

Sample Case Studies

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- 1) Soo, a young woman from Malaysia comes from a strong Buddhist family. While studying in the USA, she is befriended by Christians and commits her life to Christ. Shortly after her conversion she begins to have dreams in which Buddha appears to her telling her that she must renounce Christianity and return to Buddhism. She feels threatened. There is also an accompanying sense of dread of some evil that is about to happen to her or her family. She wakes up in a cold sweat, screaming. It has reached the point where the dreams are occurring almost nightly. She comes to you for help:
 - a. What information will you want to find out from her?
 - b. How will (can) you help her?
- 2) Simbo is an international student from a West African country. He occasionally attends IFI sponsored events, including the Friday night fellowship. You notice that when in his presence your spirit is heavy. There is a sense of gloom. You also notice that he smirks whenever anything spiritual is presented or discussed. One night after the fellowship he tells you that his god is more powerful than the Christian "god". He boasts of having special power given to him when he was dedicated to his god and that he carries a special holy cloth given to him by the priest (witch doctor). It both gives him the power to hurt other people and curse them. He claims that under the influence of this power, several missionaries in his country have become sick and died. He challenges you to a contest. He will pray to his god for you to become sick. If you do, it will prove that his god is greater than yours. Will you accept the challenge? If so, what will you do? If not, why not and how will you ever be able to share the power of the gospel?
- 3) Charlene, a small group leader (for Bible study) comes to you for counsel. She says that one of her group members, Shakila, has told her that she is being tormented by evil spirits. She comes to you to ask what to do. What would you tell her?

You agree to meet with Charlene and Shakila together. Beginning with Revelation 12 you explain that Jesus has power over Satan and his demons. At this, Shakila falls to the floor and another voice cries out from her in a loud, piercing cry, "Leave me alone." What will you do?

- 4) Students from various countries who visit your home bring gifts with them. What of the following gifts will you keep in your house, eat or use? Do you believe that objects can have spiritual influence? How will you decide?
 - an incense holder used in worship to other gods
 - an Indonesian god figure
 - a mask used in ancient Korea during a dance to frighten evil spirits away
 - "good luck" tea
 - food from one of their religious festivals
 - statues of unknown origin or use

- a CD of Hindu songs, some of which are songs of praise to various Hindu gods
- a gift of jade that is given to wear around your neck as a type of protection against bad things happening to you

If you decide to get rid of any gift, what will you tell the student(s) if the student(s) ask about the gift upon their next visit?

- 5) A Christian international student comes to you in despair because of thoughts he/she is having. The student says, "I have spent so much time in tears, hours of searching, hours of sleeping – yet so much restlessness! I only hear 'Pharisee' yelled at me again and again. Everything comes into question when I am faced by such condemnation, restlessness, and the awful feeling of being a wicked human being came to my mind. I think that I am Judas. I am sure you think this is outrageous, but this is what is in my heart day after day. I have no power to stop doing it. I hate being under him... Satan. Help me not to lose to Satan's power in my heart. Please pray for me and ask God to drive out all that imprisons me."

How can you determine if this person is demonized? What approach would you take?

- a. Agree to pray with the student
- b. Send the student to a counselor
- c. Send the student to your pastor
- d. Encourage this person to practice spiritual disciplines to overcome this problem
- e. Other:

Why would you take the approach you chose? If you choose option a, how specifically would you pray for this person?

- 6) An international student reveals that he/she was sexually abused as a child and now is hyper sexually active (compulsive sexual habits). What is the likelihood of a demonic presence in this person's life? How could you know for sure? He/she is not willing to go to a counselor for help but he/she does recognize that he/she needs help? Without specialized training in sexual abuse is it wise to try and help this student (assuming you are the same sex)? If so, how would you try to help?
- 7) Sarupa is an Indian student and young believer in your discipleship group. Over the past year of knowing her, you notice a constant pattern of relational difficulties, hurt and overreaction to situations, followed by anger and immediate cutting of those relationships. She is usually a happy and social person with a bright affect, but when she talks about people who have hurt her, her facial expression, tone of voice, and demeanor changes significantly. Rage, anger, hardness, and defensiveness overtake her, and she does not seem to accept anything you try to say to her. After a weekend church retreat, Sarupa wants to meet with you. She tells you that God showed her at the retreat that she needed to forgive her father. However, she is distressed because feels unwilling and unable to forgive him. Her father had cheated on her mother, brought shame and unnecessary hardships to her family, and physically abused her and her sister when they were children. As she talks about her past, you can visibly see her pain but also her coldness and anger towards her father.

