

Dealing with the Real Issues

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

The people we see every day, including ourselves, have a terrible disease. In Isaiah 1:5, God looked upon His people and said, "Why should ye be stricken any more?...The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint." This can be said of every one who has ever lived.

Today, the greatest mystery that the world will ever see is in a sinner who can say, "I am alive in Christ, and Christ is in me." He is a man who, apart from Christ, is inwardly sick and in a body of death. Desiring to be well, he went after every kind of cure, but what he needed was a proper diagnosis.

We spend so much time treating the symptoms of sin. This booklet will show us our need to discover and deal with the real issue, and to discern the distractions that keep us from revealing our true identity in Christ.

Chapter One
AN ETERNAL PURPOSE

“Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

“Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Ephesians 1:21-23).

“[This is] the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:26-27).

The eternal purpose of the Lord Jesus for our existence is that we will experience the mystery of Christ in each member of the Body of Christ.

Jesus Christ has taken His place as ruler over everything, and as children of the King, we have the right to claim what was Satan's territory. But to experience our victory, it is important for us to be aware that there are principalities and powers operating to hinder us from experiencing this mystery.

The Power in Ungodly Covenants

Many Christians do not understand that when we do not choose to participate in the fellowship of the mystery of godliness, we become targets for the principalities and powers of the satanic atmosphere.

There are demons that want to establish ungodly covenants in churches among similar-minded people. These people have no understanding of covenants—especially the power in an ungodly covenant made to attack believers, churches, or pastors.

In 1 Kings 18-19, a woman named Jezebel had made ungodly covenants with Satan against the people of God. Jezebel had unbelievable powers. Elijah had killed 850 of her demonized prophets with a sword. But getting rid of them was only treating the symptoms of a much worse problem, which was the real issue. Those

prophets were only part of the evil that Elijah was about to face. When he was finished, Jezebel sent a messenger who told Elijah what she had planned for him. In total depression, God's man withdrew into the wilderness and wanted to die (1 Kings 19:4-5). At the cave, in verse 9, God asked him what he was doing there. God knew that the root of the entire problem was Jezebel. It wasn't the 850 prophets. They were just the symptoms of Jezebel's evil alliance with Satan.

Likewise, time and time again in the churches of Jesus Christ, the symptoms are identified, but the root problem is never addressed. So much counseling deals with the symptoms. You may kill the 850 false prophets who were causing problems, and yet, you never get to the root, because it is cleverly concealed by the head demon running the satanic army that is attacking.

Who Is on the Lord's Side?

In 2 Kings 9, God anointed Jehu to be the king over Israel and appointed him to destroy the house of Ahab, to "avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel" (verse 7). The kings of Israel and Judah were right to be nervous when Jehu showed up in

Jezreel, where Ahab had reigned. When King Jehoram (the son of Ahab and Jezebel) asked, "Are you here for peaceful purposes, Jehu?" he replied, "What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?" (verse 22).

After killing the evil king Jehoram, Jehu went to see Jezebel. She put on her makeup and sat in the window, looking very pretty. He cried out in verse 32-33, "Who is on my side? Who?" and two or three eunuchs, there as her servants, responded to Jehu's request and threw her down to the ground. Her blood spilled out as the king drove his horses over her, and the dogs ate her remains.

Jezebel had tried to entrap Jehu, but she didn't get away with it. In the end, the root problem of the entire nation of Israel and its false prophets and idolatry had been dealt with.

Chapter Two

GROWTH WITH GOD'S
PROVISION

Regarding Jezebel, what was the spiritual principle in operation? It was control and manipulation through a powerful force—not just a charming personality, but a supernatural power to control. Elijah was not threatened by Ahab—and he was king. The 850 prophets could not overwhelm Elijah; he slew them. But the voice of one woman, Jezebel, brought him tremendous fear—so much that this prophet of God was scared to death and wanted to die. She was one woman with supernatural powers. Though she was extremely beautiful, she was a witch, and her covenant with Satan was the cause of Israel's idolatries.

“All That Glitters Is Not Gold”

Satan's will is to cause people to be around very wonderful, attractive, and winsome per-

sonalities that have connections with supernatural powers. They use those powers very tactfully and carefully to cause division in the Body of Christ. Undoubtedly, they do not know how badly they are deceived (Proverbs 31:30a).

Even as there are underlying causes to many problems in a ministry, there are also underlying causes to the problems in our life. This is why we need to understand the great principle of identifying the root, going way beyond the symptoms. Every single thing we do must be identified. First the pastor and then each member of the congregation, must examine himself through the Word and the Holy Spirit and take care of any causes, as God leads.

