

## DEALING WITH DEMONS

**“The thief (Satan) comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I (Jesus) came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” (John 10:10, RSV).**

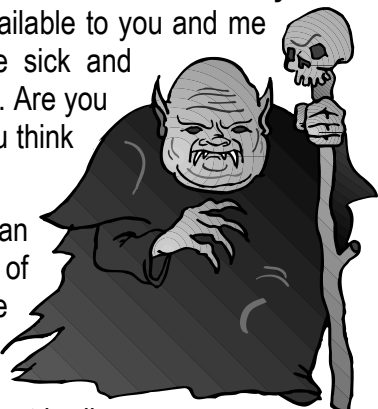
**“The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” (1Jn. 3:8, NAS).**

Did you know that Jesus spent nearly twenty-five percent of his earthly ministry casting out demons and healing the sick? Most Bible scholars agree that the Gospel accounts of Jesus' ministry reveal one-fourth of the Son of God's ministry was spent in dealing with sickness and demons, casting them out of God-fearing people in a religious community. Jesus then multiplied his efforts to set the captives free by giving the twelve disciples demon-casting authority; then sent them out into the surrounding towns and cities with this same power (Lk. 9:1-3). Jesus later gave this same commission to seventy more men. “When the seventy disciples returned, they joyfully reported to him, ‘Even the demons obey us when we use your name’” (Lk. 10:17, LVB). If that wasn't enough to deal with the problem of demons in this life, Jesus then gave **every believer** the power to cast out demons. “And these signs will accompany **those who believe**: by using my name they will **cast out demons**...they will **lay hands on the sick**, and they will recover” (Mk. 16:17-18, NRSV). In fact, there isn't a single place in the Bible where Jesus sent anyone out to preach the gospel without giving him or her the divine authority to cast out demons.

In the Book of Acts, a convert named Philip is just one example of a believer who also cast out demons and healed the sick. “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the

miracles which he did. **For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them; and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city**" (Acts 8:5-8, KJV). Since Jesus Christ is the "same yesterday, today and forever" (Heb. 13:8), the same power given to the **twelve**, the **seventy** and then **everyone who believes** is available to you and me right now in Jesus' Name. Healing the sick and casting out demons is part of evangelism. Are you ready to read on? It may change how you think about this subject. Let's go...

The Apostle Paul told the Corinthian Church that they "were not to be ignorant of the enemy's devices" (2Cor. 2:11). He told the Church at Ephesus, "For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies-- the evil rulers of the unseen world, those mighty satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world; and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit world (Eph. 6:10, LVB). He warned us to be on our guards against another or different spirit that would try and beguile believers (2Cor. 11:3-4). Paul told the Galatian congregation that they had been bewitched by the enemy (Gal. 3:1). He spoke to his spiritual son in the faith, Timothy, and warned him about the last day's battle against these demon spirits. "But the Spirit explicitly says that in **later times** [that's now] some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons" (1Tim. 4:1, NAS). God, speaking through his prophet Hosea said, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hos. 4:6, KJV). When was the last time you heard a message about how to properly deal with demons? If Jesus spent one-fourth of his time dealing with demons and never sent out a single minister to preach the gospel without also commissioning them to deal with demons, we would be remiss if we didn't "study to show ourselves approved...rightly dividing the word of truth" (2Ti. 2:15, KJV) on this



**basic** doctrine of our faith. Our victorious Christian living depends on it. As we will see in the following pages, the Bible says a great deal about this subject.

What exactly are demons? What is their nature and their works? Can they affect a blood-washed Believer in Jesus Christ? How do we guard against them? We will answer these questions by looking to the Bible.

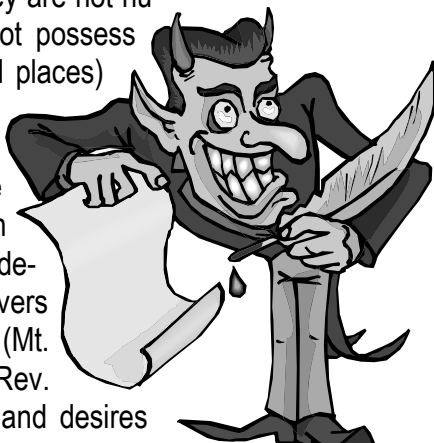
## **GENERAL FACTS ABOUT DEMONS**

They are called devils (Mk. 16:17); familiar spirits (Lev. 20:6); unclean spirits (Mk. 1:27); evil spirits (Lk. 7:21); and seducing or deceitful spirits (1Tim. 4:1). They are subject to (must obey) Christ and subject to (must obey) blood-washed Believers in Christ. They submit to the Name of Jesus and the Holy Spirit (Mt. 8:16-17; 12:28; Mk. 16:17; Lk. 10:17; Acts 19:15). Thousands of them can enter into and take possession of one man at the same time, as in the case of the demoniac of Gadara who was possessed by an entire legion (up to 6,000) demons (Mk. 5:1-11). They are Satan's agents (Mt. 12:24-29). They can enter human beings and animals, such as the 2,000 swine that ran down the hill and drowned after Jesus set the man free from the legion (Mk. 5:9-13). Demons know their eternal fate of "being cast into the lake of fire" (Mt. 8:31-32; Rev 20:10, 14). They fear God (Jas. 2:19). They wage war against God's people (Eph. 6:10-18). They recognize those who have power over them (Acts 19:13-16). They have unique personalities (Lk. 8:26-33). They have more than ordinary intelligence (Mt. 8:29). They are disembodied spirits that seek to enter into a body to express themselves in the earth (Mt. 12:43-45). They will eventually be cast into the abyss (Lk. 8:31) or bottomless pit (Rev. 9:1-21). All unbelievers, knowingly or unknowingly, are more or less in league with them (Eph. 2:1-3). They have the ability to influence men (1Tim. 4:1-5; 2Pet. 2:10-12). They inflict physical maladies, sickness and disease (Mt. 12:22; 17: 15-18). They have the ability to teach (1Tim. 4:1); steal (Mt. 13:19; Lk. 8:12); fight (Eph. 6:10-18; 1Pet. 5:8). They

can tell fortunes (like those operating through people on the 1- (900) Psychic lines) (Lev. 20:27; Acts 16:16). They act friendly to deceive people (Lev. 20:6). They are referred to 16 times in Scripture as “familiar spirits,” indicating they are familiar with the people they influence. They can travel (1Ki. 22:21-24). They go out and come back into those they influence as they will (unless cast out and rejected by the individual) (Mt. 12:43-45). They can speak intelligently through the vocal cords of their host (Mk. 1:34; 5:12; Acts 8:7) and imitate dead people to trick and deceive people still living (1Sam. 28:3-9; 1Chr. 10:13; Is. 8:19).

