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A Demon in Her Stomach

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In the spring of 2014 I dropped by a friend's house unannounced. Because he offices out of his home people come and go without knocking. So after stepping out of my car I entered through the side door and climbed the stairs. I called out his name and his wife told me he was taking a nap. His wife, Sue, is a teacher and had taken the day off. I asked how she was doing and she said, "I'm not well. I've got something going on with my digestive system and I'm bloated and in pain." I asked if I could pray for her and she said, "Yes."

A Year Before

A year before my wife and I were having dinner with Sue and her husband at our home. She complained about pain in her neck. Sue had been rear-ended twice while driving and both accidents had whiplashed her neck. Physical therapy hadn't helped and the pain was evident on her face. She said I could pray for her and so I placed my hand on her neck and prayed God would heal her. Immediately the pain left and she is pain free to this day.

But He Didn't

So when she said I could pray for her abdomen I was hopeful God would heal her. But he didn't. I knew Sue harbored bitterness toward her husband and suggested this could be the source of her health issue. She agreed and I led her through a process aimed at enabling her to release her anger and find emotional healing. But this process proved unproductive.

I then wondered if she was suffering from a spiritual affliction and prayed against the demon. After this I again led her though the process of dealing with the anger and she experienced an episodic release from the bitterness. When I then prayed for the healing of her abdomen she immediately felt the pain leave and remains pain free.

A New Phase of Ministry

That experience and others like it caused me to see a connection between spiritual affliction and emotional and spiritual healing. But Mike Riches, the pastor of Harborview Fellowship in Gig Harbor, Washington, would soon provide me with both the biblical and practical knowledge I needed to further my understanding and usher in a whole new phase of ministry.

Mike and I came from a similar theological background. Like me, he had been a cessationist. (Instead of reviewing the meaning of cessationism you can read a brief summary).

His Church Exploded

His view of how God operates today changed when 17 years ago several people were dramatically delivered from demonic affliction and others were physically healed. Suddenly, his church exploded with growth as supernatural acts liberated people and transformed their lives.

This prompted Mike to begin an extensive biblical study as he tried to understand what was happening and develop transferable principles. As Mike and his wife, Cindy, trained believers they saw Christians unleashed to minister to broken people in transformational ways. His book and study guide, *Living Free*, have ignited ministries throughout Europe and in Africa.

Mike told me most of the healings he has seen have resulted from deliverance from spiritual affliction. Applying what I've learned from Mike has brought me to the point where I finally told the Lord, "I'm in on Jesus liberating people from spiritual affliction." The experience with Sue, and many others, continue to blow my mind.