

Supporting Pastors by Ministering to Christians in Need of Guidance and Deliverance



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Dear APF Supporter:

Greetings!

I believe that it has been a beautiful summer and I hope that you all have been enjoying this season. The blessing of nature is wonderful, and I have been more aware of the way nature points us to God.

Praises:

I simply praise God for His many, many blessings for me. Life isn't always easy and the enemy often attacks, but God sees me through.

I praise God for the great support that I have received for the ministry. The APF Board has been great. We had our first meeting at the new office, and it was humbling and joyful time to share the building with them.

I praise God that He is a God who is still at work in the world, just as He was in the Bible! People come for help and He is faithful in bringing healing and deliverance to those who humble themselves before Him.

Something to Consider:

Exodus 7:8-13; 20-22—⁸ *The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, ⁹ "When Pharaoh says to you, 'Perform a miracle,' then say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh,' and it will become a snake."*

¹⁰ *So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. ¹¹ Pharaoh then summoned wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts: ¹² Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs. ¹³ Yet Pharaoh's heart became hard and he would not listen to them, just as the LORD had said...*

²⁰ *Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD had commanded. He raised his staff in the presence of Pharaoh and his officials and struck the water of the Nile, and all the water was changed into blood. ²¹ The fish in the Nile died, and the river smelled so bad that the Egyptians could not drink its water. Blood was everywhere in Egypt.*

²² *But the Egyptian magicians did the same things by their secret arts, and Pharaoh's heart became hard; he would not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as the LORD had said.*

“It works, so it must be of God!” is a comment that I hear frequently in regard to different practices that are occult. The practice brings about something that is good, such as healing to an ailment. Since healing appears to occur, the conclusion is that God must have brought the healing. The text above from Exodus, however, shows that magical arts—sorcery, witchcraft, wizardry, shamanism, voodoo, and more—can produce a supernatural act that is not of God.

Miriam-Webster dictionary defines occultism as *belief in or study of the action or influence of supernatural or supernormal powers*. The definition leaves out, though, that the supernatural power is not of the One True Living God, but of evil spirits. The evil spirits counterfeit the work of the Holy Spirit, and that counterfeit is only a mimic of what the Holy Spirit can do. There are

also limits to what the evil spirits can do. Reading further in Exodus, it tells that the sorcerers were not able to do the miracles that Moses and Aaron did (see Exodus 8:18). Nonetheless, what they can do is very powerful and real. However, it is not of God.

The counterfeit work is not genuine, especially in regard to healing. If a person is healed through an occult practice of a physical ailment, that ailment is shifted to another part of the person. Soon problems can be seen in mental, emotional, or psychological parts of the person. Possibly, a different physical problem will manifest. Sometimes, the problems don't manifest in the person, but in the person's children or spouse. The demons can't do a legitimate, genuine work, but can only make it look to be real. The symptoms may disappear, for a time, but they will either reappear, or come in another form.

The danger of using occult practices for supernatural healing or power is that a person is putting his or her faith in the powers of darkness instead of the Living God. Such practice is forbidden in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3-4 & Deuteronomy 5:6-10) and has serious consequences. When entering the territory of Satan and his host, nothing comes without a price. He may seem to give you something good, but he always takes something away and works to damage faith more and more.

Writing about the dangers of occult may cause fear and lead people to throw out all that is supernatural. I encourage you to not do so! God is still a God of miracles, and is at work in supernatural ways. I do not agree with the view such gifts ceased with the ending of the time of the Apostles. It is God who does the miracles, not the men! God still does miracles for His honor and glory and to bring people to Him. He even does miracles for the unsaved and without Christians praying. He loves us and is at work for us. The enemy wants to counterfeit that work so people worship him and to discredit those who are truly doing God's work. Especially when demons have hurt people, I have seen God bring amazing physical healing. It is not that I have a great gift, but God is faithful to bring healing to those bound up just as He did to the woman with bleeding in the New Testament (see Luke 13:10-17). If there is a counterfeit, there must something that is genuine!

Prayer Concerns:

Please pray for upcoming speaking engagements on July 24-25 at Griner Mennonite Church and in September at Bethel Mennonite Church.

Please pray blessings of healing for those who call for help.

Please pray for courage and strength to daily encounter the powers of darkness and their work against those who come for help.

Final Thoughts:

The tremendous hope we have in the Lord Jesus Christ includes His mighty working today. Isaiah foretold His work of healing in Isaiah 53:5 and Peter confirmed it to be true in 1 Peter 2:24. The powers of darkness like to imitate true healing, bringing the supernatural that is not of God into the world. I pray that we all can have a growing discernment to know what is and is not of God!

In Christ,



Ben Snyder