caused by demons when the demons are ejected then the man is no longer blind or mute remarkable in Mark chapter 9 which is talking about the son again of that man who brought his son to Jesus' disciples the way Mark's gospel reads it in Mark 9, 25 it says when Jesus saw that the people came running together he rebuked the unclean spirit saying to it deaf and dumb spirit I command you to come out of him and enter him no more now this is the same spirit that in Matthew is called the lunatic spirit that casts the boy into water and fire sometimes this is just Mark's version of the same story we have here the information that the boy was not only affected by spells of lunacy or fits which modern translations sometimes call epilepsy but he also had the physical problem of deaf mute or blind mute what do you say here deaf and dumb spirit so here we have behavioral as well as physical symptoms associated with it there is a case in Luke chapter 13 of a woman again in her case there is no behavioral symptoms that are mentioned but she is merely physically bent over and cannot stand upright in Luke 13, 11 in 12 it says and behold there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity 18 years and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up but when Jesus saw her he called her to him and said to her woman you are loosed from your infirmity and when Jesus explained this to a critic a few verses later in verse 16 he says so ought not this woman being a daughter of Abraham whom Satan has bound think of it for 18 years be loosed of this bond on the Sabbath this woman had a spirit of infirmity she was bound by Satan but she was set free she was loosed, she was delivered but what was it that Satan bound her in not in her behavior as far as we know but in simply her physical ability to stand up she was bent over and so I conclude from this that demon possession is not always able to be diagnosed from behavior it may be in some cases that only the only effect that a demonic bondage has brought in a person's life is physical one of the few people that I feel was successfully delivered from demons through my ministry when I was younger was a Christian guy I mean he was a professing Christian I just give him the benefit of the doubt that he was a Christian God knows but he was in the Navy in San Diego but he came up from time to time to Orange County where I live about 90 miles north came to some Bible studies I was teaching he came to me once just on a visit when it wasn't a Bible study he came and told me that he believed he might be might have demons and so we shared to make a long story short I prayed for him it seemed that he got delivered but one thing that was interesting about it his behavior is what tipped me off that he probably had demons some of the things he said were very telltale of what demons often say through people and some of his behavior had been very irrational and erratic and

unexplainable and he thought maybe it was demonic and once I ministered to him he did experience with a bit of shaking a deliverance after which he sensed that he was set free one thing that was interesting though is that before I ministered to him I found out that he was hypoglycemic now people who have hypoglycemia sometimes act a little nutty depending on their blood sugar level or whatever some people in that condition have been known to get violent get irrational or whatever briefly and when he was telling me he thought he had demons but I found out through talking to him that he was hypoglycemic I figured, oh no he doesn't have a demon he's just hypoglycemic I'd heard of other cases of people who are hypoglycemic who said weird things and did weird things and so forth, and I thought, oh this isn't demonic this is just hypoglycemia but he was convinced that it was more than that and so I did minister to him and in fact he did experience something that appeared to be a deliverance and I told him to test his blood sugar and he did and it was normal that he apparently I don't know, I don't want to jump to conclusions, I'm certainly not a medical doctor but my impression is that the hypoglycemia was caused by a spirit and when the spirit left the physical condition left also now that may be a very uninformed, unscholarly diagnosis of the situation, I wouldn't want anyone to decide for or against surgery on the basis of my medical diagnosis but that is the impression I had from it. I wonder sometimes if the behavior of hypoglycemics which seems so insane sometimes it's not so much that the hypoglycemia causes the behavior but something else causes both the hypoglycemia and the behavior, but not always so, I mean there are hypoglycemics who don't behave strangely my dilemma whenever I consider this particular kind of symptoms is in knowing that there are people who are blind who don't have a blind spirit and there are people who are deaf and dumb who don't have a deaf and dumb spirit, and there are people who are bent over who don't have a spirit of infirmity, and there are people who are hypoglycemic who don't have a demon, there are epileptics who don't have demons as near as I can tell these things are all capable of being caused by demons in some cases but they are also capable of being caused without demons in other cases and so I'm suggesting that while the only evidence of demon possession in some cases might be in the form of physical conditions, yet those same physical conditions are not by themselves proof of demon possession and that makes it very hard sometimes to know whether such a case is or is not a case of demon possession. I suppose it never hurts to treat it as if it is.