### THE NATURE OF DEMONS

They are evil (Judg. 9:23; 1Sam. 18:9-10); Intelligent and wise (1Ki. 22:22-24; Acts 16:16); powerful (Mk. 5: 1-18). They are not angels (Acts 23:8-9). They are not human (if they were they could not possess men and be cast out to dry arid places) (Mt. 10:8; Lk. 12:43-45). They have knowledge (Mt. 8:29; Lk. 4:41; Acts 19:15). They have feelings (Mt. 8:29; Mk. 5:7); faith (Js. 2:19); false doctrines to deceive believers and non-believers (1Tim. 4:1); their own wills (Mt. 12:43-45); miraculous powers (Rev. 16:13-16); emotions (Acts 8:7); and desires (Mt. 8:28-31).



### THE WORKS OF DEMONS

They influence, demonize and/or possess people and cause numerous negative affects: dumbness and deafness (Mt. 9: 32-33; Mk. 9:25); blindness (Mt. 12:22); grievous vexation (Mt. 15: 22); insanity and mania (Mt. 4:23-24; 17:14-21); convulsions (Mk. 9:20); lusts (8:44; Eph. 2:1-3; 1Jn. 2:15-17); counterfeit worship (Lev. 17: 7; Dt. 32:17; 2Chr. 11:15; Ps. 106:37; 1Cor. 10:20;

Rev. 9:20); error (1Jn. 4:1-6; 1Tim. 4:10; sickness and diseases (Mt. 4:23-24; Acts 10: 38); torments (Mt. 4:23-24; lying (1Ki. 22:21-24); enchantments and witchcraft (2Chr. 22:6); heresies (1Tim. 4:1) love of the world (1Jn. 2:15-17); fear (2Tim. 1:7) and deceptions (1Tim. 4:1-2; 1Jn. 4:1-6).

## TEN FACTS ABOUT DEMONS

We can glean a great deal of information about these disembodied spirits from Jesus' teachings in the Gospels:

“When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first.” (Lk. 11:24--26, NIV).

The above passage reveals ten facts about demons: (1) They are evil (v. 24); (2) They can go out and come into the bodies of men (v. 24-26); (3) They can go other places (v. 24); (4) They seek comfort (v. 24); (5) They can talk (v. 24); (6) They make their own decisions (v. 24); (7) They can distinguish between different places (v. 24-26); (8) They seek fellowship and company with each other (v. 26); (9) They are wicked (v. 26); and (10) They seek control of men (v. 24-26).

## WHAT IS DEMONIC POSSESSION?

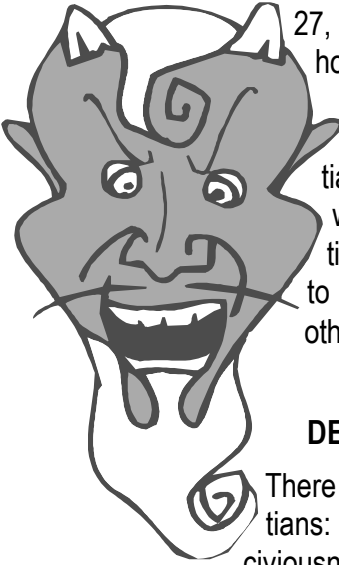
The Greek word used in the Bible for demonic possession is **diamonizomai** (Strong's #1139), and is pronounced, **Daheemon-id'-zom-ah-ee**. It means, to be exercised by a demon; - have (be vexed with, be possessed with) a devil. From this word, we can determine that **diamonizomai** includes with it the meaning “possessed by a devil,” but also includes other **lesser degrees** of demonic influence. “To have, be exercised by or vexed

with, or tormented by a devil.” In most situations, *diamonizomai* would be better translated “demonized” into the English language. This would include the possibility of demon possession without excluding the **lesser degrees** of demonic control as noted above from the original word used by God’s apostles who authored the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ words. When thinking of *diamonizomai*, we should remember these lesser degrees of demonization (tormented, vexed by, exercised by, a devil) as well as being fully controlled (possessed by a devil). In approaching this subject in this manner, we can properly deal with demons from a Biblical perspective. Inasmuch as Jesus spent up to a quarter of his ministry dealing with this subject in a God-fearing, church-going community, we need to maintain a **proper balance** in dealing with this sometimes difficult matter. It is important to remember that the devil doesn’t care whether we are in the right or left ditch, as long as we are in the ditch and not on the road with Jesus. With this strategy, the devil has sought to deceive the church into one of two extreme doctrinal camps: one extreme teaches that Christians don’t have to worry about demons or casting them out because Christians can’t be affected by them once they are “born again”; and the other extreme teaches that every time a Christian sins there is a demon that needs to be dealt with and cast out. Both camps are in opposite ditches, shouting across the road of Biblical truth at each other that the other is in error while the devil laughs with glee. Later in this teaching, we will deal with the seven degrees (or stages) of demonic influence, also known as **diamonizomai**.

