

e. *Follow up: learning to resist the devil.* — Deliverance ministry may be compared with unbinding Lazarus still wrapped in bandages and grave clothes. However, from then on, Lazarus had to walk by himself (John 11:44). The person who has been delivered from occult involvement or evil spirits, has to step out in faith. He or she needs to accept Jesus Christ as personal Savior. Throwing away fetishes and amulets and burning books on spiritism is one step, confessing and renouncing the occult practices another, but then the important third step is receiving Christ and full assurance of salvation. If we fail in the third step a tragedy will take place which Jesus described in Matt. 12:43-45: The evil spirit will reoccupy the empty, swept house with seven other spirits.

The person has to be taught to resist the devil. Therefore he has to understand and enter into his full spiritual inheritance in Christ. He is a child of God, he is redeemed from the sins of his forefathers, he is a new creature, his body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. His old life entangled with occultism has been crucified with Christ. He has been buried and raised with Christ to walk in newness of life, and therefore has to consider himself dead to sin and alive to God. He who is in him is greater than he who is in the world. Putting on the whole armour of God (Eph. 6:10-20), he has to resist the powers of darkness from this position. He has to be taught to take shelter under the protecting power of the Blood of Christ. And finally he has to be taught to command the devil as Jesus did in Matt. 4:10 using the mighty Name of Jesus. A great help for the newly delivered person is a vital, warm Christian fellowship. He learns to study the Bible and to pray. The sympathetic understanding of fellow Christians and their intercession will help to restore him in body, soul, and spirit. The special fellowship around the Lord's table has been a source of strength and healing, to many former occultists.

### Conclusion

The tremendous need for a deliverance ministry is evident. It will still increase as the demonic powers are building up for the reign of the Anti-christ and even try to invade the church. Therefore, deliverance ministry should become an integrated part of endtime-evangelism. It is very dangerous to specialize in deliverance ministry. It is still more dangerous to exploit such a specialized deliverance ministry for sensational reporting, writing, and money making. What our age needs are servants of the Lord, who with deep compassion for those bound by occultism study the various forms of occultism in the different cultural environments, who in simple childlike faith in the authority of Jesus Christ confront and uncover the occult powers, who through preaching and counseling set the prisoners free, who do not allow the devil by unclean lives or motives to have any bridge-head in them, thus, paralyzing their deliverance ministry, but who are totally committed to Christ, filled, anointed, and equipped by the Holy Spirit to lead many occultists into the liberty of the children of God.

## EVANGELIZATION AMONG SPIRITISTS AND OCCULTISTS REPORT

"Spiritism is the religion of our day, undergirding all other religion." In these words the Rev. Detmar Scheunemann outlined the dreadful proportions of a problem that can no longer be regarded as the exclusive property of Asia or Africa, but is truly international with its tentacles reaching to every corner of the globe. The very word "occult" means "hidden," and as these works of Satan were brought into the light of open discussion and exposed for what they were, we began to see the true nature of Satan's strategy for these days and how to fight and live in the victory over him that Jesus gained on the Cross.

The alarming rise in interest and participation in occultism, particularly within Western cultures over the last 10 years, was examined and the main motives for each individual evaluated. These were seen as:

- a. a desire for knowledge
- b. a lust for power
- c. a need for comfort, e.g., in the sense of wanting to contact a recently deceased loved one
- d. a craving for sex which is often used as a catalyst in occult rituals
- e. a need for protection against the occult attacks initiated by others on us
- f. the failure of the church to provide spiritual satisfaction has made many turn to occultism. This applies, for example, in the church's lack of answers to some of the problems that the occult poses and the fact that miracles such as healing which used to be part of the regular ministry of the church now appear to be Satan's own province. He is bringing many into bondage while the church of Christ stands in the wings failing to exhibit the faintest flicker of the supernatural power of a living God.

It was seen that occultism was not only rife in the world, but could also touch the church. Christians are not immune from bondage; and part of Satan's strategy was seen to be to so involve Christian leaders and laity that God's work might be hampered, and his churches hindered from rising into heavenly places with her Lord. Some Christians are also inadvertently trapped by the evil one in the use of "Christian" fetishes such as a Bible, or a Cross. An example of this was the way a soldier might take a Bible into war with him in his rucksack, not to read, but for protection! Satan will try anything in his attempts to spoil the Christian's blood-bought heritage of real life in Jesus, but it was stressed that time and again he was being defeated when confronted with the power of the blood of Jesus and the authority of his name.

