

THE DANGER OF UNCLEAN SPIRITS PART FOUR

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil.

Ephesians 4:25-27

I'm going to continue with this series on the danger of unclean spirits. Let me start by directing your attention to the fact that the apostle Paul warned us not to "give place to" the devil. I believe the vast majority of today's Christians have absolutely no idea how easy it is to give the enemy *a place* in their lives. Heck, most of them don't even think it's possible to give Satan a place in their lives, despite this warning. They ignore what Paul said because they hate the truth. This is one of the reasons so many of them are being deceived. They refuse to receive a love for the truth regarding the issue of spirits and as a result, they do things *every day* which give these spirits a place in their lives. Of course, they reject this reality and they will continue to reject it until the day they die because in *this* life, God doesn't force anyone to accept the truth. But two seconds after they are dead, they will be forced to acknowledge the truth—and they will be acknowledging that truth for all eternity.

Last week we began looking at the five major avenues these spirits use to involve themselves in our lives. We made it to avenue number three, which is people. But before we begin looking at this one, I want to take a few minutes and look at how they can use *feelings* to deceive us. I mentioned feelings last week, when we were talking about how they can plant thoughts and desires in our mind. But I didn't elaborate on this line of attack like I should have. So I want to make sure I cover it tonight, before moving on.

Unfortunately, it's not just the issue of receiving feelings from unclean spirits that's mis-understood by so many believers today, the issue of feelings period is mis-understood. When it comes to feelings, the majority of today's believers fall into one of two groups, both of which are wrong. The first group would be the Fundamentalists (including *defacto* Fundamentalists). These people reject the idea that we can be *guided by* feelings. They have various reasons for this. One reason is because they *assume* feelings originate in the heart—and of course, everyone's heart is deceitful above all things, so nothing that comes from the heart can ever be trusted.

Another reason they reject being guided by feelings is because they really don't believe we can be led *directly* by the Holy Spirit. Fundamentalist are led *indirectly* by the Spirit, through the *Bible*. They often deceive people with their words because they walk around saying we should all be "led by the Spirit" and they claim they are being led by the Spirit but the fact is, they believe *the way* we are led by the Spirit is by reading, studying, and applying the teachings of the Bible to our lives. This is how the Holy Spirits leads us. They don't believe we can be led by the Spirit *directly*. They don't believe God would ever speak to you and me like He spoke to the apostle Paul, or to Peter, or to James, or to Timothy. This is one of the main reasons they reject the baptism of the Holy Spirit experience. Through spiritual gifts, God speaks to us and guides us directly.

So the Fundamentalist doesn't accept the possibility of God ever guiding us by feelings because he believes feelings come from the flesh or a wicked heart and they can never be trusted. He also believes that if God were to guide us *by* feelings, that would be direct guidance—and direct guidance is a big no-no. Ever since the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, the position of Fundamentalist's has been "*Sola Scriptura*"—meaning, being led by the Scripture *alone*.

This is why the Church split into Fundamentalist and Pentecostal camps in 1906. In 1906 a big segment of the Church started being led by the Spirit *directly*. They started being led by the gifts of the Spirit, through visions and dreams, through personal words and by hearing the voice of God in their hearts or minds. The Pentecostal's retained a high view of Scripture and sound doctrine. They still read and studied the Scripture and applied the teachings of Scripture to their lives. They didn't *reject* being led by Scripture in favor of being led directly by the Spirit. They simply yielded to God as He began to *expand* their Christian experience. They moved beyond the place of being led by the Spirit indirectly, through the Scripture alone.

In the 50's and 60's, the Charismatic Movement began to sweep through the *mainline* churches who had rejected Pentecostalism. One of the unfortunate hallmarks of this movement was that it exalted spiritual experience *far above* the written Word. These people basically started *leaving the Bible behind* and they focused primarily on experience. This is why there is such a difference between the original Pentecostal movement (in 1906) and the Charismatic Movement. The original Pentecostal's held the Scripture in high esteem and they continued to believe *doctrine* is very important. They believed that if your experience wasn't supported by the Scripture, it was a counterfeit. Pentecostalism has never been an "anything goes" movement. Generally speaking, they have always sought to walk in holiness and have upheld the importance of sound doctrine.

The Charismatic Movement was just the opposite. From its inception it was an "anything-goes-forget-about-doctrine" movement. Spiritual experience was crowned king. Naturally, spiritual *feelings*—which are a valid part of the true Christian experience—were also exalted far above the Scripture. So you had a situation where a segment of the Church began to be led *only* by feelings, by dreams and visions, by personal words, and by the inner voice of the Spirit. If the Scripture agreed with their experience, that was fine. They would quote the Bible to prove they were right. But if the Bible didn't agree with their experience, they couldn't have cared less. Experience became *everything*. They had moved from *Sola Scriptura* to *Sola Experience*.

Below is a quote from a person who represents the typical Fundamentalists view of being guided by feelings. She is discussing feelings that are presumed to be coming from God. The issue is us being able to *feel* the presence of God in a church, or thinking we can know whether or not we are pleasing God by how we *feel*. The idea is that since feelings come from the heart, they are never to be trusted.

"Now, the bible says in Jer. 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? It also says in Pro. 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death...Back to the teacher's question: '...he **feels** he gets spiritual life there; ...he **feels** the presence of God there'...The problem here is that **we cannot know** that we are pleasing to God **by our feelings**. So how can we know that we are doing things that are pleasing to God? The answer is found in God's word..."