### **CAN A CHRISTIAN BE POSSESSED BY A DEMON?**

Possessed (fully controlled) spirit, soul, and body? Absolutely not. However, Christians can be **demon-influenced** (*diamonizomai*), tormented, afflicted, vexed, bewitched, hindered, opposed, oppressed, deceived, tempted, persecuted, seduced, and also brought into bondage. Why else would the Bible

warn us repeatedly about “the wiles of the devil” (Eph. 6:11)? Paul admonished the Church at Ephesus, “In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and **do not give the devil a foothold**” (Eph. 4:26-27, NIV). If a Christian couldn’t give a foothold to the devil in the first place, then Paul wouldn’t have admonished us against it.



Just like we have the ability as Christians to “grieve the Holy Spirit, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption,” (Eph. 4:30), we can also “give place to the devil” through unresolved anger or other sins.

### DEMONS OR WORKS OF THE FLESH

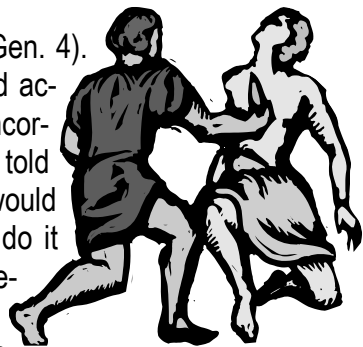
There are **17 works of the flesh** listed in Galatians: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness and revellings (Gal. 5:19-20, KJV). The New Living Translations lists these sins as: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, envy, drunkenness, wild parties (Gal 5: 19-21, NLT). Notice, these are not referred to as works of devils, but of men’s flesh (sinful nature). **We must distinguish between the flesh and the devil.** We must accept responsibility for our actions and not just try to cast out a devil every time we sin. It is our job to “keep ourselves pure” (1Ti. 5:22). It is our responsibility to “present our bodies to God as living sacrifices” (Rom. 12:1). God has given us the grace to do these things, but it is still **our choice** as blood-washed believers to “study to show ourselves approved unto God” (2Ti. 2:15).

It is up to us to walk in the grace that has been given to us so

we might be continually “transformed by the renewing of our minds” (Rom. 12:2) by the “washing of water by the word” (Eph. 5:26). At the same time, there is a devil loose and he and his army of demons are “roaming to and fro seeking whom they may devour” (1Pt. 5:8). He seeks to put up roadblocks and hindrances to our faith (1Th. 2:18, Gal. 5:7). We are to “resist him steadfast in the faith” (1Pt. 5:9). So the balance in this matter is when we “submit ourselves therefore to God (in our hearts, minds and actions)” then we can effectively “resist the devil and he will flee from us” (Jas. 4:7). The opposite is also true. If we refuse to submit to God after becoming Christians, we will be like “...an old saying that ‘A dog comes back to what he has vomited, and a pig is washed only to come back and wallow in the mud again.’ That is the way it is with those who turn again to their sin.” (2Pt. 2:22, LVB). **The devil has access to our lives to the degree that we open the door to him through sin.** It is one thing to be persecuted for righteousness, but we can’t blame the devil for coming into our lives when we leave him a key under the back door mat.

## CAIN AND ABEL

Cain and Abel were the first brothers (Gen. 4). Abel offered his sacrifice correctly and God accepted it (v. 4). Cain offered his sacrifice incorrectly and God did not accept it (v. 5). God told Cain that if he offered it again correctly it would be accepted, but if he continued to try to do it his own way, then it would be rejected a second time. Then God added this warning, “and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door” (v. 7). As the rest of the story goes, Cain let sin into his door and murdered his brother. Many men and women have made this same mistake the last 6,000 years. In fact, our prisons are full of those who fell prey to this “work of the flesh,” that was



then empowered by devils. “For the thief (Satan) only comes to kill, steal and destroy” (Jn. 10:10). In addition, history has evidenced that the devil needs a willing vessel through which to do his works in the earth. Just as God is looking for men to preach His Gospel, so is the devil looking for those through whom he can express his nature and works into the earth. Yielding to God keeps us free from the Power of Satan.

## **JESUS BEGINS HIS MINISTRY OF DELIVERANCE**

Mark’s Gospel begins Jesus’ ministry with the story of a man in the synagogue who was bound by an evil spirit:

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed (diamonizomai) by an evil spirit cried out, “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!” “Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him.” News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee (Mk. 1:21-28, NIV).

At least three things are noteworthy here: (1) the man with the evil spirit was in the church (synagogue); (2) the evil spirit recognized Jesus’ power over him and had to come out; (3) the people were so amazed by this that they wondered what new teaching and new doctrine this was. Two thousand years later, when churchgoers see devils cast out of people at church, they say the same thing, “What new thing and new doctrine is this?” Yet Jesus and His followers cast out devils wherever he went. Let’s

read the rest of this passage:

As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them. That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. **He also drove out many demons**, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was (Mk. 1:29-34, NIV).

Not only did Jesus spend nearly a quarter of his time ministering to the sick and casting out devils. Twenty-five percent of the healings also dealt with an evil spirit. Spirits of deafness and dumbness (Mt. 9:32-33); blindness (Mt. 12:22); convulsions (Mk. 9:20); lunacy and mania (Mt. 4:23-24; 17:14-21; Mk. 5:1-18); and so on. Based on Jesus' example, we can expect to encounter evil spirits when praying for the sick and we should be prepared to cast them out in Jesus' Name. Of course, not every sickness is a devil, but based on the ministry model of our Savior, we should expect to run into a devil from time to time while effectively ministering healing to the sick. (Many don't encounter devils when praying for the sick, and interestingly, these same well-meaning Christians rarely see the sick healed when they pray. Praying for the sick and casting out devils go hand in hand). (See Acts 10:38). In fact, it was one of the main earmarks of Jesus' ministry. "And you no doubt know that Jesus of Nazareth was anointed by God with the Holy Spirit and with power, and he went around doing good and healing all who were possessed by demons" (Acts 10:38, LVB). Jesus said in John 14:12, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the



Father” (RSV). Do you believe? If so, read on...