If someone wants to be prayed for, ministered to, I don't think there's anything to be lost by commanding demons to come out even if they aren't there. You know, you wouldn't lose anything if they weren't there to hear you and if they were there to hear you, maybe you've gained a great deal. I have to say that to a certain degree, the dealing with demons is, in my life, still on the experimental basis.

I still don't always know for sure when I'm dealing with a case of demon possession. I've on a number of occasions been called by somebody whose wife or friend or other relative

they believe was demon possessed and they claimed had done and said all kinds of things that proved to them that they were possessed. Where I was brought in and asked to pray for them and deal with them, which I did, I came, but in cases like this many times I saw no evidence of possession while I was there.

So I didn't even know if I was really dealing with a demon. I didn't see any evidence of deliverance either. I didn't know if demons were or were not present.

And it's sometimes very hard to know. One reason it's hard to know is because, according to scripture, demon possession sometimes is manifested in fits. The term that we usually use is manifestations.

I don't know if this term is actually from the Bible necessarily, but it's a term that's come into fairly frequent use among Christians that a demon is manifesting. If a person has a demon, they might be sitting quite nicely one moment in their right mind and then suddenly the demon manifests and they act very bizarrely. We know that, for instance, that was the case with the boy whose father brought him to Jesus disciples and then eventually to Jesus.

The boy was walking up to be prayed for, to be answered to, and when the demon in him saw Jesus, it threw him into a convulsion. Anyone who has dealt with demon-possessed people, or even when you read about it in the Bible, you can see that demon-possessed people most of the time, except in the more really extreme cases or severe cases, they are not all the time affected. They are affected some of the time and not at other times.

And there are two theories on this. One is that the demons come and they go. Sometimes the demon comes and they have a fit and then the demon goes and the fit ends.

That's one interpretation. And the other interpretation, as I mentioned in the last class, is that the demon is there all the time in a demon-possessed person, but sometimes comes, as it were, to the surface and manifests its presence. And having done so, then after that, it submerges again in the personality somewhere where it doesn't appear that the person is possessed anymore, even though the demon may be there.

I cannot say on biblical authority which view is correct, although it does seem to me that demon-possessed people have the demon living in them permanently. Maybe I'm bringing those assumptions to the text. I don't know if the Bible specifically says that the demons are always there in the person or they come and go.

And as I said in our last class, perhaps both scenarios apply to different cases. But it's hard when someone tells you that their wife or their child has been giving clear manifestations of demon possession. They call you in and you get there and they're acting quite normal.

And you spend four or five hours commanding demons to come out of them and praying with them and nothing happens. Nothing good, nothing bad. You don't see any manifestation of demons and you don't see any manifestation of deliverance.

You walk out scratching your head saying, what's going on? Was this really a genuine case or not? I've had to ask myself that many times because it is not always easy to know when you're looking at a case of genuine demon possession. To a certain degree, I think we have to depend on God giving discernment about it. We just read a moment ago about a woman who followed Paul and Silas around Philippi for three days.

And every day she was shouting out, these are men of God, these are messengers of God, they bring us the message of the way of salvation. Nothing about those words coming out of her mouth that would tip you off that she was filled with a demon. I mean, she's saying things that are more or less right, in fact, very right.

And Paul permitted it for about three days. But after three days, it says he got vexed, he got angry, and he turned and commanded the Spirit to come out. Well, why did he wait three days? Why didn't he do that earlier? I don't know.

Luke doesn't tell us why. But I'm of the impression that very possibly Paul wasn't sure himself. Is this a demon possessed person or not? I mean, there's a woman in the crowd who keeps saying positive things about his preaching.

He might have had some discomfort about it. Maybe it's a little disruptive or something. Maybe he thought she was a little overzealous.