It's a sad day when God's people think they can't know when they are feeling God's presence. It's a sad day when people have come to the place where they believe they can't know if they are pleasing or displeasing God by the way they feel. It's a sad day when Christians won't allow themselves to feel things or be *guided* in any way by feelings because they believe their hearts are wicked and feelings must come from that wicked heart. This woman's spiritual mentor has the same attitude and preaches the same kind of garbage. He mocks anyone who thinks they can actually *feel* the Lord's presence in a church service and refers to all such experiences as having the "holy ghost goose bumps"—and this guy claims to be a Pentecostal! People like this are to be pitied because they are missing a big part of the *new creation life* that is available in Christ.

Has anyone in this room ever gotten a spiritual “checking” from the Lord? All of a sudden, you start feeling bad when you are about to do something or go somewhere; or maybe you feel bad after you have done or said something? Well, spiritual checkings are FEELINGS, my friends—spiritual feelings.

Did you ever receive a “blessing” when you did something you knew the Lord was telling you to do, or after you won the victory over some temptation or struggle, or when you took persecution calmly and quietly? Well, guess what? Those blessings are FEELINGS—spiritual feelings.

Have you ever been “grieved” when you realized someone you loved was being deceived? Have you ever grieved over the condition of your family? Have you ever grieved over the condition of the Church? Well, guess what? That grieving is a FEELING—a spiritual feeling.

How about “peace”. Everyone knows Peace is a fruit of the Spirit (*Gal. 5:22*). But how many of us realize peace is *more* than fruit because you can *lose* your peace when you go somewhere, or do something, or talk to somebody. Peace is a FEELING—a spiritual feeling.

I could go on, but I think you get the point. All these feelings are spiritual feelings. They don’t come from your flesh and they don’t come from a desperately wicked heart. They come from the Holy Spirit, who lives in your regenerated human spirit.

Spiritual feelings are important avenues God uses to speak to His people and guide them every day! They are not to be avoided but embraced. Just as we can’t really know God without knowing His Word, in like manner, we cannot really know Him without spiritual experience—and spiritual experience *includes* a whole range of spiritual feelings. Anyone who says that because people get deceived and walk in their own ways, that *means* we can’t ever know we are pleasing or displeasing God by feelings—is walking in deception. These kinds of people “*have a form of Godliness but deny the power thereof*” (*II. Tim. 3:5*).

It’s not wrong to have a *healthy* fear of receiving the wrong kinds of feelings because we can receive feelings from different places. We can receive feelings from our flesh; we can receive them from the Spirit of God; and we can also receive them from unclean spirits. The fear people walk in regarding being deceived by feelings is not completely without merit. However, for most of them, it’s the *wrong kind* of fear. It’s not a healthy fear. When we have a healthy fear of being deceived by feelings, we will seek God diligently in order to learn the difference between feelings which come from the flesh, spiritual feelings which come from God, and spiritual feelings which are a counterfeit, which come from unclean spirits. When we have an unhealthy fear of feelings, we will avoid the whole issue and stick with being led by the Bible.

The problem with feelings is that regardless of *where* they come from, many times they use the same *functions* of the human soul. For example, spiritual joy and fleshly happiness are very different kinds of feelings because one proceeds from our inner man and the other one proceeds from our fallen flesh nature. Happiness comes and goes very rapidly, depending on external circumstances. People are happy as long as they have or are doing the things that make them happy. But as soon as they no longer have those things or are doing those things, the happiness vanishes. Joy is more stable because it is a spiritual feeling. It’s not affected so easily by external circumstances. Indeed, we can have joy in very unpleasant external circumstances. We can have joy, even when we are being *denied* the things that make us happy in the flesh. But the fact is, both joy and happiness utilize, and are felt by, a function of the soul called the emotions.

When you have spiritual joy, you feel that joy *in* your emotions, as well as in your spirit. When you feel natural happiness, you feel that happiness *in* your emotions, as well as in your flesh. So we have to learn the difference between joy and happiness through personal experience, and by exercising our spiritual senses, like discernment. If we don't, we will become unbalanced Christians—especially if we allow ourselves to be guided by feelings. If we are being guided by feelings and we don't know the difference, we could easily end up following the dictates of our flesh—for example, happiness and unhappiness—instead of the leading of the Spirit.

Another example of this can be seen in the difference between the *checking* of the Holy Spirit, the *conviction* of Holy Spirit, and the *condemnation* that comes from the enemy. At times, all these things can feel the same to a person—especially when they are just learning how to tell the difference between them. When God gives us a spiritual checking, or when He convicts us of something we have done wrong, we *feel* bad, and at times we *feel* guilty. We can also lose our peace. When the enemy condemns us or tries to stop us from obeying God—guess what? We *feel* bad, and at times we even *feel* guilty, and we can also lose our peace.

When we actually do or say something that is displeasing to the Lord and He convicts us, we *feel* bad. When God is giving us a spiritual checking, in order to keep us from doing or saying something wrong, or in order to warn us not to go somewhere or get involved with something, we *feel* bad. When the enemy condemns us, we *feel* bad. Also, to make things even more complicated, when our flesh doesn't get it's own way, we *feel* bad too. All these *feelings* can be so similar you can't tell them apart at first and it may take a while to figure out exactly what's happening. Now, you can take the easy and the spiritually lazy way out of this predicament and just *repress* all bad feelings when you get them. In so doing, you have a 50/50 chance of repressing feelings that are coming from your flesh or the enemy. But the problem is, when you approach the issue like that you are also *missing* a very important avenue through which the Holy Spirit guides us.

