

Walking in Freedom over Uncleanness and the Occult

Have you ever been stuck with a fishhook? It's not pleasant, to say the least. In this lesson, let's close some doors to the enemy's work in our lives – and take some of his hooks out of us while we're at it!

Let's explore several dangers which have the potential to sidetrack us, limit our effectiveness, destroy our ministry, keep us from perceiving spiritual truth, and stop us from flowing in the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit.

We need to talk about some things and practices that God has forbidden us to engage in – and for good reason! Let's see what effect they can have on us, and how we can walk free from them. If you have ever been on a CS retreat you will recognize a lot of similar themes here, but often there isn't time there to do teaching, not are they set up to allow you to ask questions.

It's not possible in a hour to give an exhaustive study on these topics, so I want to offer several things to you.

1. We have made available on our church website my complete notes for this talk.
2. We have articles available on a number of topics. We can make those available to you for downloading.

3. We have also made an audio copy of this talk which we did in 2006 available on our website at <http://www.htchurch.com/sermon/walking-in-freedom>. You can listen to it there on the site, and download it as an .mp3. You can also hear it through our podcast. If you visit our site you can see how to access that. If you have trouble finding it anywhere, remember it will be the last in any list, because it's the oldest audio we have up on the site or podcast.
4. I also have a sheet which you can hand in to me in confidence and we'll try to get you help on any topic you may be curious about, even if it's something we don't talk about here tonight.

What's the Problem?

In His Word, God forbids His people to engage in certain practices and behaviors.

- Idolatrous acts and participating in idolatrous worship
- Sexual practices which God condemns
- Contact with supernatural beings who do not obey the God of the Bible
- Using supernatural power or supernaturally-obtained knowledge which is not from Him

God forbids these practices for several reasons.

- God is a jealous God! What does it mean to say that God is jealous for us?
Human jealousy is very ugly. But God has a holy jealousy, which is part of His love. He doesn't want you to get away from Him, and He wants the best for you, without harming you. His jealousy is the passionate intensity He has for you to belong to Him alone. He has bought us at a great price – the blood of His Son –

and so He wants us to walk in His own plan for our lives, which will provide a better future for us.

- God knows that these practices are destructive to individuals, relationships, and society. The harm they create may be physical and/or emotional, as well as spiritual.
- God knows that these practices expose human beings to the risk of **demonization**, which simply means that when we engage in these practices, demonic spirits will be able to obtain a foothold in our lives.

God loves us and wants to free us from all demonic influence in our lives.

- Through the “**4 R’s**” we have been studying we can experience God’s freedom and cleansing from all demonic influence. Tonight we will pray...
 - **Revelation:** the Holy Spirit shows us the enemy’s door or foothold.
 - **Repentance:** we turn away from the things that have offended God.
 - **Renunciation:** we renounce the things which created a doorway for the enemy. This means we verbally declare that we reject something by *proclaiming against it*. There is power in making these declarations in the Name of Jesus. (Think of the difference between: announce, denounce, pronounce, and *renounce*.)
 - **Receiving:** we obtain grace from the Lord to walk in victory over those things and not return to them.

- This process will not only close doors to the enemy but remove any footholds he has obtained in our lives

Possible Pathways to Demonization

What does it mean to be “demonized?”

- To say that someone is demonized simply means that there are one or more demonic spirits which are at work in his or her life.

Why should we not use the term “possessed?”

- The normal New Testament word for demonic activity in a person’s life is *daimonizomai*, which we should simply translate as “demonized.” This word was translated by the translators of the King James Bible as “possessed with demons.”
- While “possessed” might have been the culturally understood term in the 1600’s, it is not an accurate translation, as it implies that people may be “owned” by demons or the devil. Those of us who speak modern English actually mistake what is being said, because in older English “possessed of” meant “owned” in the active sense, not “owned by” in the passive sense. So people said, “he is possessed of great wealth,” or, “she is possessed of great beauty.” It meant he had wealth, not that wealth had him.
- “Possession” has more to do with stories of “selling your soul to the devil” than biblical reality. Except in the very rarest of cases, a person who is under the

influence of demonic spirits can be delivered from their control and is not completely under their control.

- When talking about people who are afflicted by evil spirits, the New Testament simply says that they are “demonized” or that they “have a demon.”

Christians must awaken to the reality of spiritual warfare!