But he didn't cast a demon out of her until three days later. And when he decided to do it, it was easy enough to do. Why didn't he do it sooner? I suspect Paul himself wasn't quite sure.

And I think finally he just discerned, yeah, that's a demon. And I think that I told you some days ago about my first experience with a demon possessed girl. I didn't know what the symptoms of demon possession were.

But when she was brought to me for help, the person who brought her didn't say she was demon possessed. It just came to my mind, this person is demon possessed. And I was an entire novice in it.

But I just, it's like I discerned it. It's almost as if God kind of told me, you're dealing with a demon possessed person here. So I didn't know what to do.

But I then knew what I was dealing with. And I suspect that once we've cataloged all the symptoms we're capable of cataloging and possible indicators of demon possession, it's in the final analysis that boils down to God really making it clear to you. God spiritually giving you the discernment that this is a case of demon possession.

Now, having discussed symptoms and how we might know or might suspect that someone's demon possessed, let's move on to another consideration. How do people get possessed in the first place? I didn't just now. No, I didn't.

And the reason I didn't is because the Bible doesn't give examples of that. But I'm glad you brought it up because that's a very common symptom that many missionaries and other people with experience in it have had. I mentioned that Pastor Blumhart dealing with this girl, she spoke in several voices, different languages.

And he said there's no question, but that that was not her own voice. Not only was the tone of voice different, but just speech patterns were very different and so forth. And sometimes the language was different.

Now, this is one of those things where we cannot point to a scripture that says demon possessed people sometimes speak with other voices. But I will say that from reading much experience from people who have dealt with demons, and I'm not sure that I've heard other voices. I've heard things come from the mouths of demon possessed people that I'm sure were the demons own words.

So I can't recall if I knew the person well enough to discern whether that was another voice. But I've heard from very credible, very sober sources that it's very common for demons to speak out of a person using their own vocal apparatus, but speaking a totally different voice, maybe a different language. Sometimes a man's, a deep, gruff man's voice coming out of a woman who's got a very high voice herself.

Just things that are very clearly not that person doing it. And that is another thing. Yeah, I thank you Matt for bringing that up because I was limiting my list to things that you can find in scripture.

But there are other things that I think you need to be aware of that could easily be just as validly indicators. I would say that when I'm dealing with a person who has foreign voices speaking out of them that are not their own voice, it's one of those things that almost certainly, you know, I mean I have no question in my mind this is a demon speaking out, unless they're playing a trick. But sometimes it's just not possible that the person can be doing it themselves.

There are other things too, but I just, I can't make a complete list because I don't even know what the complete list would contain. Basically what I've done is try to go over the scriptural cases and catalog the various things that we find there. That doesn't mean this is a complete catalog.

Okay, now how does a person become demon possessed in the first place? That is a very difficult question to answer because the Bible is not explicit on it. There are some suggestions that can be made based upon biblical principle, however. I find it interesting

that not everybody who is a sinner is demon possessed.

It seems to me like the demons would like to possess as many people as they could, and yet there are even non-Christians who don't ever get possessed. At least the Bible doesn't indicate that Jesus had to cast demons out of every unbeliever he met or that Paul did. It seems to be an exceptional case even among unbelievers.

And yet unbelievers don't have the Christian's resources and armor and authority and so forth, so why don't all unbelievers get possessed? Why do demons pick on some people and not others? I cannot answer with any certainty at all, but I can give you what I'll just have to represent as an educated guess or my judgment as one who's asked that question a lot myself. I've asked it, I've sought answers, I've researched it, and I can't say for sure that the Bible answers the question. But it seems to me my tentative conclusion is this, that personalities of individuals vary along a scale of compliability or compliance.

Some people are very compliant, very suggestible. Other people are very stubborn, very much their own person, very resistant to control from other persons or personalities. And it is my opinion as of this date, until I learn otherwise something better, my opinion as of this date is that persons who are very strong personalities, very independent, very non-suggestible, very free-thinking or whatever, very unwilling to be gullible or whatever, people like that frequently probably the demons can't get the same control over as they can through a wishy-washy, weak personality, someone who's very suggestible, very gullible.