Much of Satan's mystique and power lies merely in the veil of secrecy behind which he hides. This veil was illustrated by the descriptions of African participants in recalling the dismissal of occult forces by past missionaries as "mere superstition," and the idea that with education the African would soon grow out of them. It was felt that here was a real area with which the Congress was dealing, merely by having these sessions — as many of us were facing for the first time the true reality and implications of demonic activity in this world in which we live. One of the results

of these insights, we hoped, would be that after the Congress, attempts could be made to educate ministers and missionaries in preparation for their ministry. Often this has been neglected at great cost! Rev. Bud Elford drew attention to the way many Arctic missionaries from his society came under a demonic activity and apprehension with which they could not cope and so left that particular mission field. This resulted in the beginning of a training and preparation program so that whether the missionaries-to-be accepted the existence of the demonic or not, they were at least prepared when faced with it.

Three main areas were stressed in which all Christians facing these problems need to be personally prepared: (i) To recognize that we are engaged in warfare with Satan and his evil forces; (ii) To be fully equipped by being continually filled with the Holy Spirit; (iii) To be living in purity and holiness, cleansed by the blood of Jesus. Otherwise the evil spirits themselves may well denounce us for what we are.

It was noted that whereas Christian leadership was to be equipped to deal with the problems, at the same time an unhealthy interest in the occult among Christian laity was to be discouraged. It was shown that in some areas of Western Christianity this was becoming the "in thing" even among young Christians. This has led in some cases to an over-interest in either the book or film of "The Exorcist" — to many dangerous practices, such as Christian young people attempting to exorcise those whose problems were psychosomatic, not demonic! Although Satan *is* defeated, that gives us no license to arouse our fleshly curiosity. Satan's activities are illicit and expressly forbidden by God, Lev. 19: 31, 20:6, Deut. 18:9-14, and we should discourage idle interest. A good guideline would be, "Never go looking for demons, but if one appears under your feet, tread on it!"

A strong emphasis was laid in our discussions on the fact that we should not be seeking to produce demonology specialists, but men of God in whose ministries dealing with the demonic was included not as a specialist activity but as an integrated part of a wider field, e.g., evangelism. We need to grow in God and in the authority of the Spirit so that we may discern where Satan is working. Discernment was a gift of the Holy Spirit for this work because Satan so often acts like a monkey, a mere imitator of the things of God, and we need to be able to tell the difference between the reality and the imitation!

We began to gain some understanding of what it means to live in the victory of Jesus. In the realm of the occult our abilities can achieve nothing: it is only in a childlike dependence on Jesus that we find him coming and working through us. That is the reason for the scriptural exhortation to prayer and fasting, not so much in order that we might become more spiritual, but to enable us to concentrate ourselves, without any distraction, on Jesus. We cannot use the name of Jesus as a mere formula, but as the authority in which we live, as we dwell under the Cross receiving daily cleansing and purifying.

Why then is not everyone immediately delivered from Satan as when Jesus expelled demons in the New Testament? We must reject Satan's condemnation of us on this point. If we are pure and honest before God, then he will use us, but only *if* the possessed person is absolutely honest in

desiring deliverance. Many of our problems are caused by the changing desires in some people so they try in various areas of their lives to keep the demon and his power while at other times they desire freedom. Confession and repentance on the part of the possessed must be honest and complete.

Scripture foretells that in the last days Satanic activity will increase. How can we in the churches not only educate each other and bring that which is dark into light, but also win the world?

a. We must educate the non-Christian to the dangers of things we too lightly accept like secret societies, hypnosis, Freemasonry, yoga, horoscopes, ouija boards, etc.

b. The film "The Exorcist" should not be seen by curious Christians but exposed for the danger it is. Pre-film literature distributed in the cinema queues and counseling centers open in the immediate vicinity after the film provide evangelistic opportunities for those towns where Christians have not managed to have the film banned.

c. As servants of Christ we need to be culturally aware and need to see how the occult relates to a particular culture and how it may be dealt with in that culture.

d. Our literature and responses must not be immature, sensational or negative, but positive, giving glory to the works of God and not the works of Satan.

Finally, we emphasized the need to move in the fullness of the power of the living God. We need not only to be sealed with the Spirit (Ephesians) but also to be continually filled with him (Ephesians). We need not only the evangelistic, organic, and pedagogic works of the Spirit, but also the charismatic work of the Spirit that he may give us all the gifts we need to be equipped for his service. Satan is defeated and so we look to Jesus. He will give us all we need to deal with the enemy, an anointing of the Holy Spirit, a childlike faith in Jesus, and the authority of the Father. Living thus in lives clean, pure, and totally committed to Jesus makes Satan fear. In the name of Jesus and his victory Satan is utterly overcome but in these days he must be defeated, not merely ignored.