

## DIFFERENTIATING DEMONIZATION AND MENTAL ILLNESS - Spencer Lee

There are certain mental illnesses e.g. schizophrenia, dissociative identity disorder, delusional or bi-polar disorder that have characteristics similar to that of demon possession. In fact most psychotic patients show characteristics of a demonized person like fantasy, hallucination and incoherence thinking.

This is especially so in a person who has schizophrenia as they hear voices within them telling to do this or to do that. The voices are often time persecutory or vindictive which can result in attacking or even killing someone whom they suspect is harming him/her. To them this voice is frequently believed as the voice of the demon residing within them. Counsellors should not question the reality of his hearing of voices as he would insist that he actually heard them due to the chemical imbalance in his brain.

### The Test of Demonisation

Christian counsellors need to ask counselee who is having mental illness though he/she claims that they are demon-possessed. The counselee is to pray by himself or be led in prayer by the counsellor asking Jesus to be Saviour and Lord of his/her life. Prayer should include the blood of Jesus Christ cleansing away all sins which demon/s cannot stand.

Quote 1 Jn 4:3 to them which says every spirit that does not confess "Jesus Christ that has come in the flesh is not from God". Likewise quote 1 Jn 4:4 "The One in you is greater than the one in the world" If the person can do all of the above then that person is not demonised but is having some form of psychosis.

### Helping the Demonised Person

If the person is demonised then demons will be manifested then the counselor must go into spiritual battle by command the demon/s to come out in Jesus' name! The counselor is to never "negotiate" with the demon/s especially when they ask for sympathy. Inexperienced counsellor in such cases can be deceived by the demons. When the demon can't scare the counsellor off, they will then beg for mercy - so never fall for it.

After delivering that person the counsellor must tell him/her to ask Christ to come into his/her heart to his/her Saviour and Lord (Mt 12:44). The delivered person must be told not to live with sin or dabble with the occult. It is through sins and occult that demons make in-road into a believer's life. The devil would subsequently make those footholds into strongholds and finally a stranglehold.

### The Test for Mental Illness

To test out whether or not the counselee is having a mental disorder, do the three-time orientation sensorium test with him/her. This is to check if their sensorium i.e. his/her orientation of self, time and place is intact. This is done by asking if he/she knows who they are, what time or day is it and the location. Next is to check on if there is social, occupational impairment and lastly on his/her other important functioning i.e. the personal appearance and mannerism.

Finally ask if he/she has seen a psychiatrist. If the answer is "no", ask him/her to see one quickly. If the answer is "yes", ask if has he/she been taking the medication? It is needed to check with family members to determine if he/she is actually having mental illness.