



“Then one was brought to Him who was demon- possessed, blind and mute.”

– Matt 12:22

DEMONIC INFLUENCE AND POSSESSION

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” (Eph 6:12)

The Difference

- Demonic influence
 - The spirit of darkness tries to incline the will of a person to sin
- Demonic possession
 - the devil takes control of one's reason and will
 - Ex: VPN



External forms of demonic possession

- Turbulent
 - “And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, 3 who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, 4 because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him.”
(Mark 5:2-4)
 - “And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, 15 “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water.” (Matt 17:14-15)

External forms of demonic possession

- Restrained form
 - “Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.” (Matt 12:22)
- Clairvoyant form
 - Definition = the supposed faculty of perceiving things or events in the future or beyond normal sensory contact
 - “Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune.” (Acts 16:16)
 - “But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities.” (Acts 16:19)

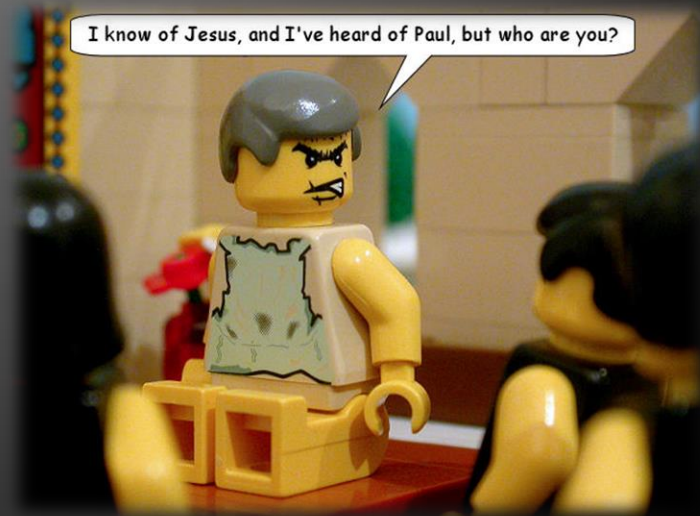
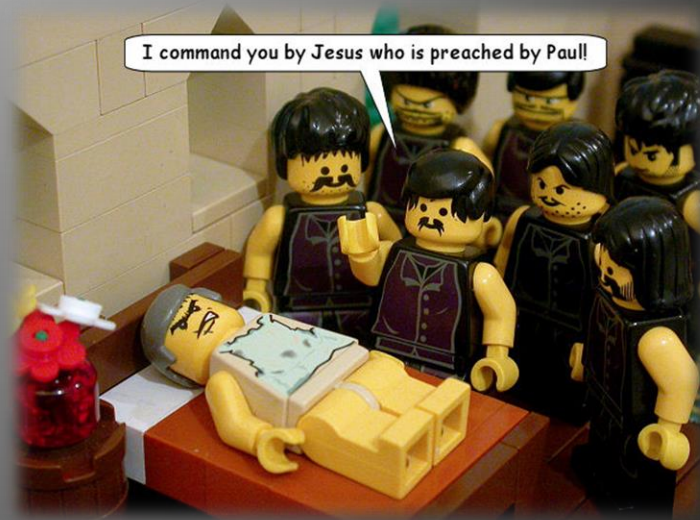
What leads to demonic possession?

- Fascination with the occult (Kurt E. Koch)
- Occult = mediums, spiritualism, fortune telling, going to fortune tellers, psychic healing, white and black magic – turning to servants of fallen spirits
 - Direct involvement
 - Turning to their servants



Not everyone has the authority to exorcise demons

- Sons of Sceva, the Jewish priest (Acts 19:13-16):
 - 13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.”
 - 14 Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so.
 - 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you
 - 16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.



Demonic Influence

- The devil seizes the reason and will of a person
- The devil is not able to forcefully enslave our reason or will
- He achieves subjugation gradually
 - One's own aversion to God
 - Living a sinful life



Freedom and Slavery

- Some people confuse the two
- Some view obedience as slavery
- Some view anarchy as freedom
- Freedom: to use your free will to NOT be negatively influence by another person
- Slavery: trying to move away from something, but find that we cannot
- When we follow the Church, it should be via a self-willed obedience



Freedom and Slavery

- Judas
 - “Then Satan entered Judas.”
(Luke 22:3)
- Jewish leaders
 - “You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do.”
(John 8:44)



Guarding against evil spirits

- Anyone who willingly distances himself from God's protection places himself in the sphere of the devil's influence.
- The Lord Christ created His place of refuge and protection here on earth – the Church
- “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.” (John 10:27-28)



Satan attempts to lure us to him

- “When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first.”
(Matt 12:43-45)



Means of defense

1. Prayer

- “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”
(Luke 11:4)

2. Invoking the name of the Lord Christ

- “In My name they will cast out demons...” (Mark 16:17)

3. Repentance

- Sin attracts the demons

4. Eucharist



Means of defense

5. Sign of the Cross

- *“...it is not simply with fingers that one should make the sign of the Cross but with a heartfelt disposition and complete faith and that if one makes the sign of the Cross in that way, not a single unclean spirit can come close, seeing that sword by which he was injured and received a mortal wound. If we with trembling look at their places of punishment, we can imagine how terrified the demons are on seeing that weapon by which Christ destroyed all their power and cut off the head of the serpent. When the Cross is before us, the demons are not terrible and not dangerous.”*
(St. John Chrysostom)

