

# Discerning between Demons and Flesh



Basics of Deliverance (Part 3)
by Derek Prince

So I'm suggesting to you that both the pattern and the commission of Jesus leave no room for the servants of God today to go out in evangelism without first being equipped to deal with evil spirits. I don't believe you can find an example there.

Now I'm going to give you some general teaching on the nature of demons — I'm going to stick with the word demons — and ways in which you can know if they're at work in you or in others. Of course, there's always the two gifts of discerning of spirits and the word of knowledge. But apart from that, in the supernatural realm, there are many, many other combined indications which should alert us to the presence of demons, either in ourselves or in others.

You need to know, first of all, as I've said, they are persons without bodies. You're dealing with persons. Disembodied persons who have a passionate craving to get into a body. You need to understand that. They are totally discontented outside of a body. The kind of body they want is a human body, but rather than be disembodied, they'll settle for a pig, or a dog or other animal. They do not want to be disembodied. That is torment for them.

They have two main objectives assigned to them by Satan. Number one, to keep you from knowing Christ as Savior. But if they fail in that, their number two objective is to keep you from serving Christ effectively. Do you see that? If they've failed in number one they don't give up. They simply switch to number two.

Now we need to distinguish between the flesh and demons. The flesh being the old, carnal nature, the old man. Demons being persons that move in and occupy areas of your personality. I compare them this way: The flesh is the carcass, the demons are the vultures that settle on the carcass. You understand? If there were no flesh, there would be no vultures. It's a very vivid picture. If you've lived in a country where there are vultures, you know when something is about to die a little speck appears up in the sky and hovers there. And you look up a little while later and there are three or four more and the nearer the animal on the earth gets to death, the lower down the vultures come. Jesus said where the carcass is, the vultures will be gathered together. Where

the unregenerate flesh of man is exposed in its carnality and its sinfulness, you can be sure the vultures will be gathering.

Now the remedies are totally different. What's the remedy for the flesh? The cross. That's right. Galatians 5:24:

> "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (NKJ)

What's the remedy for demons? To expel them, that's right. Now you cannot switch the remedies. You cannot expel the flesh and you cannot crucify a demon. So in order to know which remedy to apply you have to know what you're dealing with. Okay?

Now I would say in general if you are a committed, sincere Christian who reads your Bible, prays, has regular fellowship and desires to serve the Lord and you have a special kind of problem, something tormenting, something aggravating, something humiliating, something binding and enslaving, and you've tried every remedy, you've prayed, you've fasted, you've reckoned yourself dead and you still haven't resolved it, you can be almost sure you're dealing with a demon. I can say this out of experience which is too long for me to relate this morning.

Now, what I want to do in the next part of this session is give you some characteristic activities of demons. I'm going to list about nine verbs which describe characteristic activities of demons. If these are present in your life, more than one, or if they're very intense, you should begin to check, you probably need deliverance. And bear in mind, all these are activities of persons, because we're dealing with persons without bodies.

The first verb, entice. Demons entice. They tempt people to do evil. And if you analyze your experience you'll find that enticement often comes in a verbal form. A beautiful gold pencil has been dropped on the floor and you stand looking at it and something says to you, "Take it. Nobody will know. Other people would do the same. If it was your pencil, they'd take it." You know what that is? Anything that has a voice is a person. Behind that voice is a demon enticing you. None of you have ever experienced that, just me!

Demons harass or harass, depends on what part of the world you come from. They study you, they follow your movements, they know your weak moments, they know your weak places, they know just how and when they can get in. The example I usually give is the businessman who has had a terrible day in the office. Everything went wrong, his secretary was inefficient, the air conditioning failed... And then on the way home there was a traffic jam and he was an hour on the freeway, and then when he gets back home, believe it or not, his wife is late with the supper and the kids are running around screaming. And as he gets in through the door he does what we say, he blows his stack, okay? You know what happens? That demon of anger that's been on his tail all day jumps in. And after that his wife notices a certain change in him. He's still a loving father and husband but there are certain times when something else takes over. And she notices a kind of different look in his eyes and although he loves his wife and his children, he makes life miserable for them when that comes upon him. And then he's so ashamed and remorseful afterwards, he says, I don't know what made me do it. Well we do know. It's the demon of anger.

Number three, they torment. Now the Bible speaks about the tormentors in Matthew 18. I believe the demons are the tormentors. In Matthew 18 in the parable of the unforgiving servant, the servant who wouldn't forgive his fellow servant of petty debt, was delivered by God to the tormentors. I have met hundreds of Christians in the hands of the tormentors. You know why? Unforgiveness. If you have any unforgiveness in your heart against anybody, you are a legitimate target for the tormentors. And Satan is a legal expert, he knows when he's entitled to move in.

There are various forms of torment. There's physical torment. There's the example I would choose, arthritis. When you look at arthritis, you've seen the devil in action. Twisting, torturing, crippling, binding.

Mental torment. One that's unusually common is the fear of going insane. You'd be surprised how many Christians are inwardly fighting this battle. It goes like this, "Well, your aunt died in a mental institution and your grandfather went the same way, and you're going to be the next." And you can hardly imagine the torment that there is in such a mind.

Then there's spiritual torment. And the example that I would give is the accusation that you've committed the unforgivable sin. Now, if you are concerned about having committed the unforgivable sin, you haven't committed it! You understand? Because the people who have committed it aren't the least bit concerned. So that's not your problem. Your problem is a lying, accusing spirit which is taking away your peace and the assurance of your salvation.

All right, number four, they compel. I think there is no more distinctive word than the word compulsive. Almost anything compulsive is liable to be demonic. Compulsive smoking, compulsive consumption of alcohol, but let's not stop there. Compulsive eating is just as demonic. Gluttony is just as much of a problem as alcohol. But it's a respectable one. You can't be an alcoholic in church, but you can be a glutton. There are other forms of compulsion. Compulsive talking,

garrulity. People who can't stop talking have got a problem.

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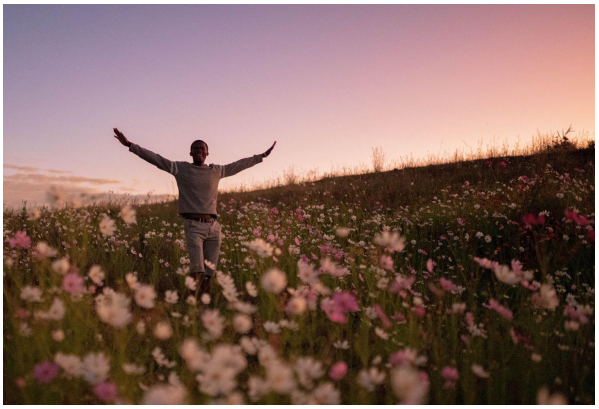
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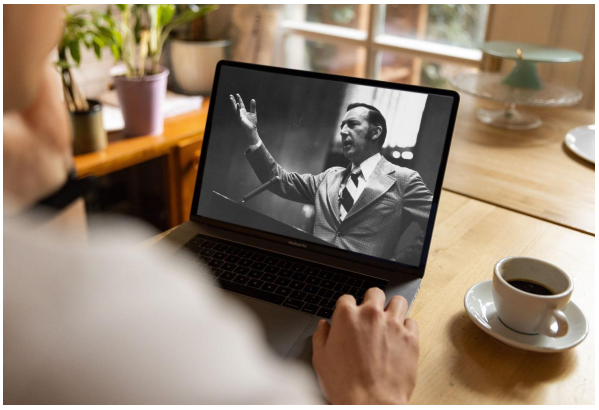
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