It is so easy to identify symptoms, and it is even possible to move away from the symptoms. But that is not how healing comes. Healing comes by recognizing something much deeper. For the addict, it is saying to himself, "Wait! Don't you know that drugs aren't the 'cause' of anything?" Drug addiction is just a symptom of something that causes people to take drugs, that's all. He doesn't say, "I am a drug addict." That is merely his symptom of a relationship he has with a power and a force beyond himself. He has no idea of what else that

power can do through self-destructive patterns as he becomes available to its control.

Adultery, homosexuality, and fornication are only symptoms of a deep-rooted cause from a leading demon of the powers of the air (Ephesians 2:2). The Word of God says that Satan made the world a wilderness and destroys the cities thereof (Isaiah 14:17). He sends in his armies to destroy cities and countries and to weaken the nations. Though he comes in as an angel of light, his entire purpose is to destroy them, inasmuch as this whole world lies in his infectious government (1 John 5:19b).

We Need the Right Diagnosis

So many people depend on help from secular counselors. Though they may temporarily deal with symptoms, they can never settle the problem outside of Christ.

When a person becomes real with Jesus Christ, he begins to deal with the cause of his problems, which is spiritual wickedness in the atmosphere. Principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world: *they* are the cause.

Only the filling of the Spirit and the conviction of the Word of God can help us. It deals

with us quickly and powerfully to separate the spirit from the soul. This is our only possibility for deliverance.

No one is free from the need for deliverance; the attack of Satan is against every believer. For example, a young pastor told me how, in a certain situation, he tried to examine his heart. "After half an hour, I couldn't see the answer; then I said, 'I'm not going to try. *You* show me in the light of the Holy Spirit, according to Psalm 26:2.'" God revealed what he needed to see—but first, the pastor needed to get out of the way.

Chapter Three
CHRIST, OUR ALL IN ALL

“For it pleased the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell;

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

“And you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled” (Colossians 1:19-21).

Pride is only a symptom of a relationship with the wild pride of Satan. Anger is just a symptom of a relationship with the angry demons that are destined to go to hell forever. The issue is always about our relationships.

Why is this? Because Ephesians 6:12 says we do not fight against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and rulers of darkness. So, if that is true (and it is), why would we analyze the flesh, and counsel it, and try to make

it better? What we need is a revelation of Christ.

Once we begin to grasp the real issue, we can go forward in our call. And the call of every believer is to make all men see the mystery of who Christ is in a man—"Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:25-27). We can do this only through the three "R's" of the Cross: redemption, restoration, and reconciliation. Through the Cross! It comes when we are dead to everything that we *could* have, and we are alive to everything that God is (Galatians 2:20). This is the great principle of having our identity in Christ.

It's Time for a Second Opinion

If, on the other hand, we examine ourselves, and we identify lust, or pride, or double-mindedness, or fear, or moods, all we have done is identify symptoms. Every time our emotions (which can't think) are controlling our mind, the symptoms will cause us to withdraw from God.

Satan says to his demons, "All you have to do is make them deal with their symptoms. That way, they will never get to the cause. The cause is really that they have given me a place—but all they can see are the symptoms."

Whether we are speaking about perversion,

fornication, or any number of vile and overt sins, we only address the symptoms when we just deal with the sin. As bad and as destructive as these sins are to marriages, families, and nations, the devil is behind it all because people have given him a place (Ephesians 4:27).

Out of natural goodness, some try to help. They develop programs that will help people withdraw from their symptoms. So, if a person gets a victory over drugs, that is wonderful. But he needs to have the right relationship with God, or he will not be delivered from the world's unseen powers that are *behind* the drugs. The drugs may be gone because of a concentration of effort, but the victory hasn't come.

In time, that person will have to deal with fear. The next thing will be insecurity. Then, it will be unhappiness in some other area; and all because the destructive, supernatural forces continue to change their direction of attack to stay in control of that person's life.

The Strange-Woman Syndrome

In Proverbs 5:1-5, the Word of God talks about the strange woman. This "strange woman" refers to Satan's system, designed to counterfeit Jesus Christ's Bride-to-be.

In other words, the Church has been called to respond to God and to serve men. But when instead of responding we take over leadership in place of God, that is the strange woman. It is a part of a system of religious works that has sent diverse attacks upon the whole human race.

What Satan wants is for us to identify with this strange-woman spirit. This is not necessarily about women. This is about a system that usurps God's authority. Men and women in this type of strange-woman system hear truth from the Word of God that is meant to convict them. They hear "reconciliation" and refuse to be reconciled. Then, they withdraw into moods and draw away instead of getting right with God. It is a superficial symptom with a satanic root that has separated and divided people from the fullness of Christ, which is His Body.