## SEVEN STAGES OF DEMONIC INFLUENCE

There are varying degrees (or stages) of demonic influence. The devil never possessed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, but he clearly **influenced** them, resulting in their poor decision. Their decision to partake of the forbidden fruit (from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) led to the fall of man. Thank God that Jesus redeemed us by overcoming temptation in the wilderness and then He went to the Cross to destroy Satan’s power over us. Whether the devil tempts us to sin, deceives us into sin, or we simply choose to sin makes very little difference in the result. “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). Said another way, if the devil influences someone to jump off a cliff, tricks them into jumping off the cliff, or he enters their body and throws them off the cliff, the end result is the same terrible fall (and crash at the bottom). Our job as Christians is to recognize the devil’s influence in our lives and stop him in the Name of Jesus before he can do irreversible harm. The seven stages of demonic influence (diamonizomai), also called “degrees of demonization” or “demonic control”, are as follows:

**1). Regression (withdrawl).** This is when the enemy influences us to step back from what we know we are called to. This may concern a doctrine that we know to be true, but we withdraw from preaching it for one reason or another. It may be the fear of man, persecution, or the seed of doubt entering our mind or heart. Instead of **progressing forward**, plundering hell and populating heaven, we **regress backwards** on the issue. This first stage of demon influence in our lives may come as subtly as missing church a couple of times when we know God has called us to fellowship. When this occurs, repression is soon to follow.

**2). Repression (non-expression).** Now, the enemy moves in a little deeper, burdening our spirit to a degree that **we no longer express ourselves** when we have something to say on the matter. If the enemy can keep us silent when we know we should

be preaching, teaching, or professing what we believe, he knows he can move in deeper still by suppressing us.

**3). Suppression (withholding).** This is when people come to us and specifically ask us about Jesus. Instead of answering them with the truth God has placed within us, **we withhold** that truth from others, effectively denying them the Gospel (good news) that can save them. At this point in the game, the enemy knows he can move in even further to depress us.

**4). Depression (broken-spirit).** When the enemy breaks our spirit, others have difficulty lifting us out of our spiritual state of brokenness. **We lose desire to even try anymore.** People come to us and share a word of hope or encouragement, but we respond by saying, “Well that may work for others, but it won’t work for me.” At this point, we need to call out to God, asking him to heal our broken spirit, or things can go downhill quickly. (If you see someone in this state, it is time to pray and fast for this person’s restoration and deliverance from the enemy’s plan.) It is at this stage of demonic influence that bitterness, offense, un forgiveness, or apathy or anger against God can easily enter in. Paul stated, “Look after each other...Watch out that no bitter root of unbelief rises up among you, for whenever it springs up, many are corrupted by its poison” (Heb. 12:15, NLT). Once a root of bitterness enters in, the enemy moves on to oppress us.



**5). Oppression (weighed down).** Once this occurs, **a person usually needs someone to help “lift the burden.”** This is where we step up to the plate and cast the spirit off our brother or sister in the Lord. We must do this with the authority Jesus has given us. “In my name they shall cast off (cast out, expel) demons” (Mk. 16:17). If we don’t step in at this point, the enemy, who already has one handcuff on our fellow Christian soldier can easily move to the next phase of his control by shackling his mind through obsession.

**6). Obsession (preoccupation).** This stage of demonic con-

trol **affects the individual's mind all the time**. It may be constant thoughts of doubt, unforgiveness, a grudge, the occult, anger, pornography, or murder. It could be a spirit of suicide, pride, or jealousy. The list of things the enemy could be using is nearly endless, but the **preoccupation** with it is the telltale sign that the obsession stage of demonic control is present. The person who is under this level of demonic control will often hear thoughts in their head and even voices when no one else can. This level of preoccupation with evil will often cause an individual to curse God, deny Christ, and/or reject the Gospel. If this occurs, the enemy may have free reign to enter the person's spirit and take full control of their lives through possession.

**7). Possession (fully-controlled).** This stage of demonic control involves an individual **losing total control of their spirit, soul (mind, will, and emotions), and body**. The enemy has free reign to do whatever he wants through the earthly vessel of the human body. The demoniac of Gadara is a Scriptural example of full blown demon possession (Mk. 5:1-20). Notice how drastically the man is changed once Jesus cast out the demons. "When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid" (v. 15, NIV).

### THREE EXAMPLES FROM SCRIPTURE

How free are you? God tells us to "...keep yourself pure" (1Ti. 5:22). The Bible never tells us to do something unless God also provides the ability for us to do it.

**Jesus**, our perfect example, kept Himself pure from Satan's influence through the power of God. He was able to boldly declare, "...For the ruler of this world [Satan] is coming. **He has no power over me**" (Jn. 14:30, RSV). Satan had absolutely no demonic control over Jesus' life. The devil was allowed to crucify Jesus, appearing to defeat him, but we know this was ordained by God in advance, that mankind might be redeemed (Jn. 3:16; 10:11-15). In fact, Jesus tricked the devil into the crucifixion.

“None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (1Cor. 2:8, RSV). **Jesus walked free from all demon bondage in this life, and demonstrated how we can do the same.**

**Peter**, our second example, is a man who was used greatly by God, but Peter also allowed the enemy to use him. At one point, Peter is speaking by direct revelation from the Father, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mt. 16:16). Jesus replies, “Blessed art thou...for flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you, but my Father which is in heaven” (v. 17). Jesus then gives Peter “the keys to the kingdom of heaven” (vs. 18-19). The invisible enemy then jumps right on Peter. “Then Peter took him [Jesus], and began to rebuke him, saying, you will not be crucified...” (v. 22). Jesus responds with these astonishing words, “**Get thee behind me Satan:** thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men” (v. 23).

