

The 'Discipleship Check List' Transcript

A GV247.TV Programme presented by Stewart Menelaws

DCL No4: Did you experience deliverance from any ungodly spiritual influences?

This series is for any Christian believer who is either at the very beginning of their journey with Jesus Christ or who has been a believer for some years but lacks a sound understanding of the Christian faith. It should also prove to be a helpful aid which interlinks with all our resources for Shepherds, overseers and believers reaching out to others.

Our world has always been infatuated with the subject of the supernatural. Blockbuster movies, television dramas, children's cartoons and books, magazines and newspapers. Horoscopes speculate the future, adverts encourage the search for an inner spiritual guide and spiritual gurus encourage individuals to reach new heights. Angels and demons. UFOs and close encounters. The supernatural is all around us.

Question: Depending on your cultural background, social circle or just quite simply a life lived, have you been, or are you involved in, spiritual practices that are in direct opposition to God's instruction to keep clear of such areas?

As someone who was once involved in the world of the occult, I ask the question, *is this important for the new convert to Christianity?* And the answer is, *absolutely, yes!*

Involvement in forbidden supernatural connections:

1. Any form of fortune telling is forbidden (*For overview see Deuteronomy 18:9-13*)
2. Spiritism is forbidden (Leviticus 19:31)
3. Any form of witchcraft, sorcery or wizardry is forbidden (Exodus 22:18 & Lev 20:27)
4. Contacting the dead (*actually talking with unclean spirits – not a loved one*)(Lev 20:6)
5. Eastern mystic practices via transcendental meditation, channelling, mindfulness etc.
6. Close encounters or alien abduction
7. Involvement with a cult group or other unbiblical religious organisation (*false doctrines*)
8. Any form of antichrist worship (*also ungodly music*)
9. Use of drugs and other mind altering substances – '*pharmakeus*' / *magician* (Rev 21:8)
10. Any involvement with angelic or idol worship (Lev 26:1 & Rev 19:10)
11. Ownership of any form of magic/spiritual/Idolatry possessions - Acts 19:19
12. Any form of false prophetic visions (Deuteronomy 13:1-5 & 18:20)
13. Any form of seeking supernatural power for oneself (Acts 8:18-24)
14. Any form of false biblical practices (Romans 16:17)

The supernatural practices that human beings can get themselves entangled with, is wide and varied, but the root remains the same. Rebellion, the sin of self-will, is in direct opposition to God's commands. If you desire to walk upright before the God of The Holy Bible, you need to take this seriously.

In Genesis chapter 3, the serpent opened the door that would lead mankind in rebellion and justification. After the flood, mankind would continue on a course of rebellion and in his quest to be like God, would develop various practices to open the door to other spiritual dimensions. There are many ancient civilisations well-known for their supernatural beliefs.

- God states that any supernatural connection out-with Him is cursed (Deut 18:9-13)
- Those who practice magic arts, idolatry (*false gods*) are destined for Lake of Fire (Rev 21:8)
- A rebellious spirit is as the sin of witchcraft; divination and arrogance like the evil of idolatry (1 Samuel 15:23)
- To be obstinate and follow one's own plans is wickedness (Isaiah 30:1)
- God hates haughtiness, lies, murder, wicked scheming, quick to do evil, false witness, one who causes dissension among brothers/sisters (Proverbs 6:16-19).
- Any form of vanity - egotism, self-importance, pride, narcissism, conceit (Ezekiel 28:17) (*These are the opposite of love and humility*)

To help illustrate how to identify a false spirituality:

If you want to be able to spot fake money, you study the original to be equipped to spot even the best forgeries. So too, study the Word of God (Psalm 119:105) and you will be able to recognise any false spirituality that would lead you into error.

Why are people deceived? Does God not love us?