I can tell you that especially when you are dealing with other people in the things of the Lord, being guided by spiritual checking's is very important. When we have a desire to help other people, it's so easy to get involved with them too deeply, or on the wrong level. Many times the Lord has kept me from getting into spiritual trouble by "checking" me when I was getting too involved with someone or dealing with them the wrong way. The more you deal with unclean spirits *in* other people, the more important it is that you be able to recognize spiritual checking's. We also need strong spiritual discernment in these kinds of situations. But being able to recognize and follow the checking's of the Lord fulfills a function that not even discernment can provide.

My point is not to give an in-depth teaching on feelings tonight. My point is to bring out the truth that unclean spirits can produce feelings in us just like the Spirit of God can produce feelings in us, and just like our flesh can produce feelings in us. When the flesh produces bad feelings, it's usually because it's not getting it's own way—just like it's happy when you give it what it desires. But as I said last week, the flesh is not a living entity with supernatural intelligence that's constantly plotting your downfall. It's a nature. Just like dogs bark because it's part of their nature, so our flesh feels happy, or sad, or mad, or hurt when it does or doesn't get what it wants. The situation is much different when unclean spirits *intentionally* give you feelings that are designed to confuse you and get you to think God is making you feel that way for some reason. This kind of thing is an *act of war* by a living, personal enemy who is out to destroy you.

Let me give you just one example of this. You probably remember that last week, my mother shared a few thoughts at the end of the chat session. Well, after it was all over, she *felt bad* about something. Since she had a good day in the Lord, and since we couldn't discern anything out of the ordinary (spiritually) that had happened

during the chat session, she eventually came to the conclusion that it *wasn't* the Lord she shared what she did and the Lord was *convicting* her. Personally, I didn't feel she did or said anything out of line, but I couldn't say *for sure* that what she was feeling *wasn't* coming from the Lord. She went to bed that night, repenting for anything wrong she might have said, and even repenting for saying anything at all, if the Lord wasn't leading her to share. The next morning, she still felt bad. After talking and praying with sister Erma, she realized that it was an attack from Satan. God doesn't keep "convicting" you of something you have done wrong *after* you have confessed it and truly repented of it. So she prayed against that spirit and it left.

The point is, she couldn't tell right away whether what she was feeling was conviction coming from the Holy Spirit or condemnation coming from another spirit because all she could tell was that she *felt* bad. But the fact is, a spirit was attacking her, not because she was walking in some kind of sin but because she obeyed the Lord. What she shared that night was a *spiritual* encouraged to one or two people in the room. Whenever God uses you to encourage the brethren or help them in some way in the spirit, don't be surprised if Satan tries to take *revenge* on you because that's the kind of creature we are dealing with.

Where do we think the desire for revenge originated? It certainly didn't originate with Adam and Eve! The desire for revenge—as well as every other evil attitude and desire mankind experiences—was transmitted to Adam and Eve through the fall. Revenge originated with Lucifer, the covering cherub. As a matter of fact, the whole temptation of Eve and Adam in the Garden was an *act of revenge* against God by Lucifer. The fallen nature of mankind IS the nature of Satan. So even if Satan is not directly responsible or directly involved in all the murder and mayhem that takes place every minute on this planet, he still bears responsibility for it because it's *his* nature that's being manifested in all those wicked deeds.

Satan not only tries his best to stop *us* from walking in truth and life, he also tries his best to keep us from being of any real spiritual help to others. When we manage to not only thwart his purposes with regards to our life, but also thwart his purposes in the lives of other people, he become furious and seeks revenge. And let me warn you—if he can't take his revenge out on you for some reason, he'll take it out on the ones you love. Make no mistake: he views people who know how to war in the spirit and set people free as an extremely dangerous individuals, and he will focus a lot of attention and expend a lot of his resources to bring *that kind* of a Christian down. That's why so many people who started off as genuine deliverance ministers have fallen, or have been destroyed, or have been *deceived* and have become involved in counterfeit deliverance. Satan doesn't take you invading his territory lightly!

Okay. Let's examine how these spirits use other people to deceive and defeat us. This is a very unpleasant subject but only *the truth* can set us free and keep us free. If what I share is too hard for you to accept or live with, try not to shoot the messenger. I'm only trying to help the saints get *complete* victory over all the things that would hinder them. The kingdom of God will be filled with all kinds of Christians—baby Christians, spiritual children and teenagers, Christians who have been wounded and are spiritually handicapped, Christians who were deceived in some area, but still kept the faith—all kinds of Christians. However, that kingdom will only be *ruled* by those who overcome *as* Jesus overcame (*Rev. 3:21*)—and He overcame everything (not just *most* things) that stood in the way of complete victory.

In order *not* to be defeated by unclean spirits which work *through* people who are around us, we have to get delivered of a lot of false doctrines we have been taught in the Church System. The first error we must get free from is the idea that it's wrong to adopt a general attitude of *suspicion* regarding other people. We also need to

reject the idea that it's wrong to suspect other believers of trying to deceive us without a ton of irrefutable evidence and proof. We are also going to have to renounce the very common teaching that it's wrong to view other Christians as our spiritual enemies. I'm not talking about hating people *in the flesh*. I'm talking about being able to cope with the reality that other Christians do become our spiritual enemies—many times without them even realizing it—because of the teachings or the “spirit” they have embraced and are following.