It appears from Scripture that the devil influenced Peter to come against God’s plan for Jesus’ life. Jesus immediately recognized the adversary at work through one of his disciples. Instead of ignoring it, Jesus said, “Get thee behind me Satan,” effectively casting the enemy off Peter. When people come to us with the “plans of man” instead of the “mind of Christ,” we are wise to follow Jesus’ example. The adversary didn’t give up on Peter, however, but came back for a second run against him. Jesus said, “Peter, behold, Satan has desired to have you, that he may **sift you as wheat:** But I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not: and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren” (Lk. 22:31-32, KJV). Later, Satan did sift Peter. Peter eventually denied Christ three times (spirit, soul and body) and disqualified himself for discipleship. Jesus, after his resurrection, extended His grace to Peter, restoring him three times. “Peter, do you love me...Peter do you love me...Peter do you love me” (Jn. 21:15-17). Then Jesus prophesied the way in which Peter will die by martyrdom while holding fast to the faith (v. 18-19). Many of us have also denied Christ at a moment of weakness,

but God's grace is so far reaching that he comes to restore us. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20, KJV). It doesn't matter how far we've fallen, Jesus is there to help lift us up if we'll only call out for deliverance and forgiveness.

**Judas**, our third example, is a man whom the Holy Spirit anointed with "power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease" (See Mt. 10:1-8). Judas, did not use this power to keep himself pure from satanic influence (following Jesus' example). Judas had a money problem.



"For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil" (1Tim. 6:10). Judas loved money so much that he "stole from the money bag" of Jesus (Jn. 12:6). Judas left a key under the doormat of his spiritual house and the enemy could get in anytime he chose. Satan eventually picked his opportunity and used Judas as the means to arrest Jesus. "And after the sop, **Satan entered into him [Judas]**" (Jn. 13:27). When Satan was done with this compromised minister of the Gospel, he caused him to commit suicide. Judas' love of money, left unchecked, caused him to end up in hell by satanic assistance. How many of us have ended up in prison (either physically or spiritually) for a similar reason. Thank God that we've been given a "time out" to recover ourselves from the devil's snare through the grace given by Jesus Christ. "...and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will" (2Tim. 2:26, NIV).

In further dealing with Scriptures that evidence "degrees of demonic control" consider the following examples. A boy demonized since he was a child is related in Mark 9:14-29. In this passage, the boy was taken captive by the enemy **from time to time**, "tormenting him and throwing him into the fire" (v. 18). With the demoniac of Gardara the demons **completely controlled the man**, tormenting him continually. "And always, night and

day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones” (Mk. 5:5, KJV). Judas brought the torment to himself by his covetousness “and Satan entered him,” Peter by his calling (and his pride), others by generational curses of their fathers or mothers, and yet others by willful disobedience and sin. The apostle Paul was hindered (roadblocked) by Satan (1Th. 2:18) and the Galatians’ growth was hindered by Satan through the false (legalistic) teachings within the church (Gal. 5:7). Regardless of the cause, Jesus wants to forgive us, deliver us, and put us into the ministry of helping Him set others free. Are you ready?

## ENTRY WAYS FOR DEMONS

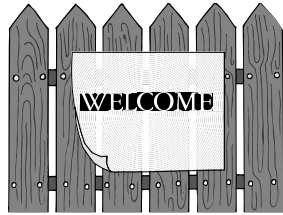
We have already discussed the 17 works of the flesh of Gal. 5:19--20: adultery, fornication, strife, drunkenness, etc... We determined that these are not demons, but rather our own fleshly desires acted out as sin. James says, “When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death” (Jas. 1:13-15, NIV). **We are responsible for our own sinful acts, not the devil.** The devil and his army of demons, however, are responsible at times for doing the tempting. Once we yield to the temptation, it gives license for the devil to have place in our lives. That’s why James goes on to say, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (Jas. 4:7, KJV), and Paul says, “Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil” (Eph. 4:27, RSV). With this in mind, let’s study **the five entry ways for demons.**

## THE FIVE ENTRY GATES OF MAN

These entry ways cause (or allow) Christians, when in disobedience to the above warnings from James and Paul, to give

opportunity to the devil. I heard one Christian jokingly say, “I can resist anything but temptation.” His life had been a terrifying example of his honest proclamation. He had served, on the installment plan, thirty of the last thirty-four years behind bars, and was on another parole violation for drug use. I often say, “If you can’t be a good example, you’ll just have to be a horrible warning.” So we don’t fall into the latter category, let’s learn these entry ways and close the doors to the devil and his demons, keeping ourselves pure from their influence.

**THE FIVE GATES OF MAN** -The five gates of man are: (1) the eye gate (things we look at, magazines, television, other people, etc...); (2) the ear gate (things we listen to, radio, music tapes, conversations, etc...); (3) the mouth gate (things we eat, drink, ingest, speak, etc...); (4) the nose gate (things we snort, drugs or otherwise, things we smell, such as odors or aromas that bring us into thoughts of past experiences, etc...); and (5) the touch gate (things that arouse us through physical touch, or things we touch that arouse us to any of the 17 works of the flesh). The devil can’t make us sin, but he can certainly arouse us to such actions by tempting us to commit sin. Once we sin, then he has access into our lives through our actions. Our actions against God give Satan entrance into our lives.



## THE TROJAN HORSE

Let’s look briefly to the story of the Trojan Horse from Greek mythology to gain an insight into the strategy of the devil and his demons. The Greek siege of Troy had lasted for ten years. The Greeks devised a new ruse: a giant hollow wooden horse. It was built by Epeius and filled with Greek warriors led by Odysseus. The rest of the Greek army appeared to leave, but actually hid themselves inside the horse. Meanwhile, a Greek spy convinced the Trojans that the horse was a gift despite the warnings of

priests and soothsayers. In the end, the Trojans foolishly accepted their enemy's gift. The Trojans celebrated the end of the siege, so that, when the Greeks emerged from the horse, the city was in a drunken stupor. The Greek warriors opened the city gates to allow the rest of the army to enter, and the city was pillaged ruthlessly; all the men were killed, and all the women and children were taken into slavery.