- Although Christians cannot be “possessed,” they can certainly be influenced by demonic spirits. Christians must realize that although there is protection in Christ, that protection is... *in Christ!* Sin and occultic practices can allow the enemy to have a foothold and create a demonic stronghold in their lives.
- The New Testament makes a number of statements and warnings about demonic activity which would make no sense whatsoever if it were not possible for the enemy to harm us.
- Christians must realize that we are in a real war, with a real enemy. *“Be sensible and vigilant, because your adversary the Devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking someone he may devour...” (1 Pet. 5:8)* But sadly, Western Christians sometimes commit dangerous errors because they may:
 - *Pretend the power of the enemy is not real.* The Bible assures us that the devil and his demons are real, and powerful.
 - *Act as if the reality of demonic activity doesn't affect them.* The Bible teaches us to walk carefully because the enemy is looking to “pick off” someone from the herd. [Think about those nature shows...]

- *Engage in activities which give the enemy a legal right to afflict them.* God condemns occultic activity in the strongest terms possible because he knows that it opens a door to the enemy's work in your life. [Ouija boards are a prime example – if you play with the technological device of a demonic spirit, how much Ouija board is enough?]
- *Walk in ignorance or apathy of the risks when we engage in dangerous practices.* The devil doesn't "play fair" and to say that you were just having harmless fun is no protection when you go onto his territory. ["I had my fortune told for fun!" Can you ignore the law of gravity?]
- *Hope the enemy won't bother them if they don't bother him.* This is wishful thinking – and dangerous. He is committed to your ruin and makes no truces!

The Doorway of Uncleaness

The door of illicit sexual relationships

- Because of the way he has designed families and individuals, God forbids us to engage in behaviors that: (1) are contrary to nature; (2) should be viewed as dishonorable and shameful; or (3) are destructive to the human personality.
- Christians are not prudes. God is not against sex – He invented it! That may mess up your theology! What God *is* against is sexual activity outside the boundaries of the marriage relationship. The general term for this in the Bible is

fornication. More modern translations of the Bible may render this word as “sexual immorality.”

- God’s attitude towards sexual sin is simple: “*Flee fornication.*” (1 Cor. 6:18a)
- When God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, He was bringing them out of a pagan world that did not understand the boundaries. (Mention the depravity of Egyptian culture and of pagan gods.) Because of this, the Law of Moses gives a very specific listing of practices He considered evil, so there could be no doubt: rape, incest, close marriages, incest, homosexuality, etc.

Are sexual sins are worse than other sins?

- Our sexuality is such an important part of our God-designed humanity that sexual sins are indeed worse than most other sins. Sexual sins deform and damage our personality at a fundamental level, so much so that one can even become confused about the most basic identifying mark of his own humanity – whether he is male or female.
- When we commit sexual sin with another, we can bring untold damage to that person as well. Even sexual sins committed in isolation harm others; they can not only become destructive to our personalities, but also create barriers to real intimacy with our spouses.

Recognizing and breaking the power of soul ties

- God has also forbidden illicit sexual acts because whether we care to discuss it or not, sexual intercourse is a spiritual experience as well as a physical one.

- *Do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." (1 Cor. 6:16)*
- God has not designed us for a multitude of sexual partners. There is a spiritual connection which takes place in the marriage act, not merely a physical one. What we call a "soul tie" can be created in which the person's will and heart can become bound to the sexual partner. People can thus become emotionally bound to people with whom they had sexual intercourse in the past. For example, in Genesis 34, we read how a man named Shechem raped Dinah, the daughter of Jacob. And the Bible says his soul cleaved to her. Sadly, the modern world is full of tragic stories of obsessive relationships and their bad fruit.

Other unhealthy soul ties

- Besides unhealthy emotional bonds between sexual partners, there are other kinds of unhealthy soul ties. Some people are excessively devoted to other relationships such as "co-dependent" friendships or parent-child relationships that are beyond the bounds of what is emotionally healthy.
- Even non-sexual soul ties can create a doorway for the enemy's work in our lives as unhealthy human relationships breed fear, grief, manipulation, control, etc. [Cutting the apron strings...]
- A healthy soul has healthy interactions with others because it derives life from the Lord, not from other people. Can this be why we even use the expression in describing such people that they are "draining?"

The Doorway of the Occult

In general

- The word *occult* comes from the Latin *occultus*, which means *hidden*. It refers in general to hidden or forbidden wisdom or knowledge.
- God has forbidden us to worship other gods, or to seek supernatural power or knowledge from any other source but Him. The Devil is happy to oblige people who will not stay in God's pasture.
- The Bible cannot be more clear than when it says: "*Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord*" (Deut. 18:10-12, NIV)
- A person who contacts supernatural beings other than God or who seeks supernatural knowledge apart from God will easily become ensnared by demonic spirits who will deceive and afflict him. And deception can be worse than affliction because if you are deceived you don't *know* you are deceived.
- This also applies to attempts by people to develop some supposed abilities of the human soul. It may indeed be true that the fallen human soul retains some of the abilities it had before the Fall of Man; nonetheless, we are never encouraged by God to make use of these abilities. Apart from Christ, people lack the maturity and wisdom to make use of such powers, assuming they even exist. People who

seek to develop their “psychic” abilities typically become demonically influenced. They will quickly and in almost all cases deny the Work and uniqueness of Christ.

