

Ministering to Christians Seeking Spiritual Freedom and Deliverance



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Dear Life of Freedom Ministries Supporter:

Greetings!

Wow! March sure didn't seem like March! Sunshine and temperatures in the 80s sure made it feel more like June. It has been nice to be outside playing and working. I hope that blessing of spring warms your hearts as it has mine.

Praises:

It has been a blessing to see God lead people through turmoil. Often when people seek deliverance, the enemy tries to bring a great deal of trauma to persuade them to stop. God has led people through these dark times to freedom. What a blessing!

The Bible studies have been really enjoyable for me. I enjoy preparing for them and sharing God's Word and my experiences with the group.

I praise God for your support. Whether words of encouragement, prayers, or finances, the support is a blessing.

Something to Consider:

Mark 1:23-24—²³ *Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil (unclean) spirit cried out,* ²⁴ *“What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”*

At the March Bible study, we did a brief survey of Scripture about our enemy, Satan and his host. One point that was made was that demons desire to reside inside humans in order to accomplish their plans. The idea of demonization is not popular. I've written in the past that the term *demon possession*, as used in the passage above is unfortunate. I prefer to use the word *demonization*. The word *possession* gives way too much credit to demons, as if they own the person and is in total control. For instance, a person who is “possessed” may try to make a claim, “the devil made me do it!” Instead, *demonization* leaves room for different degrees of influence and inhabitation. Each individual person is accountable for his or her actions and cannot place blame on demons or Satan. Therefore, even while inhabiting a believer, the demon's work is still a matter of influence, not possession or control.

At the April Bible study, we will take a closer look at demonization. I'll go into greater detail about the reality of demonization and what it means. However, a few points should be shared in the newsletter. First and foremost, just because a person is demonized *does not* mean a person is not a Christian. When we read of Jesus setting people free in the Bible, He treats them all as victims who need to be freed. In May, we will address what can cause demonization and it is true that personal sin can cause demonization. However, even in these cases, the person needs help to becoming free to live for Jesus and doesn't need to be condemned. Demons do not make a person

evil, but simply influences the person to think or do evil things. Demons do not steal salvation, but work to hinder the life of a believer. Therefore, I encourage everyone to not regard a demonized person to be contaminated and needing to be avoided. They need our love, not rejection.

A second point that I'd like to share is actually a recommendation of a few books on this topic. Dr. Karl Payne's *Spiritual Warfare: Christians, Demonization, and Deliverance*, is one example. In this book, Dr. Payne does an excellent job of challenging the view that demons can't reside in a Christian. *Confronting Powerless Christianity* by Dr. Charles Kraft is another excellent book on this topic. He also directly challenges those who criticize the inner healing/deliverance ministries. His book is valuable for explaining causes of demonization and how to be free by getting rid of the "garbage" they use to inhabit a person. The last book is Dr. C. Fred Dickason's *Demon Possession & the Christian: A New Perspective*. This book does use the term *demon possession*, but he does address the reality of inhabiting demons. Other books are out there, but I find these three to be most in line with my experience and understanding.

Finally, the most important point is that Jesus Christ can powerfully set free a demonized person. Therefore, we don't need to fear the reality of demonization. Again, the victims don't need condemnation. They need freedom! Jesus declared that He was sent to "proclaim freedom for the prisoners..." (Luke 4:18). The release of the prisoners still continues today, as Jesus didn't give a deadline. What a joy it is to see a captive set free!

Prayer Concerns:

Events: *Life of Freedom Bible Studies*—The next monthly Bible study will be on Monday, April 9th at 6:30pm. All are invited to attend. The topic for this Bible study will be "Demonization." It is part four of the series on spiritual warfare.

On March 26, my family suffered a loss. One of our two dogs, Ralph, died from being hit by a car. Old Ralph was a blessing to me and to my family for almost 13 years. I'm thankful for the years God gave us with him. My prayer is for the children especially to learn the value of life and to learn to grieve.

Final Thoughts:

Demonization isn't a fun topic, as it is often associated with evil and pain. I hear *many* sad stories of how demons have afflicted people, and it can cause great sorrow. The Bible study time is not to glorify what the demons do to people, but rather how God does a mighty work of healing. Without God at work through the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross, we'd be even more troubled by demons. God has put in place for believers the ability to appropriate His victory. Even though we'll be talking about demonization, the backdrop is the Truth of God's love for us. Let's not forget that He is a God who is full of love, grace, and mercy!

In Christ,



Ben Snyder

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