And I think that those personalities exist among Christians and among non-Christians. And it seems to me the people I have met who are demonized seem to be of the weaker sort of personality. Now perhaps I'm getting things mixed up, maybe the demons have made them that way, because in these cases I've never known any of these people before they were demonized.

But it does seem to me, the one case, the girl that I cast demons out of the first time, the most remarkable case and the first case that I've ever had, where it was very clear what happened, I mean there were clear indicators she was possessed and a very obvious and dramatic deliverance that was unmistakable. Even after she was delivered and she was filled with the Spirit, she spoke in tongues, she was rejoicing in the Lord, her face was radiant, she went into her cabin, she got some dope and flushed it down the toilet and stuff. I mean she seemed like she really had a genuine conversion and all.

She went away rejoicing in her salvation. We looked in on her later on to see how she was doing. It turns out that she found out she was pregnant by somebody.

I think she knew who, but she didn't tell us who. But she was terrified that her father, if he found out she was pregnant, would beat her up or something. He was not a Christian

man.

She was terrified of her father and so she had decided she was going to get an abortion. She even had a Christian friend who was going to take her to the clinic to get the abortion because she was terrified. She was probably 16 years old or something.

She was living at home and she was really afraid of her parents. We tried very hard to dissuade her from that. When we were talking to her, she sounded like she was maybe not going to get an abortion, maybe.

But then when we'd kind of back off a little bit, she'd kind of say, I have to get an abortion. She had us pulling one way and this other Christian friend who was going to take her to the clinic pulling the other way. She was kind of wishy-washy between the two.

Something as major as whether you're going to kill a baby or not. If you can take a stand on anything, you should be able to take a stand on that. I could understand not knowing whether to put sugar in your tea or not, but whether you're going to kill a human being or not.

If you've manifest itself a little bit, if you've got a little backbone. She was just wishy-washy on this. As we tried to persuade her, she seemed kind of persuaded not to get the abortion.

As the other person was trying, she was kind of persuaded to do it. I don't know whatever happened to her. I don't know.

I suspect that she went ahead and got the abortion because we lived in another town. We couldn't keep up on her and her friend was her neighbor. She struck me as a very compliant kind of person.

Whatever someone was saying, she went along with. This was after she was delivered. In my experience, which is not comprehensive and not totally authoritative, my impression has been that the persons who succumb to demon possession are fairly easy people to be overcome.

I suppose that a demon has the same challenge in conquering a person's personality as another human would have in conquering another person's personality. Basically, when a demon possesses a person, their personality comes under the control of a personality, of a demon's personality. The same people who are easily dominated by other people's personalities probably are easily dominated by evil spirits' personalities.

That's my guess. It's not a shot in the dark. It's an educated guess, but the Bible doesn't tell us this.

If we would ask why is it that some, even non-Christians, don't get possessed, I suspect that the demons don't have an easy time with everybody. There are some people who are very stubborn. There are some people who are very independent, who are not easily persuaded of things, who are not easily dominated.

I suppose that as a personality varies upon the scale of that one end, compliability or compliance, and on the other end of being strong-willed, I suppose that the persons who are closer to the compliant end are the ones who are no doubt more susceptible. I'm not saying it's a virtue to be strong-willed. I'm just saying that the demons may have a harder time with people who are strong-willed.

You don't have to believe that. I'm just giving you my thoughts. If I'm wrong, it doesn't hurt anything, I suppose.

If I'm right, it might answer some questions. There are some specific things that apparently make it easier for demons to get control over people. Remember I said that in the Old Testament, when demons or evil spirits came upon people, they were sent by God.

I mean, demon possession in the Old Testament is represented as one form of God's judgment on persons for certain reasons, frequently for idolatry. And yet, not everyone who does idolatrous things gets demonized, but some do. I don't see anything in the New Testament that would repeal that Old Testament idea, that when people are demonized, they are in some sense under judgment from God for something they have done, something that had they not done it, had they not incurred God's wrath, they might never have come under this particular circumstance.