Paul said to “*watch in all things*” (II. Tim. 4:3-5) and also, to “*be on your guard*” (I. Cor. 16:13 NIV). He didn't say things like that for no reason. We must watch everyone who is in our lives. You have to watch those who *minister* to you—including me. I'm not above being deceived. You have to watch your co-workers on the job. You have to watch other Christians you fellowship with. You have to watch your own loved ones (that's a hard one). Finally, you have to watch yourselves. The reason we have to watch everyone and walk in a godly spiritual suspicion is because everyone in your life is a *potential* enemy. At any time, any person in your life can begin to listen to these unclean spirits *without* even realizing it, and those spirit can begin to use them against you..

I'm sorry, but it's just not possible to watch and be on guard against the wiles and the devices of *your* adversary if you are *afraid* to suspect other people, including friends, relatives and even other Christians, of being used by that adversary against you. It's a very *unpleasant* reality to live and walk in, I know. But the truth isn't always pleasant. The fact is, many times the enemy uses other people to seduce us. We can either face this reality and learn how to walk accordingly; or we can turn away from it because it's too hard and hide our heads in the sand. People who choose to stick their heads in the sand won't necessarily end up demon possessed or in Hell. But they will never be overcomers because overcomers get *complete* victory over *everything* that seeks to keep them from victory.

If we want to walk in *complete* victory over the demonic kingdom, we're going to have to watch and be on our guard towards every single person in our lives. Walking this kind of walk does *not* mean you can't have any real fellowship with them. It doesn't mean you can't spend time with them. As long as they are not being used by the enemy to seduce you or draw you away from God, we can have a “normal” kind of relationship with them, whether it be a spiritual or a natural relationship. But we must stay on guard and watch, just in case the enemy tricks *them* and starts moving *through them* to get to us. When that happens, you must act accordingly. You can't continue on with things as usual because if you do, you will end up deceived.

When someone you are involved with gets deceived and starts being used by the enemy to get to you, things have to *change* in your relationship. I don't care who it is or what kind of relationship you have with them, you must confront them with the truth and try to explain what's going on so they can get out of a position of being used against you. If they cannot see the truth or they will not accept the truth, then there must be a *spiritual* separation from them—and that spiritual separation will have to be maintained *until* they accept the truth and stop being used by the enemy. The degree of separation depends on *the degree of spiritual danger* that person poses to you.

Now, consider just this *one* fact with regards to the errors that are being taught to God's people. They are being taught that Satan can't touch them or hurt them because Jesus defeated him at the Cross. They are being taught all manner of false doctrines which are specifically designed to produce a false sense of security in them, so that they can't possibly believe they could ever be destroyed. Can you imagine the *grip* Satan is able to get on the lives of people who walk around assuming he can't touch them; who walk around assuming that God is totally responsible to keep them safe; who walk around assuming that because God is sovereign and he chose to save them, nothing can stop His plan for them from being fulfilled?

*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. **For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.***

Ephesians 6:10-12

As I have said many times, we are in a two-front war. One battle front is putting our flesh to death (dying daily). The other front is overcoming the wiles and devices of our adversary. The problem I find, everywhere I turn *outside* the Church System, is that people want to believe it's only a *one-front* war. They want to believe that if we "die daily" we won't have to worry about that whole other front. They may spin it in different ways, but the doctrine is always the same in the end. Dying to self is the answer to everything in our lives—at least *internally*. Sure, the enemy may try to attack us *externally* at times, through persecution and things like that. But we don't have to worry about facing him and defeating him when it comes to our *internal* problems if we die to self because you see, all our *internal* problems stem from "the flesh". Wrong desires, wrong thoughts, wrong feelings, bad attitudes, sin, fleshly lusts and so forth, are all problems of the flesh. So if you will just put that flesh to death, all the internal problems you face every day will be taken care of.

Please notice that *the reason* Paul admonishes us to put on the full armor of God has very little to do with the battle against the flesh. He very specifically says we are to put that armor on so we will: "...*be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*". The "wiles of the devil are not restricted to external persecution from unbelievers. The wiles of the devil are all the tricks he uses to *deceive* us. The wiles of the devil are the things he uses to try and get us to give him a place in our lives. When Paul said we are to avoid doing things that give place to Satan, he wasn't talking about Satan finding an *external* place in our lives. Satan and these unclean spirits are looking for a way to entwine themselves *IN* our lives. They are looking for ways to become PART OF our lives, so that in the end, we are being guided by them and doing their will instead of God's will.

We don't put the armor of God on to stand against "the flesh" or to "die daily". The armor of God is *not* for the purpose of battling flesh and blood. It's specifically associated with battling invisible beings—principalities, powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world. If our *only* battle (or our only *real* battle) was against "the flesh" as so many preachers and Bible teachers out here claim, then there would be no need for the armor of God. If Satan and his unclean spirits could not touch us or infiltrate our lives as long as we die to self, there would be no need for armor. You only need the armor when you are battling *invisible* creatures.

Many of the people who have set themselves up as "teachers" outside the Religious System have been deceived and are being used by Satan to convince us to spend all of our time dying to self. These ministers keep God's people ignorant of Satan's capabilities and his devices and eventually we end up just as deceived as they are. So the first group of people we need to be wary of and keep a close eye on are Bible teachers and ministers, especially the ones who frequently minister to us.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron...

I. Timothy 4:1-2

It's always interesting to listen to people talk about the current apostasy because in most cases, it shows you just how *blind* they are to the workings of the whole spirit realm. They do exactly the opposite of what Paul said we should do in Ephesus 6:11—they continually rail against flesh and blood. They are constantly talking about this false teacher and that false prophet. They are completely focused on the *men* who are leading the church down the path of destruction. They never expose the spirits behind it all. When is the last time you heard someone expose the spirits *behind* people like Benny Hinn, or Todd Bentley, or Rick Warren, or Janet Myers, or C. Peter Wagner, or Joel Osteen?