As we can see from the story above, the enemy was able to enter the otherwise impenetrable city walls of Troy by offering the gift of the beautiful Trojan Horse. Instead of waging war to get inside the city, the crafty Greeks simply set a **gift** outside the front gate. The Trojans, desirous of the gift, then **opened their own gates** and brought the



giant horse inside their domain, then celebrated and fell into a drunken slumber. While they were sleeping, the hidden enemy inside the horse kicked open the secret door, overcame the guards, and opened all the gates to the city for the other Greek soldiers to enter Troy and capture the entire city. All through the sly offer of what appeared to be a free gift.

The devil's schemes are like that of the Greek's Trojan Horse. For some it's the attractive Trojan Horse of making some quick money. This cost Judas his eternal soul for thirty pieces of silver (Mt. 27:3-9). For others, it's the enemy's offer of sex with a woman. Samson fell prey and his head landed squarely in the lap of Delilah, the Philistine hairdresser. He lost his seven locks of hair, his strength, his freedom, his eyes, and eventually his life as he died in prison (Judg. 16:4-30). David fell prey to Bathsheba and then committed murder to cover it up (2Sam. 11:1-27). All because he didn't protect his spiritual gates from temptation. What is the Trojan Horse the enemy uses with you? Is it alcohol? Drugs? Pornography? Has the devil placed these things outside your spiritual gates lately? Remember, when you invite these things into your city, he comes with them. Let's look at an all too

common example of how the enemy works in the Christian's life.

## **WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF THE ENEMY'S DEVICES**

He sets before the gates of the blood-washed Christian a beautiful woman. The Christian peers at her through his **eye gate**. She is pleasing to the eye. Her perfume arouses him through his **nose gate**. They engage in conversation. Her words are smooth and soothing to his soul as he listens attentively through his **ear gate**. The thought of going to dinner with her sounds appealing. "Dinner is safe enough," he thinks to himself. "Why not? It's not like I'm sleeping with her, I just want to get to know her better. Besides, she may be sent to me by God to be my wife!" He asks her to dinner, she responds. While waiting for their food, she orders a glass of wine, he says, "I'll take one too. One glass won't hurt," and then it's two. As glass after glass enters through the **mouth gate**, his senses begin to dull and his tie begins to loosen. He begins to forget the advice of King Lemuel's Mother, "Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings...it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes to drink strong drink; lest they forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted" (Pr. 31:3-5). As they get up to leave, he helps her with her coat. As she slips it over her shoulders, he feels something as they make contact for just a moment. The **touch gate** has been affected. He is aroused. A kiss follows, then passion runs wild. The two become "one flesh," and the enemy has ridden in undetected on this seductive filly of the night.

The following morning the Christian tries to repent for his actions, but something seems to hinder him. His desire to read the Bible doesn't seem to be present. His prayers are hollow. God's presence seems withdrawn. The heavens unhearing and silent. Later, a phone call comes his way. It's her. She wants to thank him for such a wonderful evening. Can they go out again? He pauses, remembers the passion, and yields again. The next

thing he knows it's been several months time. Church has been on the back-burner. His friends have again become those from the world. All five of his gates are open to the enemy and the level of demon-influence in his life is increasing, although he doesn't know it. He's been too **preoccupied** with the woman, making ends meet financially, and the enemy now has him. For some, it's back to prison for a dirty U.A.; others, a new crime to keep that high-maintenance woman in proper attire; or several women by now. Oh, what a tangled web we weave. A dozen of the seventeen works of the flesh are now in full manifestation and we have given the devil permission to "take us captive as he wills" (2Tim. 2:26). For although we are born again Christians, our actions indicate we have once again become "the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2-3). We have, in effect, "given place to the devil."

## HOW TO BE SET FREE

Whether it's pornography, drugs, gambling, homosexuality, or some other sin that has you, a friend, or a loved one bound, there are four simple steps to be set free from diamonizomai; the demon influence, torment, and vexation of the devil and his minions. They are simple to remember and easy to apply. Simple to remember because they all start with the letters "RE". Easy to apply because God wants to set us free and all of Heaven backs us in our decision to be free from the bondage of the evil one. Here they are:



**STEP ONE - Re-cognize** you are demon influenced. The Bible says, "For we are not ignorant of the enemy's devices" (2Cor. 2:11) If necessary, "confess your faults to another, and pray for one another that you might be healed (set free)" (Jas. 5:16). Remember, **any** believer can cast out the evil one in Jesus' Mighty Name (Mk. 16:17).

**STEP TWO - Re-pent** from the sin that gave place to the dev-

il in your life. “If we confess our sin God is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1Jn. 1:9). Since the devil is unrighteous, God will cleanse him from our lives once we confess our sins and command him to leave our life in the Name of Jesus. True repentance is more than just apologizing for our actions. God isn’t interested in our apology, but rather our repentance. Repentance is a military term that means to do an “about-face.” Said another way, it is turning **from** sin and turning **to** the Lord, a 180 degree turn in the other direction. It also means to return to the highest point with God. “Re” means again, and “pent” means the highest point. This is where we get our word “penthouse” from, the highest point on the building. So, when we re-pent we go again to the highest point possible with God.

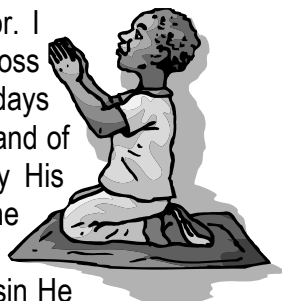
STEP THREE - **Re-nounce** the sin and all evil imps associated with these activities. Simply say, “Satan, I renounce you from my life. I command you to flee from me **now** and never return in Jesus’ Mighty Name. I apply the blood of Jesus Christ between me and you right now and declare myself set free from this moment forward. Amen.” If necessary, throw out or destroy the Trojan Horse the devil rode in on. This could include magazines, music tapes, (if they are yours), witchcraft books, false religions, alcohol, drugs, nicotine products (if you want to be free), Tarot cards, Dungeons & Dragons and role playing games of this sort that invite special powers, other than the Holy Spirit, into your life etc... In the Book of Acts when the Gospel set people free from witchcraft, they “brought their books together and burned them before all men...so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed” (Acts 19:18-20). If you keep the Trojan Horse in your possession you have given the devil license to come and go in your life as he wills. If you destroy the horse he rode in on, and command him to leave, his power is broken. With these three steps being accomplished, you are ready to stand against all the enemy’s wiles. Remember, he came at you once and got in, he will try it again. Therefore, it’s our job to resist temptation when it comes. The good news is we don’t have to resist in our own power. The

power to resist temptation always comes **before**, not during the temptation. It's important that we "give no place to the devil" (Eph. 4:27). Once he's in, we need to go back to step one and start this process again.