One of those things, as I already said, is idolatry. Idolatry, particularly in the Old Testament, is listed as one of the things associated with God's wrath and God's bringing people into bondage. Sometimes that bondage is actual political bondage.

The all bondage is of that sort, though. There is also spiritual bondage that people can come into. Let me read something from Blumhart here.

I just read this for the first time this morning, though in my notes I had already included this because it is my own conclusion as well. Pastor Blumhart made this observation. He said, He says, There is something else that in summarizing I have to report.

This will call for attention, but I cannot be silent about it by any means. Through the above appearances and others later, I realized that our time suffers from an evil that has eaten through nearly the entire evangelical Christendom like a secretly gnawing worm. No one is paying serious attention to it, and that is the sin of idolatry, which by steps leads up to magic and complete black magic.

I received the surest knowledge of its existence in the most horrible way. Idolatry may

be considered every reliance on a supernatural invisible power based upon which a man is attempting to obtain either health, honor, gain, or pleasure, as long as this power is not purely divine. But every superstitious use of pious words, especially when the highest names are used in it, is also idolatry because the living faith in God as well as the highness and majesty of God are made into a caricature.

He says, Slowly I learned to get a glimpse into the horrible consequences of all this idolatry. The first effect is that a man becomes more or less bound to a sinister satanic power. This happens through a demon which wins influence over him because it is enticed through an act of idolatry.

This influence may be physical and may cause every kind of nervous disorder, cramps, gout, and other diseases where doctors know little what to do. It also may cause psychical or soulish effects such as melancholy, depression, or gross indulgences such as lewd passions, lust, drunkenness, stinginess, envy, wrath, vengeance, and other passions which often become such a burden to the man that he cannot master them. What Paul writes on idolatry in his epistle to the Romans, that they change the glory of the eternal God into all sorts of foolishness, is literally fulfilled in our Christian idolatry.

Christians put their confidence in senseless sayings, secret formulas, and signs in certain days in pieces of paper which they hang on their necks. The Africans call these gris-gris. This was written 150 years ago.

Some things are not exactly practiced in the same way in the church as now as they were then. It is also one of the rare cases in Blumhart's thing where he is telling his theories about things instead of just reporting what happened. In those cases he cannot speak with quite the same authority as when he tells us what actually happened.

His impression, what he learned from his 18 months of dealing with this was that idolatry, which he obviously is associating somewhat with what we might call occultism, moving into magic, magic arts, incantations, things like that. He says looking to supernatural powers for fame or for money or for pleasure. We would call this today occultism.

Really in the Bible the line between idolatry, which is the worshiping of actual idols, and occultism is a very thin line, if that line indeed exists at all. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10 in verse 20, he said the sacrifices that the heathen offer, they offer to demons and not to God. Now of course the heathen offer their sacrifices to idols, but Paul says they offer them to demons and not to God.

You will find God giving very, very strong warnings in scripture against idolatry and also against occultism, which is closely connected to it. In Leviticus chapter 19, Leviticus chapter 19 in verse 26, God said you shall not eat anything with the blood, nor shall you practice divination or sooth saying. He also says a couple of verses later in verse 31, give

no regard to mediums and familiar spirits.

Do not seek after them to be defiled by them. I am the Lord your God. Over in Deuteronomy chapter 18, there is even a somewhat more comprehensive list of occult things to avoid.

In Deuteronomy 18 verses 10 through 14, it says there shall not be found among you anyone who passes his son or his daughter through the fire. This is a reference to the worship of Moloch, where they actually sacrifice their children to an image of the God Moloch, often referred to in the Old Testament as an abomination to God. Or anyone who practices witchcraft or a soothsayer or one who interprets omens or a sorcerer or one who conjures spells or a medium or a spiritist or one who calls up the dead.

For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord. And because of these abominations, the Lord your God drives them out before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God for all these nations which you will dispossess, listened to soothsayers and diviners.

