

WASP: Flesh vs. Demons

Many who criticize deliverance ministry claim that it tends to blame everything on demons to avoid personal responsibility. We should not ignore the flesh or overemphasize the demonic, but we should understand how the two work together to carry out Satan's plan in our lives.

The flesh is the gateway to the demonic

Many times (unless it is generational, etc.), it is through the flesh that demons gain entrance into a person's life. We are tempted either by our own fleshly desires or by demons. The enemy works through his army of fallen angels because they are seeking to gain entrance into our lives or carry out his plan to kill, steal or destroy¹. Once we give in, the demonic enters and is welcomed into our lives. They serve as bad friends who constantly seek to negatively influence us. Without having that spirit, it is much easier to resist the temptation.

But wait a minute, what about plain old temptation that is thrown our way on a regular basis? We are not immune from that, are we? No, unfortunately we will be tempted to a certain degree until we leave this earth. The following illustration shows the difference between normal temptation and demonic influence pressuring us to sin. Normal temptation is like driving down the road and seeing an adult bookstore alongside. One finds it easy to resist thinking about what is inside that store as they pass and continue down the road. They can leave the temptation behind as they drive on. But imagine if someone worked in such a store and were exposed to videos and images all day long. They cannot leave it behind, for it is a constant presence. That is what it's like to have a demonic spirit of lust. There is a VERY big difference! If you feel a temptation every once in a while, but find it easy to resist, then you are likely experiencing temptation from your flesh or the enemy. The goal is to resist it and move on. However, if you feel driven to lust, pornography, or other sinful behaviors, then you likely have a spirit that must be addressed.

As we have discussed, the flesh is a gateway to the demonic. Demons cannot simply walk up to us and enter... they must be welcomed, and our flesh is a major tool they use to get the job done. If they can tempt us to sin, and our flesh opens the door, then they will have 'permission' to access our souls and/or bodies. That is why you cannot effectively minister to a person who is not ready to let go of their bondage. If somebody is unwilling to give up sin in their lives, then even if you are able to cast out spirits of lust, addiction, etc., they will likely (without even knowing it) re-open the door all over again and the demons can come right back.

Sin is a work of the flesh

Unless the demon takes complete control over the person, it is the flesh that commits the sin. Take for example a person who has a spirit of lust and then commits adultery... it is their flesh that has sinned,

¹ John 10:10

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though they may have been coaxed along or pressured by a spirit of lust (or similar spirits). A demonic spirit can strongly influence or pressure us to sin, but it cannot force us to sin. This is why the Bible still refers to various sinful acts as 'works of the flesh'.

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19-21

Demons are like bad friends

So, what if you have a spirit of rage and you are driven to violence? Wouldn't at least some of it be the demon's fault if you fell into that type of sin? Having a demon is like having a bad friend who has access to your mind and soul. It interjects ungodly thoughts or feelings in your life day after day. If you hang around bad friends all the time, what happens? You begin to become like them. Their influence will wear off on you! That is what happens when a person has a demon. The demon's ways will wear on a person's flesh and break it down, making it hard to resist temptation and sin.

Can a demon take control over a person and use their body to commit gruesome acts? While it can happen, it is rarely the case. Demons are great at working the flesh up to the point of sin and applying pressure, which can be very hard to resist. This is usually how they do their dirty work in our lives.

Conclusion

The flesh is an open door to the enemy and demons are here to ruin our lives. Satan uses both, flesh and the demonic to carry out his plan to destroy us! The flesh must be crucified (or consider ourselves dead to sin - see Romans 6:11), and demons must be cast out. If we try to crucify the demon or cast out the flesh... we are wasting our time! It is vital that we accomplish two things when seeking deliverance:

- Make sure our flesh is not joining hands with the demon or giving it any permission
- Get rid of any unclean spirits that may be working against us

It is pointless to constantly discipline the flesh yet allow the demons to remain. But it is equally useless to cast out demons but allow the flesh to re-open the doors to them again.