You see, this is one of the reasons people *hate* me so much. I don't focus on flesh and blood. I expose *the spirits* that are moving in and through the ones who are propagating these destructive errors. Nobody gets mad at you if you get behind a mic and say: "I disagree with pastor so-and-so's view". They won't even get mad at you if you say: "I believe brother so-and-so is wrong in this area". However, they get furious when you say: "*This man has been seduced by a religious spirit and Satan is using him (or her) to seduce others*". When you expose the spirit behind someone, that's a whole different story! The unclean spirit that's moving through that minister gets enraged because it's being exposed; and the person usually allows that spirit to vent it's rage because their own pride has been hurt. As long as we all "agree to disagree" and we don't expose the spiritual reality behind the errors that are being taught, people will put up with you. What they *won't* put up with is when you start revealing the role these spirits play in their wrong teaching.

Look closely at what Paul said when he talked about the last days apostasy. He said this apostasy would come about as a result of God's people—not the pagans, not "professing" Christians, but genuine believers—listening to "seducing spirits" and the "doctrines of devils". In this particular passage he didn't say God's people would depart from the faith in the last days because they were following *men*. He didn't say they would depart from the faith because they were following flesh and blood. He said they would be drawn away from the faith because they begin to listen to SEDUCING SPIRITS and the DOCTRINES OF DEVILS. Now it's true, in other places Paul talked about believers being deceived by men. But here, he is exposing the reality *behind* the men. He is revealing the truth behind the flesh and blood.

Why did Paul call these spirits "seducing" spirits? He called them seducing spirits because they have the power to seduce the mind. They come to us and try to wrongly divide the Scripture in *our minds*; or they try to impart false ideas or revelations *to the mind*. Once a person accepts the ideas or revelations of a seducing spirit, two things happen: (1) Their minds become *enslaved* to the power that gave them the idea or revelation; and (2) they become vessels *through which* these spirits can freely operate. They go forth and spread the teachings and ideas of these spirits among the people of God; and the same spirits that seduced them are present with them when they teach, in order to seduce the minds of those who are listening.

Did you ever talk to somebody and you knew the anointing of God was on those words, and you could see they had a real affect on the person you were talking to? Did you ever witness to anyone and you knew the words coming out of your mouth were not your own words but were the words of the Holy Spirit? Well, those who are deceived by seducing spirits do *exactly* the same thing. They speak words that are not their own. Also, they have an anointing on them. They have real, supernatural power.

When someone is walking under the influence of seducing spirits, they are doing the *same thing* for Satan through the power of those spirits that you and I do for God when we speak under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Many preachers, and Bible teachers, and writers, and bloggers, and regular folks like you and me—both inside and

outside the system—are moving and speaking under an anointing that is not God’s anointing. When they stand behind a pulpit or get behind a mic, they are not the ones who are talking. Rather, seducing spirits are speaking *through* them and when they speak, supernatural powers are being unleashed over the audience.

Whether seducing spirits try to talk to us directly, or whether they are talking to us *through* the voices of other people, the fact is, **THEY** are the ones who are talking! **THEY** are the ones who are deceiving Christians right now. It’s **THEY** who are drawing multitudes away from the faith. **THEY** are the cause of the apostasy we are now witnessing. The people (flesh and blood) they are speaking and manifesting themselves through are nothing but puppets. Without the power of these spirits behind them, they would be nobody’s. It’s the power of these spirits that makes them what they are and *draws* people to them. So whenever you read about false prophets and teachers, remember you are not dealing with flesh and blood. You are dealing with invisible spiritual powers that have deceived them and are using them to deceive multitudes of others. This is why John said:

*Beloved, **believe not every spirit, but try the spirits** whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: **Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:***

I. John 4:1-2

Why is John talking about *spirits* when warning against “false prophets”? Why, when talking about judging whether a prophet is true or false, does he say “try the spirits”? Why didn’t he say: “try the doctrine” of those who claim to be prophets? Why did he say “believe not every spirit” instead of “believe not every doctrine”? Could it be that John was trying to let us know that we’re not simply dealing with flesh and blood? Is it possible he was speaking of things as they *really are* in the spirit world? It’s not flesh and blood who is talking when a false prophet speaks. It’s the spirit that person walks under who is talking.

Contrary to what most of us assume or have been taught, doctrinal error is *not* harmless because in many cases the doctrines we are being taught are not just *human* opinions. They are the “doctrines of demons”. These doctrines were *not* conceived in the mind of man. They were conceived in the minds of supernatural creatures and planted (or inserted) into the minds of man. Since many of these doctrines have come from the minds of supernatural creatures, they contain supernatural power.

Those who think doctrine isn’t important, and who remain confident that God will lead them to glory regardless of what they believe, are not moving in faith: they are living in unreality. The *way* God leads us to glory is by giving us His Spirit—the Spirit of Truth—in order to expose and deliver us from everything (including false doctrines) which keep us from attaining that glory. This operation *is* the faithfulness of God.

Many Christians today are making the same mistake Israel made. Most of the people of Israel paid no attention to the instruction or teaching of Moses and the prophets, whose ministry were but a type and shadow of the ministry of the Holy Spirit under the New Covenant. Doctrine, obedience, faithfulness; they cast all these things behind their backs. Yet they continued to *assume* God would fulfill the promises He made to them anyway. The supreme accomplishment of the Old Testament Church was to tie God’s hands and make it impossible for Him to give them what He had prepared for them. This is why King David said they: “...*limited the Holy One of Israel*” (Ps. 78:41).