But as for you, the Lord your God has not appointed such things for you. No one knows for sure why they are called familiar spirits, but the familiar spirit is a spirit that consults with a medium or a medium consults with them. The woman that Saul went to to call up Samuel is said to be a woman with a familiar spirit.

The standard evangelical explanation of what a familiar spirit is, is that it is a demon that was associated or very familiar with some living person, now dead, and who impersonates that person at a seance. So that when a spiritist goes to a seance and thinks they are conjuring up or talking to the spirit of their deceased great uncle, they are in fact talking to a demon who is familiar with their great uncle and who is impersonating him. And this is really almost any evangelical you ask what is a familiar spirit, this is what they will say.

It is a spirit that is familiar with somebody who is dead and who impersonates them at a seance. I am not sure the Bible supports that notion. I am not sure that the Bible says that.

It certainly doesn't say that. It does speak of familiar spirits, but it doesn't say what the spirits are familiar with. Whether the spirit is familiar with some deceased person whom they impersonate or which seems to me more likely from the use of the language, a spirit who is acquainted with or familiar with a medium.

A medium having a special relationship with a particular spirit who are mutually familiar to each other and who cooperate together in such activities as spiritism and seances and calling up the dead. This would mean that the familiar aspect of a familiar spirit is a familiarity with the medium, not with some other person out there who is being conjured

up. My reason for suggesting this is because a witch or a medium in the Bible is said to have a familiar spirit.

Since anyone might go to a medium and say conjure up so and so and that so and so might be anyone who has ever lived, you would need many familiar spirits. If the familiar spirit was someone who knows how to impersonate somebody that they are familiar with, that witch would have to be in touch with lots of familiar spirits, one for each person that needed to be impersonated. But the Bible speaks of a woman or a man having a familiar spirit as if there is only one spirit that that person is regularly involved with.

Carl Jung, leading founder of one of the major forces in psychology, had a familiar spirit. He was not shy about saying so. He called it his ghostly guru.

He received insights from a demon, a spirit guide, that he was familiar with, that he had regular dealings with. People who practice something called mind control are taught how to cultivate a spirit. They conjure it by visualization.

Generally speaking, they have a particular mentor spirit that they have regular communion with in these sessions. I think that is probably more what a familiar spirit is. One that is familiar with and who is familiar to a particular practitioner of occult practices.

Anyway, the Bible makes it very clear that involvement in the occult is simply an abomination to God and he judged people in the past for it. He may well judge people still for it in the form of giving them over to the powers that they are courting. In Romans chapter 1, when Paul describes the descent into idolatry of the race, he points out that God gives them over.

Because they change the glory of God, he gives them over to something. In other words, he ceases to protect them. He turns them over to the fruit of their own works.

If people are courting demons through occult practices, it is not surprising if God just gives them over to be possessed by those powers. We know that Simon the sorcerer, who was a great sorcerer, is said to have been in bondage, spiritual bondage, which might be equivalent to demon possessed. In Acts chapter 8, Peter said of Simon the sorcerer to him, in verses 9 and following, it says, there was a certain man called Simon who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, in other words, blasphemy, to whom they all gave heed from the least to the greatest, saying, this man is the great power of God.

Later on, according to the Church Fathers, this same man claimed to be the Christ and the Word of God and the very power of God on earth. It says they heeded him because he astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. Later on though, he acknowledges

Christ and is baptized.

And later, Peter says to him, because he finds this man still to be involved in demonism, he says to him, verse 22, repent therefore of this your wickedness and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you for I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity. Now he doesn't say you're demon possessed, but he said he was in bondage. He was in bondage to iniquity and almost certainly the man was demonized and had these powers because of his demonized state.

Anyway, it is widely held among Christians who deal with the demon possessed that occultism is one of the open doors for demons into the person's life. Another possible cause of demon possession is, surprisingly, that it is conceivable and possibly substantiable from Scripture that a person may be born with a demon. That babies may be born demonized.

Now this is hard for us to accept for the simple reason that it just seems unfair. It seems unfair that an innocent baby should be born so afflicted. On the other hand, there are many things that are unfair.

