

After a demon is gone, what then?

Written by Bill Perkins

Jesus told a parable in Matthew 12:43-45 which gives insight into what happens after a demon leaves someone. Here's what he said:

“Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came’; and when it comes, it finds *it* unoccupied, swept, and put in order. Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation.”

Israel's Empty House

The Lord was speaking of Israel. The ministry of John the Baptist cleaned out Israel's house, ridding it of demons. But instead of filling the house with the Messiah, the nation rejected Jesus, leaving the house empty and open to a demonic invasion. Jesus prophesied the demon would come back with seven demons worse than himself, resulting in the last state of the nation being worse than the first. In 70 AD the Romans destroyed the city and the temple, fulfilling the Lord's prophecy.

God Owns the House

While the parable referred to Israel, Jesus spoke truthful words about demons and what happens when they leave a person. When a believer puts his/her faith in Jesus Christ for forgiveness and eternal life, the Holy Spirit takes ownership of the house. At the moment of conversion a Christian is “sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise” (Ephesians 1:13). This seal testifies to the fact that God owns us.

A Room, Not the Deed

However, that doesn't mean an evil spirit can't enter us and occupy a room in the house (our body or soul—the location of our intellect, emotion and will). It never “possesses” a believer because that speaks of ownership. Instead, it occupies us. It moves into a room of the house where we've set up an idol—something we trust to meet our needs, besides God.

Swept but Empty

When the demon leaves it will look for a place to live. If it doesn't find one, it will return to us. If it finds our soul cleaned but not occupied by something godly, it will return and bring some friends.

This means when a demon is evicted from our soul, we must fill that room with Jesus, through the Holy Spirit and godly thoughts. If we do that, while the demon may knock on the window, it won't get in. Of course, this raises a crucial question, how do we fill the room with Jesus and godly thoughts? Next week I'll talk about that.