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

I. Corinthians 12:7-10

One of the things I find interesting is that many of the same Pentecostal people who believe and preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit, have a tendency to *ignore* one of those gifts in particular. They don't ever teach God's people about the gift of "discerning of spirits". Of course, the reason for this is obvious. Many of these Pentecostals, like all Fundamentalist's, deny the possibility of unclean spirits moving or speaking *through* genuine believers. If you realize demons can move through you and speak through you, then your walk will be *different* than the vast majority of today's Christians.

Please notice that Paul said the gifts listed in First Corinthians 12—including the discerning of spirits—are for the edification of the church. He said: "*But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal*" (vrs.7). The gift of discerning of spirits is for the edification of local believers. It has nothing to do with exposing unclean spirits in the unsaved. God gives this particular gift to us so we can identify wrong spirits that begin to move in *the brethren*—especially during a gathering where people are free to move in the spirit and do things like prophesy, work miracles, produce healings, give messages in tongues, and bring forth words of wisdom and revelation knowledge.

In Paul's day, when the local body came together, it was *nothing* like we understand a "church" service to be in our day. There were no "pastors" as we know them. There was no clergy/laity system, no platforms or podiums. There was no set order or program. Nobody came week after week to listen to one man. When the brethren came together, everyone—including the sisters!—were *free* to not only participate and share, but also to move *supernaturally* in the gifts of the Spirit. Therefore, it was imperative that someone in that gathering had the gift of the discerning of spirits to safe-guard the rest of the brethren in that kind of atmosphere.

The ignorance of God's people, even His Pentecostal people, regarding the workings of the supernatural realm is incredible. Wherever you find people who are open to the moving of the Spirit in a real, supernatural way, you will also find Satan is moving there as well. Indeed, one of the *easiest* places for Satan and these unclean spirits to actually *manifest* themselves as "angels of light" is in a local gathering, or in a home where the saints are open to supernatural experiences and are used to partaking of them. It's *these* kinds of places and situations where we must be on guard the most because Satan tries to *imitate* the moving of the Spirit.

Most Christians really have no idea how easy it is to *yield* to the wrong spirit in the setting of a local assembly. I've been in gatherings where a person prophesied under a *wrong* spirit and nobody in that fellowship had any idea what was going on. Nobody! They just sat there and said Amen! like a bunch of idiots! Do you know why this kind of thing happens? It's because most Christians don't believe demons can *move* through them or *speak* through them, especially in a church service. So a religious demon made utter fools of those people. Do you know these spirits take great delight in doing stuff like that? Do you know they love making fools of us? They come right in to our fellowships and they sing about Jesus, and they pray and prophesy, and they stand behind the pulpit and preach error after error because it shows just what kind of ignorant fools we are!

I'll tell you a little story about a wonderful sister I knew personally, who ended up in the deliverance ministry after being delivered herself of many, many demons. She was a Baptist and she had accepted Jesus as her Savior as a little girl. Through a series of events that I won't go into here, she ended up basically possessed and in a mental institution. Through another set of circumstances, a man who had just received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and was being led into deliverance himself, was introduced to her and was asked if he could help her. He did. The short story is that she was set free from all those spirits and became a powerful minister.

She remained under the covering of the man God used to deliver her. After the people in that church prayed for her to be filled with the Holy Spirit, she began to prophesy in the meetings (in that church the women were free to share and prophesy). After about a year of prophesying, the man who was used to deliver her and the elders of that church called her into a meeting and they showed her a list of all the prophecies she had given over that past year. They were divided into *two* columns. One column contained the prophecies that were coming from the Holy Spirit. The other column contained the prophecies that were coming from *another* spirit. She said she was crushed; but she said she also knew in her heart that she would be making a major decision that would affect her life for years to come.

She could have yielded to the pride and the self pity that was welling up inside of her, or she could have yielded to the Spirit of God as He moved through those men who loved her enough to try and help her recognize *the way* that other spirit was moving through her. She submitted to their counsel and after that, she began to recognize *herself* when that other spirit was trying to prophesy through her. It was at that point that the Lord began to use her to help deliver other people who were in serious bondage to demons.

I don't share these kinds of experiences very often because I have no intention of casting my pearls before *swine* (blind & deluded Christians). But I'm sharing this with you tonight in order to highlight the fact that unclean spirits can move through us in any situation, even when we are seeking to move in the Spirit and worship God in a *church* service. This is one reason God gives people the gift of the discerning of spirits. This gift is for the *edification* of the body. It's given to *help us* recognize when another spirit is beginning to move through us as we move in the realm of the supernatural. Most of today's Christians are simply too proud and/or too afraid to embrace this kind of gift because they are too proud and/or too afraid to acknowledge the reality that unclean spirits could ever move through **THEM** or speak through **THEM**!

Another avenue these spirits use with regards to people are people we don't even know. I'll give you one illustration that should make this point clear. A brother who worked for a feed mill, and who was asking the Lord to show him the truth regarding these spirits and what they are capable of doing, had an experience that really opened his eyes to the reality of how they can work, even through people we don't know. Here is his testimony, as he himself recounted it:

"How can the enemy use thoughts against you, **after** God has told you to do something and you **have decided** to do it? Since the following incident happened, I have seen the enemy work repeatedly in situations where God has told someone to do something only to have circumstances change to **keep that person from obeying**.