No one ever said the devil was fair in the way he did things. And we know that babies are born with physical handicaps. There are cracked babies born.

There are babies born blind because their parents had syphilis. There are babies born with every kind of handicap, both mental and physical. That doesn't seem fair either.

I'm not sure exactly why it would be that we could accept as a reality that babies are sometimes born physically or mentally handicapped but we somehow reject the notion that they can be born spiritually handicapped in a spiritual bondage. As a matter of fact, we don't have any proof in the Scripture that babies are born in such a state. There are some who think that God's statement that he visits the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate him may apply here because the bondage that is referred to or the punishment is on idolatry.

God's statement about this is in his context of the second commandment. You shall not make any grave an image and bow down to it for I am a jealous God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children of the third and fourth generation of those who hate me. If demon possession is sometimes a punishment for idolatry and if this punishment is visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation, there is at least a possibility that some may be born with demons.

I was an elder in a church in Santa Cruz for a couple of years with a man who married a woman whose parents had been highly and deeply involved in Satanism. They were priests and priestess of some sort in the Satanic cult locally and she had been born, as near as she could tell, demonized. When she got saved, she got delivered, but she had

demons.

As near as she could tell, she had them all her life. She suspected that she was born with them and if she wasn't, she got them at a very early age. I remember a guy named Kurt Koch who is a German writer, modern German writer who has written a great deal on such things.

He wrote many books that are from his experiences in this area. Kurt Koch, K-U-R-T-K-O-C-H. One of his books is called *Occult Bondage and Deliverance* and it gives a lot of teaching on this subject as well as his own experiences.

He was, I think, in the Philippines teaching at a Bible school, I think as a guest there. One of the students, a young man, came to him privately and confessed to having certain problems. It turned out the man was demon possessed and Kurt Koch began to minister to him and the demon speaking out of him said, you can't cast us out.

We've been in this family for 300 years. Well, the demon was at least partially wrong. He did get cast out, but he may have been right about being there for 300 years.

You never know. You can't base an awful lot of confidence on the testimony of a demon, but it is not inconceivable that for many generations, a family that is sworn over to Satan, that is totally given over to idolatry and occultism, might have generations born in that bondage that the parents were in. I don't know.

You know the man who brought his son to Jesus and the disciples couldn't cast out the demon, but Jesus did. Jesus asked him, how long has he been in this condition? And the man said, since childhood. Now that doesn't mean since infancy necessarily, but I will say this, if a child can become demon possessed, that seems every bit as unfair as if a baby is demon possessed.

It's even conceivable that in saying from childhood, being as vague as he was without giving specific dates or times, he might have been saying in short form, he's always been this way since his childhood. I don't know. I don't know what to read into that.

That's why I'm not sure whether the Bible teaches or does not teach that people can be born with demons. I will say though that in experience, there are Christians who affirm that they know of cases of babies being born demonized and needing to be delivered either as infants or later on in life. I cannot defend that doctrine, but I cannot refute it either.

I give you what little warrant there may be for it in scripture and from experience for your consideration, but if we ask how do demons come into people, I think occult practices are one of the main ways. I think that in some cases it's possible people are even born demonized. It's a very abhorrent idea to my mind, but it does not seem that abhorrence of it is a good enough reason to reject its truthfulness.

There are some other things. I will bring them up, I guess, our next session because we've run out of time, and I want to go on to talk about some practical matters like how do you cast out demons, and why do sometimes the demons not come out and so forth. We'll just continue this discussion.

We'll have a part three in our next class, and I'll finish out even on this point of what indicators there may be in scripture or in experience of how people come to be demon possessed in the first place. The Bible doesn't say explicitly, but the things we're considering are perhaps hinted at in scripture, and much of missionary experience seems to confirm some of these theories. Okay, I'm going to have to stop right there because I'm looking at the clock, and we're just out of time.

The next point would take too long to really develop more time than we have now. So stop here, and we'll finish this up probably.