Be sure to understand, God loves us and has proved His love by sending His Son to save those who will trust in Him (Rom 5:8). Yet God also makes it quite clear that if you are foolish and desire to believe in falsehoods, you will be given over to that which you desire (2 Thess 2:11-12). Far too many lazy individuals keep looking to others to tell them what is right and what is wrong. Is this okay? Is that okay? Is it alright for me to do this? Is it alright for me to do that?

Once again In Matthew 25:1-12, The Lord Jesus Christ warns that many people who have a belief in Him are foolish and they are wilfully foolish and they will not be able to enter His Kingdom. We all have to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. In other words, we must take things very seriously. Your eternal life depends on it. (Philippians 2:12)

Can unclean spiritual practices be a barrier or hinder our walk with God?

Yes. The disciple of Jesus Christ must be a clean vessel (sanctified) where The Holy Spirit resides (1 Cor 6:19) and who will in turn mature into an ambassador for Christ (Eph 6:20).

Repentance, humility, selflessness and faithfulness in keeping God's instruction. *In some cases, deliverance prayer may be required.*

Noticeable extremes in scripture:

- Those who are demonised / unclean spirits control them (Luke 9:39 and Matt 8:28-32)
- Unclean spirits enabling divination/fortune telling/word of knowledge (Acts 16:16)
- Bound by a spirit causing physical problems (Luke 13:16)

While The Lord Jesus Christ never touches the demonised, that is a creature be it man or animal with unclean spirits within, we read how Satan uses unclean spirits to achieve deception with the kings of the earth to bring them together for battle against The Lord (Rev 16:14 & Rev 17:12-14). These acts are allowed by God (Judges 9:23) to bring about His purposes which will result in The Return of Christ and all creation bowing down to The Judge (Isaiah 63:1-6 & Rev 19:11-21).

Every Christian believer needs to be part of the body of Christ and should discuss with their shepherd or overseer any concerns they may have in regard to former involvement with ungodly spiritual practices. Personal prayer before the Father (Matt 6:5-15) is important as you seek the Lord for anything that has been in or is in your life at present that may be unacceptable (Psalm 139:23). Repentance for involvement in anything that sets itself up against The Lord (*Rebellion*) is absolutely necessary. Repentance leads to forgiveness and The Lord is our deliverer (Psalm 116:8).

False Doctrine:

False teaching and false prophecy are warned against, throughout the New Testament (Matt 24:4-8 & 24-25 and Acts 20:29-31).

False doctrine and an erroneous understanding of God, can come through:

- Lack of personal bible study and prayer (2 Tim 3:16-17)
- Poor biblical teaching / misinterpretation of the scriptures (2 Pet 3:14-16)
- False prophecy (initial warning in - Deuteronomy chapter 13)
- Deceptive signs and wonders (2 Thes 2:9-12 & Rev 13:3-4)
- Deceiving spirits (1 Tim 4:1)
- Deliberate unwillingness to hold fast to sound doctrine (2 Tim 4:3-4)
- Not coming away from that which is unacceptable before God (Isaiah 52:11 & Rev 18:4)

The antidote is to repent and be faithful to God's Word – His revealed instruction for your life.

Summary:

The Christian disciple is to be...

- Sanctified (set-apart) which means to be purified, consecrated, hallowed or dedicated (1 Thessa 4:3)
- Have the mind of Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 2:16)

Repentance: Contrition, Remorse, Regret. Turn back to God and be faithful...

- An effort to learn right thinking, to choose right behaviour and experience right feelings.
- Feed on The Word of God, obey and experience correct behaviour.

Next week (DCL No5) we look at:

Have you been baptised in water? Did you/do you understand its significance? (Luke 3:1-22)

The 'Discipleship Check List' series has been produced with the sole aim of encouraging the hearer / reader to study the Holy Bible so that faith in Jesus Christ will be built on Him alone. Every human work is fallible and whilst every effort has been made to represent the truths of God Almighty's Holy Words, this series is but an aid to help encourage study so that the Christian disciple of Jesus Christ will go onto maturity in the most Holy faith.

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