STEP FOUR - **Re-sist** the devil. This **maintenance step** is done by first "submitting to God" (Jas. 4:7). If we try to resist the devil in our own strength, we are bound to fail. However, if we submit to God first, asking Him to clothe us with the "full armor of God" (Eph. 6:10-18), then we have heaven's power against the devil, and we will win every time. Submitting to God is first agreeing with what God says about our sin. **Recognizing, Repenting,** and then **Renouncing** it. Then we can stand against the tricks and traps of the adversary with the power of the Holy Spirit and God's armor assuring victory. And once we are free, we can then help others get set free using the same powerful steps to victorious Christian living.

## PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE

I confess Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. I believe and proclaim that Jesus died on the Cross for my sins, was buried in the tomb and three days later rose from the dead. Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father and intercedes for me in prayer. By His work on the Cross of Calvary 2,000 years ago, he purchased my freedom from the devil and all his demons. God has promised that if I confess my sin He is faithful and just to forgive me and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness, including all demons and demon bondages. By faith right now, I take God at his word and I confess my **specific sins** of (take a moment to insert your sins here, confessing them out loud, by saying, I confess, \_\_\_\_\_, etc...name as many sinful acts as the Holy Spirit brings to your mind now. Now say,) Lord I confess that I accepted the devil's Trojan Horse into my life but now I turn to you for help and total deliverance. Jesus, I accept your absolute Lordship over my life, spirit, soul,



and body right now. Cleanse me from all unrighteousness and any and all spirits of unrighteousness that received permission by my actions to enter in my life. I accept this deliverance by the power of your Holy Spirit right now in Jesus' all-powerful Name, the name above every name. Satan, I command you to depart from me and my family right now in Jesus' Name! Amen.

Remember, if the Son sets you free (and He has), you are free indeed (Jn. 8:36). Begin to thank and praise God for your deliverance and prepare to resist the devil when he comes next time. Get into the Bible today. Begin reading in Matthew and continue through the whole New Testament. Go to church. Fellowship with other believers. Spend time each day in prayer, talking with God. Commit yourself to fasting one day a week (see page 26). As a believer, you have victory today, because you are now submitted to God. All heaven backs you on your decision to remain free. The devil is a liar, but God is the Truth and "greater is He [Christ] in you than he [the devil] who is in the world" (1Jn. 4:4). Now, go forth in victory, in Jesus' Name.

### **AN UNSEEN WAR**

*(We received this letter just as we were going to press. That the Holy Spirit would arrange for us to receive this testimony at exactly the right time to go hand-in-hand with the scheduled teaching shows His perfect timing!-Ed.)*

Dear Sister Barb McGraw and Heart of America Prison Ministries, Greetings in the mighty name of our Lord and Savior.

I hope and pray that when you receive my letter that it will find you and rest of my Christian family resting upon the hands of our Lord and Savior. As for me, I am very blessed by receiving the prayer request of my brothers and sisters. Thank you so very much for the honor. Sister Barb, I would like to share some of the good treasures that our Father has shared with me. The Authority of the Believer. Eph 1:18- 2:6.

“These present days there is an unseen war raging on every front: the war between the forces of righteousness and the forces of wickedness and between God and Satan. The world, the nation, the church, the family and every individual on planet earth are specific targets of attack by the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” Eph 6:12.

The average man on the street is totally unaware of the invisible war, even though he is very directly involved, and in many cases he is being swept away by the forces arrayed against him. He interprets everything from world crises to personal traumas as natural happenings. He sees no connection between unseen spiritual forces and such life tragedies as divorce, illegitimacy, sexual perversion, abortion, child abuse, disease, financial collapse, drug abuse, and crime. Furthermore, Mr. Average citizen believes that man is his own savior, and that increased knowledge and scientific advancement will eventually remedy all of mankind’s problems.

While the forces of evil have been increasing in boldness and strength, even to the point of seeming invincibility, as God has been gathering and training a vast army of spiritual soldiers. These soldiers of the cross know who the enemy is, and are not ignorant of his tactics. They know their spiritual weapons and how to bind the satanic strong men. The trumpet of God is now sounding the call to battle. It is time for the great army to go forth in full battle array through fasting and prayer. This army is the true church of the living God. (Not everything that is called “Church” is His Church). Time is running out. Arise, O Church!

Truth is the key to freedom. Jesus said, “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:32). There is much truth in the Bible which pertains to Satan and his kingdom. This area of biblical truth is a necessary part of that which must be embraced in order to experience freedom. It is certainly a fact that Jesus spent much of His earthly ministry in dealing with the devil and in emphasizing principles of spiritual warfare. If it were not important for us to know about Satan and his ways then the Bible would have remained silent on the subject. Satan is the

one who stands to lose the most when Christians gain understanding about who they are in Christ and who the devil is. Satan does not want us to understand that he has already been defeated. Jesus defeated the devil. He took away all the armor in which Satan trusted (Luke 11:22).

Therefore, the devil can do no more than we permit him to do. When Christians really comprehend Satan's limitations and their own equipping, they will be encouraged to confront the devil directly, bind him, and spoil his house. There are two levels of spiritual warfare. One level of warfare involves the casting out of demons. This is commonly designated as the ministry of deliverance. A second level of warfare is that of wrestling against principalities, powers, world rulers, and spirit of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph 6:12). We do this through prayer, standing in the gap (Eze 22:30-31).