- There are several main categories of spiritual dangers which can expose a person to demonic influence and which can create a demonic stronghold in a person’s life. It is not possible to provide a complete list of these dangers; in general, the Bible advises us not to do anything which we cannot do to the glory of God! (1 Cor. 10:31)
- Question # 1: If something is questionable – why would you do it?
- Question # 2: Can you do it to the glory of the God of the Bible? The question is not whether it makes you feel good or trims your hips and thighs.

Idolatry

- Idolatry is the sin of worshipping any God other than the one, true God. It’s an exclusive club, the club of God: it has one member! In order to avoid the sin of idolatry, we must clearly understand Who this God is. But all we can know about Him is what He has chosen to tell us about Him; so we must know His Word. While we cannot “define” God, it is not difficult to distinguish this God from other gods:
 - He is the Creator of all things
 - He describes Himself as “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”
 - He is the author of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures

- He describes Himself as a triune God, eternally existing in three Persons: the Father, the Son (the Lord Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit
- Jesus, Who is God the Son, became a man and died to redeem Man to God
- Any religion which cannot give its agreement to these points is certainly idolatrous. This includes Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, paganism, Wicca, worship of nature spirits, etc. Exception: Jews are not idol worshippers as they worship the True God but do not accept the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Idolatry is not simply mental belief, but includes participation in the prayers, worship and ceremonies related to any such religion.
- By biblical definition idolatrous prayers include supposedly Christian prayers made to Mary, the mother of Jesus, to angels, and to deceased “saints.” There is only one mediator between God and Man. (1 Tim. 2:5)

Participation in Cultic Groups

- Quasi-Christian or other groups with unbiblical views of Jesus Christ. This includes groups such as Christian Science, Scientology, Unification Church (“the Moonies”), Mormonism, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Unitarianism, Masonic groups, various New Age groups, Spiritualist churches, and groups teaching reincarnationist beliefs.
- In general, nearly all cultic groups attack the Person of Christ (Who He is) or the Work of Christ (What He did). This is always a quick and good barometer as to

the safety of any group. In 1 John 4:3, we read this: *And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God...*

Divination

- Divination is obtaining knowledge about people, events and situations through supernatural means other than a revelation from the God of the Bible.
- Common divination practices include: astral projection, Ouija board, telepathy, fortune-telling, tarot cards, palm-reading, horoscopes and astrology, dowsing (which is sometimes called water witching), mind reading, mediumship (“channeling”), séances and conversing with the “dead” or with “ghosts,” automatic trance writing, “psychic readings,” and interpretation of omens.
- Satan’s practice of revealing information to people and guiding them through the work of familiar spirits is a counterfeit of the Holy Spirit’s gifts of prophecy and the word of knowledge. (Explain.)

Witchcraft and sorcery

- At its most basic level, witchcraft is a work of the flesh, according to Galatians 5. This means that there is a normal tendency in fallen, human flesh towards manipulation, intimidation, and control of others.
- At a deeper level is the reality of supernatural witchcraft, which is using objects, spells, chants, curses, and demonic assignments to manipulate or control persons, places or events. **Sorcery** by a strict definition involves the use of potions and drugs to achieve the effect.

- Under the category of witchcraft and sorcery would also come such things as black magic and “white magic,” manipulation and control by religious figures, use of dedicated objects such as amulets or jewelry, and sacrifices of animals or human beings.
- Christians should not be naïve about materials and objects that are dedicated to the enemy or have been used for witchcraft or for false worship in general. Demonic spirits may attach themselves to places, to animals and even to physical objects such as idols, artwork, and jewelry. Scripture warns us to keep an accursed thing away from us, lest we become an accursed thing like it! (Josh. 6:18)

Deceptive Adaptations

- Of special note and danger today are practices which have been deceptively adapted to the beliefs of our society in order to conceal their occultic or idolatrous nature.
- These practices are usually re-packaged for Westerners as a philosophy, an exercise, a psychological therapy or a medical treatment.
- Although commonly accepted in America, these practices are based on and still contain their spiritual foundation and can lead to demonic bondage. They include
 1. Yoga.
 - The postures of yoga are actually postures of worship to Hindu gods.

