

4 Evil Spirits in the Modern World

Introduction. Demons possessed people in the New Testament and produced symptoms like muteness, deafness, blindness, convulsions, superhuman strength, and self-destructive behavior. But demon possession has ended because it served its purpose of confirming the power and teaching of Christ (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4).

That doesn't mean, however, that evil has been removed from the Earth. Satan is the father of evil spirits that affect the mind with unrighteous thoughts and immoral qualities, drawing us away from Christ's doctrine (1 Timothy 4:1).

The only defense against these spirits is careful study and sound knowledge of the Word, so we're going to "test the spirits" to see if we're "of God" (1 John 4:1-6).

I. The Spirit of Pride

- A. Pride is spiritually dangerous because it turns the soul inward, resists God, and distorts how we see ourselves and others. It isn't a small flaw but a root sin that can lead to downfall, division, and estrangement from God (Proverbs 16:5).
- B. Psalm 138:6.
- C. Jeremiah 9:23-24.
- D. James 4:6.
- E. 1 Peter 5:5.
- F. Practical steps to defeat pride:
 - 1. Practice intentional gratitude.
 - 2. Learn to listen more than you speak.
 - 3. Serve other people without recognition.

II. The Spirit of Jealousy

- A. Jealousy can make a person inwardly restless, bitter, and preoccupied with what others have rather than with gratitude and faithful stewardship. It leads to disorder and vileness rather than wisdom and peace (Proverbs 27:4).
- B. Proverbs 23:17.
- C. James 3:14-16.
- D. Galatians 5:19-21.
- E. Romans 13:13.
- F. Practical steps to defeat jealousy:
 - 1. Find the core belief or fear that causes jealousy and then work replacing it.
 - 2. If someone's success stings, ask, "What can I learn from their habits or choices?" Then apply one small takeaway.
 - 3. Serve other people without recognition.

III. The Spirit of Bondage

- A. People become entrapped by sins such as gambling, alcohol, drugs, tobacco/vaping, pornography, or sexual immorality. People become entrapped by their career, their hatred of others, or having their children in too many things. Addictions destroy the human soul (Romans 8:15).
- B. Proverbs 20:1.

- C. John 8:34.
- D. 1 Corinthians 6:12.
- E. Romans 12:2.
- F. Practical steps to defeat addiction:
 - 1. Acknowledge the problem and really commit to change.
 - 2. Build a “support group” of trusted Christians to maintain accountability.
 - 3. Replace the “role” addiction played (relief, excitement, connection) with healthier and more righteous alternatives.

IV. The Spirit of Weakness

- A. Christians are tempted by feebleness. They’re tired of trying and the ultimate result is a loss of faithfulness (Galatians 6:9).
- B. Psalm 3:6.
- C. Revelation 2:3.
- D. 2 Timothy 1:7.
- E. 1 Corinthians 16:13-14.
- F. Practical steps to defeat weakness:
 - 1. Set realistic spiritual goals and pursue them.
 - 2. Rely on God’s strength, not your own: God’s Word, prayer, and worship.
 - 3. Obey God in small steps, thus removing fear and building confidence gradually (i.e. invite to worship, invite for study, then lead the study).

Conclusion. Satan looks for those who aren’t vigilant (1 Peter 5:8). Do you see these spirits as powerful and seducing deceivers? What will you do about them? Does the spirit of God or the spirit of error dwell in you?

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