

## Models of Deliverance Part 2: Power

### —God at War, Week 10—

#### I. Our General Strategy of Spiritual Warfare is James 4:7

**Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**

- It is useful to use James 4:7 as a guide for how we think about this kind of war against the enemy (*discussed last week*).

#### II. One Specific Strategy is a "Truth Encounter" Model

- This model focusses on renouncing sin and deception, and then reestablishing our freedom in Christ (*discussed last week*).

#### III. A \_\_\_\_\_ Specific Strategy for Spiritual Warfare is a " \_\_\_\_\_ " Model

- This is the traditional and most common Christian approach, which focusses on directly confronting demonic spirits and commanding them to leave a person (or place). This approach is the one used by Jesus and the apostles in the New Testament. See, for example: Mark 1:21-28; 5:1-20; Acts 16:16-18.
- This approach has also been used throughout church history. See, for example: Tertullian, *Apology* 23,4-18 (197AD); Justin Martyr, *Dialogue*, 30.3; 76.6 (c. 160 AD); Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolyicum* 2.8 (c. 180AD); Origen, *Contra Celsum* 1.6; 7.4 (c. 235AD).
- Some distinctions in terminology are sometimes helpfully made.
  - In Catholic circles, often "deliverance prayer" is used to describe prayers for liberation that do not include direct commands to demons. These are also called "minor exorcisms." "Major exorcisms" or "solemn exorcisms" involve direct commands to demons. These are reserved to priests specially appointed by the local bishop, and use a fixed set of prayers.
  - In other Christian circles, sometimes "major exorcism" is used for those with serious enough affliction that the demon overtakes the personality. "Minor exorcism" is sometimes used for less drastic situations.
  - In Evangelical circles, often terms like "deliverance" or "deliverance prayer" is used instead of terminology of exorcism.
  - To help locations that are "infested" by demonic or other spiritual activity, language of "exorcism of a place" or "house cleansing" is often used. These are encounters where prayers are used alongside commands to demons to depart the place.
- A Suggested Approach for Exorcism (from *Confronting the Paranormal*, by [Anglican priest] William H. Lendrum, 82-86).
  - **Repentance.** See Acts 3:19; 19:17-20. Here the person is led to recommit their life to Christ, and they should confess all known sins, forgive everyone who has offended them, and bring their whole life under the Lordship of Jesus (James 4:7; Rom 10:9-10; 1 John 1:9). If they are spiritually being hindered and cannot repent, ask if they are at least willing to be made willing, to receive repentance if God grants it (Acts 5:31).
  - **Binding and Loosing.** See Matthew 12:22-29. Here we use the authority of the "keys of the Kingdom" that God gave us his church (See Matthew 16:18-19; 18:18-20). Example: "*You foul and evil spirit, in the name [of the Lord] Jesus Christ and in accordance with the authority that he has given to his Church, I bind you and I forbid you to speak or interfere with this (man/woman). I take away your power to influence or restrict (him/her) in any way. I loose you (name) from bondage. You are now free to repent of your sins and to cooperate with us as we seek to lead you to total and permanent freedom as a child of God indwelt by the Holy Spirit.*"
  - **Word of Command.** See Mark 5:8; Acts 16:18. Now comes the heart of it, direct commands in Jesus' name for the demon to leave. Example: "*You foul spirit, I am speaking to you now in the name and with the authority of [the Lord] Jesus Christ. At my command you will depart from this person whom you have tormented for many days and you will go to your own place. I have bound you and stripped you of your power to resist. You will go quietly and you will hurt no one as you leave. Go now to that place that the Lord Jesus Christ appoints for you and there you will remain till he releases you.*" Demons routinely resist leaving as commanded. Repeat the commands as needed. (Such an approach is suggested by Mark 5:8, which implies Jesus giving repeated commands that are resisted). Lendrum advises: "There may come a time when you realize that you are not going to succeed. In that case it is wiser to stop and try another time. It may become clear later, why the demon was able to resist your commands."
  - **Follow Up.** See Luke 11:24-26. Demons will try to return. "The emptiness created by the departure of demons needs to be filled. It is, therefore, essential that the person who has been rid of spirits should put his life in the care of Jesus Christ and be indwelt by the Holy Spirit." The person must pursue a life of faithful discipleship.