I'll let this experience speak for itself. It was revealed to a friend and my wife that we were to go to Oklahoma. Since the Lord had not indicated the purpose, I had very little interest in going because I was very carnal-minded at that time. Well, time passed and finally my wife and friend convinced me to go. We made plans and I arranged to be gone from work.

Then the Lord revealed to me in the night that the enemy would try to stop me from going. He also revealed that this would occur at my place of work. As I recall the events of that week, before our departure, I had no idea **how** the enemy would attempt to stop me. I was, as you could understand, more alert and even wondered if something were going to fall on me. I didn't know what to expect. I was operating a feed mill at a grain elevator and there were many things that could happen in one of those places. I had to deal with many people and a variety of situations.

The week started normally, but about half way through it we started getting an **unusually large**, I should say overwhelming, number of orders. This sparked a concern by the manager since I was planning to leave. If he hadn't known the Lord had told us to go, he would have told me I couldn't go. I wound up in his office to talk about it as it was apparent that we were overloaded. That kind of lets you know the picture of the situation.

On top of that, about a day before it was time to leave, the person who was to replace me came and said that I couldn't go because we were too busy and he wouldn't be able to handle it. My jaw must have nearly fallen to the floor. I couldn't believe my ears. You see, this young man was a workaholic. He would go home from work and farm until two or three in the morning, day in and day out. He loved any work that was a challenge. (To tell you of his capabilities, soon after this incident, at a very young age, he started managing a branch elevator and feed mill.) Normally, he'd tell you he could handle anything and was the type that would tackle anything! This was completely out of character for him!

I reminded him of the time he was going to Wyoming and was worried about being away, leaving me with more responsibility. I had told him not to worry about the place because I would make sure everything was done, 'I could handle it.' As I was reminding him of this, He suddenly got this funny look on his face and told me to go ahead, 'He could handle it.' Then he turned around and walked away. I was left standing there thinking, 'That was really strange; what in the world is going on!'

The orders kept coming in, so I decided to stay after hours and work a little harder, still **wondering how** the enemy would try to stop me. Then it came out! I never will forget it. While I was talking with a farmer as I loaded his pickup, he said to me, '**I really don't need this feed.**' I said, 'What do you mean, you don't need this feed?' He indicated to me that he had enough feed to last way into the next month. **He had just decided** (entertained the idea) to get some more feed now because he wasn't sure what was going to happen next month. It was then that I realized the enemy or spirits were **putting thoughts into people's minds**, which was causing the overload on me and the mill.

Remembering where the Bible says Eve was beguiled in her mind, I began to understand the 'out of character' performance, and the funny look of the young man who was to replace me while I was gone. I asked the very next customer if she was getting her feed a little early? She said, 'Yes.' I didn't pursue the subject any further with her. There was no reason to. With this feed mill incident, God was showing me how simply, in every day life, **a spirit** and/or the enemy can give simple thoughts to people to come against God's plan."

Of course, Christians who are blind to the reality and the work of unclean spirits would think this kind of a testimony is bizarre. They would say this guy's just a Charismaniac who sees demons under every rock and blames demons for everything that goes wrong in his life. They would say: "*Come on Daniel! Do you really expect us to believe that every time someone's business picks up unexpectedly, demons are behind it? That's the way things go in the business world! Businesses slow down and businesses pick up*" My answer is **No**, I don't think every time a business picks up, demons are behind it. But when something out of the ordinary happens in the business world that ends up keeping a **Christian** from doing God's will—then **Yes**, it's very possible demons are involved in that situation and only a fool would discount such a possibility!

I'm sorry if people don't like it that I keep saying many of today's Christians are *fools* but it's the truth. I'm not saying that because I hate them. The errors they are taught makes them fools. Even if I could convince them that this guy's testimony is true, and that spirits *can* work through people we don't even know like that in order to keep us from doing God's will, they still wouldn't get it because in the back of their minds they're thinking God will always protect them and override the wiles of the devil. They think that because God loves them, because God is faithful, because they have been saved by grace, and because God is sovereign, Satan's devices won't ever work *on them*. The lies they are taught puts them in a state of spiritual unreality and as a result, they walk in pride and presumption regarding the demonic kingdom.

Another important avenue these spirits use with regards to people are those who are and integral part of our lives—family members, close friends and fellow believers. This is the most unpleasant aspect of this whole issue. We all know that apart from any spiritual considerations, it's very easy to come under the influence of someone in a bad way in the natural. Every parent knows which kids in the neighborhood are bad for their children to play with and which ones are okay for them to play with. When Johnny plays with the wrong kind of kids, he comes home manifesting things you don't want to see in him.

Paul said: "*Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners*" (1. Cor. 15:33). The writer of Proverbs said: "*He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed*" (Prov 13:20). Even in the natural realm, we are easily influenced by the people we keep company with so we are admonished not to hang around people who are evil, or people who are fools. Well, how much more do you think this is the case when dealing with unclean spirits?

Most of us live in a religious world that is so far removed from the truth, it would be comical if it wasn't so tragic. People walk around convinced that God is protecting them from the wiles and the devices of Satan when in reality He's not. They are deceived and they have given Satan many "places" in their lives because they refuse to do their part. They refuse to face the truth and do the things the Lord requires of them in order to walk under His protection. They presume Satan can't touch them when the truth is, he has done much more than touch them. He has found many places in them to move and operates.

