

A Pastor's Thoughts on Deliverance

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There is so much to the subject of SRA deliverance, the more one studies the more one finds a need to learn. I am thankful that my heart has always been open to the subject of angels and demons and the spiritual elements of my faith, even when I did not know much about it. This is possibly why God has led me down this path.

My heart breaks with how few Christians believe in the subject of deliverance and are willing to open their minds for discussion on the topic. Few are willing to entertain the fact that they may be mistaken as to whether deliverance is for today. Some Christian leaders are more willing to call you a fanatic and a hoax than to step down from their opinion. This is an interesting contrast from the early church which was so open to the subject and where scripture lays a solid biblical foundation. The secular world cannot get it, however, the Christian world should.

I think part of the problem stems from the way some Christians have misused their giftings and turned deliverance and healing ministries into a circus event. Sadly, this has caused people to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

However, I am thankful that we have had such teachers as Derek Prince and Frank Hammond among others such as Kay Tolman and Russ Dizdar, who give a level-headed and biblical reasoning for the truth and value behind this subject.

For me one of the key matters is understanding and taking confidence in the authority given by Jesus to do deliverance work, as laid out in Luke 10:19:

Look, I give you authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy. And nothing shall by any means hurt you.

And Mark 16:17-18:

These signs will accompany those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.

The New Testament mentions deliverance fifty-five times. I think the most significant deliverance example in scripture can be found in Mark Chapter five, the Man of the

Gadarenes. It seems the man in the tombs may have been an early survivor of ritual abuse. The response of the locals of that region to the man's miraculous deliverance is not unlike the response of people today.

As demonstrated in this story, full deliverance is an encounter with the living Christ and an encounter with the operating presence of the Holy Spirit. This is accomplished by applying what Jesus has done at the cross to a person's life, including salvation, physical healing and the inner healing of the soul. Christ's finished work deals with the issue of sin in a person's life and provides both the freedom and power to overcome it. Deliverance enables us to walk in the new nature that Christ has given us.

There is both freedom from demonic and freedom from lies. Jesus said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." Jesus' word is truth; his Spirit is truth. God requires truth in the inward parts. We are even instructed to wear the truth as part of the armour of God. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life..." He embodied the Truth.

SRA survivors have been lied to all their lives. They need the truth to be set free. The Hebrews 4:12 sword of the Spirit, cuts through these lies and grounds us in the Word.

It is important to exchange each lie with the truth. One little lie can steal peace, joy, ministry, fruitfulness, comfort and can affect one's experience in Christ. It can steal a person's faith in God and instil doubts. When anyone embraces a lie, they embrace the one who brings the lie.

As a Pastor, it is imperative that I approach the subject of deliverance with my congregation and with the leaders around me, while ensuring that my conversation comes from a place of love, compassion and good biblical standing. Hopefully as they see the results and the good fruit that comes from deliverance, they will see the value of this perspective.

We are to be filled with the Spirit, worship in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, and pray in the guidance and leading of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit that teaches us, gives us wisdom, perspective, and the discernment needed to provide effective deliverance.

"The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." James 5:16a (NKJV)