- **Aspects of the Battle**

- As you begin praying for someone and command demons to leave, in many cases the demons will try to hide and convince you they are not there. Often nothing will happen at first. Don't be deceived! For the demons, almost everything depends on remaining hidden. Ask God to force them to be revealed. Be patient.
- As pressure continues to be put on the demons, typically the oppressed person will begin to "manifest," meaning showing some signs of the presence of the demons (see Mark 9:20). This is often experienced as discomfort, nausea, dizziness, weakness, fluctuating emotions, confusion, etc. These are good signs, in that the demon's attempt to remain hidden are being weakened.
- Sometimes it is helpful to command the demon to reveal themselves. The preferable way to do this is to command them to communicate through the person's mind, so that the person can tell you what the demon is saying. This is (for obvious reasons) preferable to the demon taking control of the person in a trance state and speaking through their mouth, though sometimes this is outside our control (see Mark 1:24-25). *Ask no questions except what is necessary for removal.* Typically the only advisable questions are things like what is its name (see Mark 5:9), how many of them are there, how did they get access, etc. Be aware, demons routinely lie, and they can sometimes lie even when commanded in Jesus' name to tell the truth. If some piece of information seems especially critical, continue asking the same question and command them to speak the truth in Jesus' name. God can overcome their resistance and force them to speak truthfully (but still take everything with a grain of salt).
- At some point relief should come and the demon should leave. Usually the oppressed person has a sense of it happening. But it is advisable to keep up the prayers and commands for a time, since sometimes demons will just *pretend* to leave.

- **Miscellaneous Items**

- The authority and power to cast out demons belongs to every Christian, because the power is Christ's and not ours. It is critical that we have an understanding of our authority and position in Christ (e.g., Luke 10:17-20; Eph 2:6). *More on this next week.*
- Though the power to cast out spirits belongs to every Christian, if able to plan ahead, it is preferable to have a team approach that includes mature believers, with outside prayer support. See Matthew 18:19-20. Do not be presumptuous about any of this!
- On the front end, all involved should confess their sins and seek the Lord with sober mindedness. Pray for protection for all involved, including the family and property and property of all involved, even if elsewhere.
- In these situations, beware any kind of pride or assurance that "you know what to do." What is needed is humility and desperation and dependence upon the power of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Continually pray that the Holy Spirit will direct you. Be patient. Devote plenty of time to the meeting.
- Scripture speaks of a spiritual gift of discerning spirits (1 Cor 12:10). One version of this is the supernatural ability to perceive the presence of an evil spirit one way or another (see the very interesting Job 4:15). God can grant this as needed at any time, and it is wise to pray for this going into any such situation. Other Christians seem to have an aspect of this gift more permanently. It is wise to include such a gifted Christian if possible. They can help confirm the evil presence and its departure.
- Pray for God to send angels to assist you (see Hebrews 1:14; Daniel 10).
- The oppressed person's participation is central. Lead them in various renunciations as issues come to light ("Do you in Jesus' name renounce this demon/sin/practice?" etc). Lead them in also commanding the demon to leave, as you are also doing.
- Anointing with oil, signing the cross on their forehead (or elsewhere) can be helpful (see James 5:14). This is not magic, but a symbol of faith. Similarly, laying hands on the person can be helpful. This can put additional pressure on the demon. Some Christians advise against this, but it is a traditional part of the process, and we see Jesus doing it once (Luke 13:10-17).
- Celebrating of the Lord's Supper can be helpful, as it proclaims the death of Jesus (1 Cor 11:26). Pray and ask God to gather up any evil spirits involved to come force them to witness it—it is a sign of their certain defeat!
- If the demon takes over the person and some kind of violence seems possible, forbid any such thing in Jesus' name. Commands in Christ's name must ultimately be obeyed. Do not forget this is a spiritual battle, not physical.
- Note carefully the importance of faith and prayer in such situations (Mark 9:29). Later manuscripts of Mark add "and fasting" (see KJV). Even though a later addition, since fasting is an aid to prayer it is wise to use it leading up to a known encounter.
- Contrary to what we might expect, deliverance is not always a "once and done" encounter. Commonly, repeated sessions are required. The process of deliverance is thus parallel to our sanctification and journey of Christlikeness, that is, *progressive*. Sometimes it can take months or years. Do not despair: God has a purpose in working gradually, and there is something for all involved to learn about faith, perseverance, and dependence on God (see Rom 5:1-5; 2 Cor 12:10; James 1:2-4).

### The Bottom Line

\_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ to Overcome \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ Spiritual \_\_\_\_\_.  
...by \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_.  
...by being \_\_\_\_\_ oppose \_\_\_\_\_ this way if \_\_\_\_\_ it.