When it comes to relationships, it's very easy to come under the influence of the people around us. And what do you suppose happens when you come under the influence of a person who is walking under the influence of unclean spirits? You come under the influence of those *same* spirits. So God has to teach us how to walk with people who are close to us, when they are walking under the influence of these spirits.

If you ever spent any time flowing with our little group here in Pennsylvania, you would hear us talking about "coming under" this or that spirit. What we are talking about is coming under *the influence* of different spirits—either directly or through other people who are walking under them. You see, Satan is trying to bring us *under* his influence 24/7, any way he can. Many times his most successful avenue is the people around us because he knows we are not willing to have our relationships disrupted or ruined. He knows when we are in a place spiritually where we would rather compromise and do things we know aren't of God in order to keep peace with the ones we love; and he knows exactly how to use that kind of situation *against* us.

So before we close tonight, I want to quickly mention some of the ways we can come under other people, particularly other believers. We can easily come under the wrong spirits other believers walk under when we do certain religious activities with them that constitute having spiritual union with them. Spiritual union takes place

between people when they lay hands on one another or pray for one another. Just praying together with someone about something can bring you under a wrong spirit they are walking in. Taking communion together is a form of spiritual union. Worshiping together is a form of spiritual union. Studying the Bible with someone is a form of spiritual union. Even having dinner with someone *can be* a form of spiritual union if you are having spiritual fellowship during that meal. Now, having spiritual union with other believers can be a *good* thing if they are not walking under the influence of other spirits. But it's a bad thing when they are walking under the influence of unclean spirits because that opens *you* up to those same spirits.

This is why lots of interaction with other Christians can actually be harmful to you instead of helpful. This is why I reject the whole “*can't-we-all-just-get-along*” attitude that pervades Christendom. No! We can't all just get along because in order to do that, I'll have to open myself up to all the crazy spirits *you* walk under. In order to get along, I'll have to pray with you and enter into spiritual union with all the spirits you walk under. In order to get along, I'll have to listen to your religious teachings—teachings that are coming *from* seducing spirits.

The attitude that says we shouldn't let our petty individual opinions, or non-essential doctrinal differences, separate us from one another is a clever deception that's designed to bring you under the influence of *many* spirits that are operating in today's Christians. You know how it goes. One day you realize that your best friend has recently accepted a very strange doctrine and is pushing it on everyone. You tell your friend you disagree with this new teaching and you give your reasons why. Then your friend says: “*That's okay. It's no big deal. It's nothing to separate over and besides, we agree on so many other important issues*”.

But what if that strange new doctrine came from a *seducing* spirit? And what if believing and propagating that doctrine opened your friend up to that spirit in a really big way? What if you see that spirit gaining more and more control over your friend? Is it a big deal or not? Is it something to separate over or not? In a situation like that, if you “agree to disagree” and stay in fellowship with your friend, you are opening yourself up to the *same* spirit that seduced them. In a few weeks, *both* of you will be walking under the influence of that spirit. Many times the plea to agree to disagree and maintain fellowship with someone is a device of Satan.

And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Revelation 14:1-5

We've looked at this passage several times and from several different angles over the last year but I want to look at it again from the standpoint of walking free from any influence of unclean spirits. When John said this group of saints are “virgins” who had not been “defiled with women”, he wasn't speaking literally and carnally. He wasn't

saying these people will be male virgins who have never touched a woman. The term “women” is being used *metaphorically*. It may represent Babylon (the great Harlot and all her harlot daughters)—which includes not only the big denominational systems, but also the small ones people set up *out here*. It could be a reference to the flesh or it could be representing something else. Whatever the term women represents, the idea John was trying to get across is clear—this group will be utterly faithful to the Lamb. They will refuse to have *spiritual union* with anything or anyone that can *defile* them or make them *unfit* to walk with the Lamb on Mt. Zion.

Brethren, there is a *heavy* price to pay if you want to be one of those 144,000. Walking with the Lamb in the high places, on spiritual Mt. Zion, isn't part of the package deal of Christianity. You don't get to walk on Mt. Zion with the Lamb simply by accepting Jesus as your Savior. You don't get to walk on Mt. Zion just because you have been justified and received the imputed righteousness of Jesus. You don't get to walk on Mt. Zion just because you have attended a fellowship of some kind or have faithfully read your Bible your whole life. Walking on Mt. Zion with the Lamb is a reward for those who have been *fanatical* about remaining pure—and we can't possibly remain pure if we are walking under the influence of unclean spirits every day.

If we want to be one of those 144,000, we'll have to ignore the demand to keep having spiritual union with other Christians regardless of what spirits they walk under. We'll have to ignore the Pied Piper when he starts singing “*Can't We All Just Get Along?*” We'll have to be able to see through this very subtle deception that says that since we're all on the same path but just at different places, it's not right to isolate ourselves from other people who are on that same path, just because they aren't at the same place we are. People who talk that kind of gibberish are deluded. I've got news for you—we're *not* all on the same path. Many of my brethren have been deceived and they are on a completely different path than the one I'm on! We'll also have to get to the place where it no longer bothers us when people say we are Pharisees and a “holier-than-thou” types because we refuse to enter into spiritual union with anyone and everyone who calls themselves a Christian.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Ephesians 5:25-27

When Paul said Jesus is coming back for a Church that is holy, without blemish, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, he wasn't just talking about people who will be walking free from sin and worldliness and the flesh. He was also talking about people who will be walking free from the influence of all unclean spirits. Since it's very easy to come under the influence of these spirits through *interaction* with other people who are *themselves* under their influence, we should be asking the Lord to show us how to walk *carefully* with others.

To Be Continued Next Week