

Can Christians be Demon Possessed?

Written by Bill Perkins

Suppose you own a home free and clear. You've got the deed locked away in a safety deposit box. Over the years you've replaced the roof, the AC and heater, the carpet and you upgraded the kitchen and bathrooms. It's a nice house and you've diligently maintained it.

Squatters

Upon returning from a vacation you discover that during your absence some squatters have moved in. They've ruined the carpet, ripped the curtains, and filled the house with trash. They're living in the master bedroom and wearing clothes from your closet.

Since the squatters are living in the house does that mean they possess it? Do they own it?

The answer is obvious. You still own the home in spite of the presence of squatters. While you may be responsible for leaving the back door unlocked, you retain possession of the house.

Already Possessed

In a similar way, believers cannot be owned or possessed by demons because they are already possessed by Christ. When speaking of the resurrection of the dead, Paul said this, "But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming" (1 Cor. 15:23; see also Romans 7:4, 8:9; 1 Cor. 15:23; 2 Cor. 10:7; Gal. 3:29).

Can Christians Be Demonized?

Perhaps the more important question is this: Can Christians be demonized? Merrill F. Unger in *Unger's Bible Dictionary* described demonization as control of a person by one or more demons, affecting both the mind and body. Isn't that what happened to Peter in Mark 8? Jesus had just declared he would go to Jerusalem where he would be rejected, killed and raised from the dead. Peter immediately pulled the Lord aside and began to rebuke him. Jesus told his disciple, "Get behind me Satan" (Mark 8:33).

In that moment, Satan used Peter as an instrument of his will. If Satan could so influence Peter, doesn't it make sense he could also influence other, less devoted, believers? Yes, he, or his minions, could afflict a believer. And I have personally seen believers occupied by demons. I've heard them speak. I've seen them cause men and women to convulse and spasm. And I've seen believers liberated from demonic bondage.

Managing, Not Free

Think about it for a moment. Why do some believers experience enslavement to sin from which no amount of counseling or accountability provides lasting freedom? Why are so many Christians managing their anger, bitterness, addictions and compulsions rather than living free of them? In many instances, certainly not all, the reason is because they're not just battling the flesh but a demon. And since most Christians have no experience or training in evicting evil spirits, they're helpless against an enemy whose presence and power they deny.

A Room in the House

Back to the opening illustration. While a demon can't possess a believer—it can't own the house—it can squat in a room of the house.

Next week I'll talk about how they get in.