There is one thing that the Holy Spirit always says: *Draw near*. Draw near to the throne of grace. Draw near to mercy. Draw near to godly people. Draw near to the Body of Christ. Instead of having fellowship with iniquity in the communion of demons (1 Corinthians 10:20), we need to experience the fellowship of the mystery in the Body of Christ.

Chapter Four
CHRIST IN YOU:
THE REVELATION
OF A MYSTERY

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

“If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

“How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

“Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)....

“...Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who

created all things by Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 3:1-4, 8-9).

Paul said that to him, who was "less than the least of all saints," this grace was given, that he should preach among the Gentiles. His message was the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Unsearchable. That meant Paul was preaching a message that he couldn't trace out, that was inexhaustible and unfathomable. Yet, though this message could not be fully comprehended, it was the message he would learn. This must be our attitude, or we will not understand the Word that we have received with the fullest of blessings.

When Paul began to preach about the mysteries and riches of God, he renounced other subjects, such as legalism. As precious as the law of God was, he preached against legalism. His message was about the unsearchable riches of Christ. And every time he considered it, the apostle knew that he would never be able to fully search out what he was preaching nor comprehend it in this lifetime. He realized that he could never trace the depth of those riches, because they are eternal, reaching beyond the limits of human understanding.

The Holy Spirit Reveals It

According to Ephesians 3:5, the mystery of Jesus Christ, “which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men,...is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets *by the Spirit.*” The only way the mystery will ever be revealed is by the Holy Spirit. The purpose of Paul’s message was “to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 3:9).

“To make all men see” means “to bring into light” (to men who are willing to see it) a revelation of the fellowship of the Word of God, and the life of God, and the Spirit of God in the Body of Christ—a mystery that will only be revealed to us by God.

Though Christ paid for the sins of all men in the world (1 John 2:2), in Ephesians 3:9, “all men” refers to those who would be willing to see the mystery and be illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

“The fellowship” speaks of the participation of redeemed sinners in relationship to the Body of Christ, hid with Christ in God.

“To the intent that now [(in this lifetime)]

unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, *According to the eternal purpose* which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:10-11).

Enter into Fullness with a New Identity

The Body is the fullness of Christ. If we believe that, why would we ever want to be separated from fullness and be a target for demons to have a banquet at our table (1 Corinthians 10:21)? Why would we want to have demons serving us at their table when we are alone because we have withdrawn?

Satan doesn't want us to be fulfilled in this life on earth, so he has a temporal purpose to distract us and make us withdraw from God, His Word and His Church. When we withdraw, we enter into a temporal preservation of self. We hear all kinds of strange voices. Yet, God, through the Cross, has an eternal purpose for us.

The Word of God says in Ephesians 3:8-11 that we can make a show of the demons in the air when in weakness we apply doctrine on every side. In our hearts, we are able to implement doctrine. To have "manifold wisdom" means to have doctrine on every side. We reveal

the living Word of God, and we confess it to the air.

What happens when the demons see that coming? They say, “Oh no! It’s the living Word that created us, and it’s coming back at us. Back off!” Then, by the living Word of God, we expose Satan’s strategy and get to the real issue, the heart of the matter: Christ is everything. He identified with us on the Cross, and He is willing to dwell in us and become our new identity when we accept Him as our Savior.

CONCLUSION

To the person who is an alcoholic, alcoholism is a symptom. It is not a cause. There are demons that cause alcoholism. There are demons that cause perversion. So the problem is not what demons cause us to do. Those behaviors are the symptoms. Through careful study of the Scriptures, many of these demons have been precisely identified by name.* As a result, many Christians have experienced great victories by fasting with prayer that addresses the enemy specifically.

With the intensification of warfare in these last days, more than ever, we need to understand that God has given us an eternal purpose: that we should make all men see the mystery of God, which we can never fully comprehend or explain. The nature of God is in us, on the resurrection side of death.

Thank You, Lord, for revealing to us this unsearchable mystery. Thank You for giving us spiritual

health and wisdom by keeping us surrounded with a great wall of doctrine, which protects us as it feeds our souls. In Jesus' Precious name, Amen.

**The purpose of identifying specific demons and knowing their names is to give us an advantage in warfare because we identify the cause, not just the symptoms. For more about angelic warfare and the names of certain demons, read Dealing Precisely with Demons, Exposing Satan's Armies, and Operating in the Authority of God's Kingdom, by Pastor Carl H. Stevens, Grace Publications.*