

Do You Believe We Should Cast Out Demons Today?

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The following is an edited transcript of the audio.

Do you believe in casting out demons? How would you go about it?

I do, and I think there is a steady state, normal way to go about it from 2 Timothy 2:24-26. And I think occasionally there is what David Powlison would call an *ekballistic* form. David doesn't think that is the normal way to do ministry, and we may or may not see things eye to eye there.

So I would say, occasionally you see a manifestation of demonic power that is so in your face and so possessive and controlling of a person's life that an extraordinary intervention and exorcism is called for.

I've been involved in one in my life—only one. But I've read about others and it is much more common on the mission field, of course, where you are moving immediately into places where they are more explicitly demon-driven than we are explicitly demon-driven here.

The steady state, ordinary way of bringing people out of the clutches of the devil is described in 2 Timothy 2 where it says, "Teach with gentleness, correct your opponents in love. God may perhaps grant them to repent and come to a knowledge of the truth and be delivered or escape from the power of the evil one who had taken them captive." That's a paraphrase. So clearly in that passage, teaching and love and patience and God's sovereignty—maybe he'll intervene—is the normal way that Timothy is being told to free people from the will and the bondage of the devil.

I don't think in order to be seriously engaged in spiritual warfare (where you are freeing people from the powers of the evil one), you have to do exorcisms week in and week out. You have to be a faithful, loving, humble, and repenting teacher—a lover of people. Satan is a liar and therefore he will not abide truth. He is a murderer, and therefore he will not abide love. So if you are a truth-giver and a deep, self-sacrificing lover, you will win.

That text from Revelation 12:11—"They overcame the devil by the blood of the lamb, for they loved not their lives even unto death"—what does that say? You overcome the devil by the gospel, by believing you are covered by the blood. You overcome by applying and teaching and preaching the blood of Christ, and then by being so sacrificially dedicated to people's lives that you are willing to die rather than run away from a situation. When that happens, when martyrs covered by the blood loving people happens, Satan is defeated.

So there are lots of ways, at least the three that I'm describing here. This teaching way, this self-sacrificing, gospel way, and this occasional exorcistic way.

Demons are real, Satan is real, and every pastor should do a serious study of the devil and of his ways and of demons, and decide how he is going to deal with that. Because there is an attack on the church in various forms all the time.

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