- Many of the mantras or chants which people do as they practice yoga are actually the names of Hindu deities, or even statements in which one declares death over himself.
2. Other practices or “therapies” which involve the manipulation or transfer of “life energies” such as “kundalini,” “chi,” “prana,” etc. This includes ta’i chi, feng shui, traditional Chinese acupuncture, reiki, certain massage therapies, and related practices.
 - All of these things are based on adjusting or regulating the flow of supposed energies within the human body.
 - The acupuncturists believe that there are 72,000 meridians or lines which channel energy in the body. Even if this is true, how did they acquire this knowledge 4,000 years ago?
 - God has an answer for our healing.
 3. Hypnosis and similar therapies which involve suspension of the human will, such as regression or past lives therapies.
 4. “New Age” medicinal practices or “holistic” medicine practices which incorporate any of the elements described in #'s 1, 2, and 3, above. This includes homeopathic medicine and may include chiropractic medicine, depending on the practitioner.
 5. Any martial art which retains its spiritual component, particularly when it involves manipulating the *chi* or *ki*. This includes traditional karate.

6. Participation in the religious ceremonies of occultic or idolatrous groups, especially receiving objects, prayer, or “blessings” from practitioners.
7. Contact and conversation with “aliens,” “ascended masters,” “spirit guides,” or similar beings, or supposed “angels” who do not obey Jesus Christ, or who deny His Work and Nature.
8. Transcendental Meditation or any form of meditation designed to empty the mind, or to bring someone to a different or altered “state of consciousness.”
9. “Gaia” or nature worship.
10. Role-playing games (i.e., games in which the participant assumes the identity of another character), especially games with occultic themes, such as *Magic: The Gathering*, and *Dungeons and Dragons*.

Response

- Why would you want to swim in a questionable river?
- It’s important to know that if you are practicing anything occultic or even questionable along those lines, or if you have engaged in sexual immorality, God is not condemning you!
- However, God does want you to be free. His Word says if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- He also wants you to walk free through the power of the HS and the power of the Word.
- Let me say something to you if you are unsettled about any of the things we talked about: God is a good god.
 - He is not opposed to healing – Jesus said that healing is the children’s bread. Actually, in the story where Jesus said that, the children’s bread was actually deliverance from a demonic spirit.
 - God is not opposed to your being healthy and being in good shape: but He says that bodily exercise is of some profit, but godliness is more profitable.
 - We need to ask ourselves: what benefit we have derived from the things we have been practicing? What field are we sowing into? Take the time you have been sowing into other things and compare it to the time you are sowing into your relationship with the Lord.
 - I’m not here to argue with you and I won’t argue with you about your yoga, your acupuncture, or praying to Mary. I will say that if you examine these things biblically you will find them to be either improper for you or questionable. And if it’s questionable, why would you do it anyway?
 - I’m asking you to examine what you are doing in the light of God’s Word and be honest with yourself and God about your life... in Cleansing Stream we pray, “Search me, O God!”
 - God says, in Deuteronomy 30: *“I call Heaven and earth to record today against you. I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing.*

Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed may live, so that you may love the LORD your God, and that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him.”

- If you can't honestly say that you're flowing in the life and blessing that God wants you to have, then you should question and at least take inventory of your life and see if there is anything spiritual there that is displeasing to God. Is anything short-circuiting His power?
- I have noticed that people who hold on to these things are unable to function readily in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They may also have difficulty hearing the Lord's voice, or entering into worship, and may be skeptical of the work of the Holy Spirit.
- Let's be wise and realize that we cannot play at a spiritual smorgasbord. You can't say, well, I'll take a bit from God's table, and a bit from this other table that I think is OK. Ouija boards work by the power of evil spirits. So then, how much Ouija board is a little Ouija board? Well, how much cyanide is a little cyanide?
- If you really want God to search you, and if you really want to choose life, if you just want to eat from His table only, then we're going ask the Lord to reveal to us by the Holy Spirit anything in these areas which is offensive to Him. Then we'll ask His forgiveness and renounce these things together.

- Let's ask the Holy Spirit to show us right now if there is anything related to the occult or uncleanness or an unhealthy soul tie or relationship that is holding us back or which is creating a foothold for the enemy in our lives.

(Invite the Spirit to come and move, bringing to our minds anything which is offensive to God or hindering us from His call.)

- **Pray this:** Father, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. I ask you to forgive me for committing or practicing this thing. (Speak it to yourself in a whisper, or speak it into your hand so no one will hear.) Right now, I renounce this thing in the Name of Jesus. I ask You to cleanse me from all unrighteousness. I ask you to break the power of any soul ties or relationships that are unhealthy. Bring all my relationships into healthy emotional balance. Give me the strength to walk in victory over everything I have named to You tonight. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I choose life and not death. I choose blessing and not cursing. In the Name of Jesus.
- (Worship together again.)
- Create opportunity for people to receive prayer with anointing of oil, or to remain in worship. No group time.