I believe that it is time for the Church to confront these spiritual Goliaths. You may recall that young David conquered the giant with his slingshot (ours is prayer "The effectual fervent prayer" James 5:16) but he became experienced with his weapon while protecting his sheep from lions and bears. In a similar way, the church has been learning the tactics of spiritual warfare through deliverance ministry among the "sheep", and now it is time to face demonic strong men. This letter is written because of a deep desire of heart that the Church, God's army, become totally aggressive in spiritual warfare. Too many Christian Soldiers remain inactive and ineffective in the time of battle. It is my prayer that all the Saints of God will become Saints at war!

Enclosed are also 20 X .39 stamps, may the Lord be glorified through this humble tithe offering for His Kingdom. Say hello to all my brothers and sisters.

In His name and service,

Bro. Freddy Aviles Jr., Tennessee

## **BIBLICAL FASTING**

By Pastor Darin L. Shorey, Family Worship Center,  
St. George, New Brunswick, Canada

During one of Isaiah's many conversations with God concerning the Nation of Israel, the Word of the Lord came to Him like never before. He was so stirred in his spirit that he wrote it down. The nation of Israel was experiencing a national crisis that included a rebellion against the commandments of God. Isaiah needed clear direction and he needed it now!

The Lord said, "Is this not the fast that I have chosen; to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free and that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out, when you see the naked, that you cover him and not hide yourself from your own flesh? Then your light shall break forth like the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily and your righteousness shall go before you. The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'" (Isaiah 58:6-9 KJV).

God said that the answers would come as light breaking forth like the morning! God desires to provide His children with clear direction for every question and a solution to every problem, whether it's spiritual, physical, financial, legal, mental or emotional. Decisions like what is my calling and purpose? How can I best prepare myself for the next chapter of my life, after prison? How can I be most fruitful for God where I'm presently planted? How to deal with specific problems with God's wisdom? He is very interested in your life and enjoys leading you towards the best of each day!

Too often, we stand in the dimness of twilight-which is neither light nor dark. Like driving your car at dusk, twilight makes it difficult to see the road clearly. Without clear illumination, you might miss an important sign or take a wrong turn, delaying your arrival to a desired destination. Many decisions we make are actually

defining moments! During many of these defining moments, we feel like we are driving in twilight. Though there are many good resources available to us today to assist us in making good choices, there is none better than the resource that God reveals here to Isaiah, “Is this not the fast that I have chosen?”

Fasting may very well be the most overlooked and underestimated discipline in Christianity today and its benefits are amazing. The lack of fasting in your life could cause secondary understanding, which leads to secondary motivation and results in secondary application, leaving us short of God’s best! Often times, as it was with Isaiah at this particular time, we can’t afford to miss it! We must hear God! What does fasting do? It opens the door of communication with God and it creates an incredible sensitivity to the realm of the Spirit. God tells Isaiah that some things are only achieved through a selfless sacrifice, a denial of the lesser pleasures of life in order to enjoy the greatest pleasures of God! Jesus demonstrated to his disciples one day that certain miracles and deliverances only happen when prayer is combined with fasting. The disciples were unsuccessful in casting a demon from a boy. Jesus took the boy, rebuked the demon and instantly the boy was set free by the power of God. These same disciples, who earlier, were given authority to cast out every devil (see Mt. 10:1; Lk. 9:1, 10:17), but failed in this instance, were astonished at the ease at which Jesus cast the demon out. It became a teachable moment. They inquired of Jesus, saying, “Rabbi, why could we not cast it out?” Jesus replied, “This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting” (Mk. 9:29, NKJV). Jesus knew the secret power of combining prayer and fasting. Where did he learn this secret? Right after John baptized Jesus and the Spirit descended upon Jesus in bodily form like a dove, Scripture says that Jesus was “full of the Spirit” (Lk. 4:1). Once filled, “the Spirit led Him into the wilderness to fast” (Mt. 4:1; Lk. 4:1-2). After fasting for a season the Bible says, “Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit” (Lk. 4:14 KJV). What was the key? Fasting. Before fasting, Jesus was “filled with the Spirit.” After fasting, He was released in “the power of the Spirit.” Jesus began his ministry

immediately after receiving the Spirit's power in the wilderness. "And news of Him went out from all the surrounding region" (Lk. 4:14b). Since Jesus is our role model and example, then we should follow his leading. Start by asking Him how, and how long, you should fast. If you've never fasted before you may try not eating after 6PM, then eating dinner the following day (24 hour fast). You can drink water if you like, or go without water. However, don't drink coffee or eat candy. Simply trust God to give you the grace, and He will. The next time you fast, try 36 or 48 hours, then try a three day fast. God will lead you from there and you will see His power released in and through your life. I've heard many Christian teachers say, "You have not because you ask not." Though this statement by itself is scriptural, I wonder if there might be more to it than that. Maybe we have not because we fast not! **(Seek medical advice before fasting if you have any health issues.)**

I don't have the space to expound upon each of the Biblical Fasts found in the Word of God, here is an overview of the nine fasts mentioned in the Bible to help get you started: The Disciples Fast-Fasting for the freedom from addiction (Mt. 17:20-21), The Ezra Fast-Fasting to solve problems (Ezra 8:21-23), The Samuel Fast-Fasting to win people to Christ (1Sam. 7:1-8), The Elijah Fast-Fasting to break crippling fears and other mental problems (1Kings 19:2-18), The Widow's Fast-Fasting for the needy (1Kiings 17:12), The Saint Paul Fast-Fasting for insight and decision making (Acts 9:9-19), The Daniel Fast-Fasting for health and physical healing (Daniel: 12-20), The John the Baptist Fast-Fasting for an influential testimony (Matthew 3:4; Luke 1:15), and The Esther Fast-Fasting for protection and deliverance from evil one (Esther 4:16).

May God bless you abundantly as you continue to seek and serve Him with all your heart!