What steps would you take to help Sarupa begin the path of forgiveness? What might be the connection between Sarupa's unforgiveness towards her father and her present relational difficulties? Are there any signs of demonization or spiritual strongholds in her life? If so, what might have been a possible "entry point" for the demonic?

- 8) During prayer for a Chinese student, Chen, the student remembers that during boarding school she made up a story in her head about being a beloved daughter of Satan who had an ability to kill angels. She used her power for revenge on people who mistreated her such as those who bullied her. This story gave her a sense of power and comfort when she felt lonely and rejected by others and forgotten by her parents (especially after their divorce). At the same time she was powerless to stop trying to kill herself. She would regularly cut herself. She was often alone and did not have a single friend.

What root issue do you see at work in Chen's life and how can you tell if it is demonic in nature? What would you do to further help her?

- 9) A student from Indonesia, Siti, became a believer in your Bible study group, but shortly after she claims that you and others in the group are "out to get her" and she stops coming to the Bible study. Sometime later she writes to you the following email:

"This is Siti who used to come to your Bible study group. We are in need of deliverance help. We will be able to serve Christ again if Siti's deliverance is complete and her favoritism cured. This favoritism was observed and renounced, but it is still there since it is caused by the evil spirits in her body. This spirit called Yong Choy Nyet is scared by different types of people. She has been hiding in Siti's body for years and has caused her to be nasty in her words and she got upset easily. Another spirit leads her into sexual sin. Her glory in Christ is a stake." Can you accept her self-assessment? Why do you think she switches from first person to third person? How would you try to help her?

- 10) A student from Albania shares with you that she is afraid to go out of her apartment without her husband. She says that she has a profound fear of being sexually attacked. She claims no sexual abuse in her background. Her paralyzing fear is negatively affecting her life. How can you determine if this fear is psychological or demonic? How could you help her?
- 11) Hui a PhD student from China is a strong Christian leader who believes God loves her objectively but has no inner sense of God's love. During public or private worship times she has no sense of God's presence. She knows not to operate based on feelings and her faith is strong but describes a wall or block in her relationship with God that seems to make God distant from her. She comes to you for help because she says her Christian life is principled but not full of life. What would you want to explore with her so you could help her?

In talking with her you learn that before becoming a Christian that she was a Buddhist who also engaged in ancestral worship. You also learn that she experienced severe rejection from her father. As you share with her the Father heart of God and help her to renounce any ties to past idols she begins to cry out (scream). Should you:

- Comfort her because she is in emotional pain
- Ask her why she is screaming
- Discern whether a demonic spirit is present that needs addressing
- Tell her to stop screaming because it will be OK.
- Something else _____

- 12) Jun is a PhD student from China who is depressed and has thoughts of suicide. She is a Christian but is quite confused about God and believes that God is punishing her. She feels isolated and her eyes are full of “darkness.” Her father was emotionally abusive when she was child and committed suicide. She alternates between anger toward her father and sorrow in missing him. Her father was an angry and hopeless man. One of the things he often said is “Life is hopeless.” Her religious background was ancestor worship. While you encourage her to seek professional counseling, you also offer to pray with her. As you do, she begins to experience emotional healing as she begins to really believe that God is for her and not against her and that what her father did to her was not God’s will. But there still are intrusive thoughts of sadness, anger, and suicide that assail her. Would it be proper to ask if you can pray to drive out any evil spirits that could be bothering her?
- 13) Min from China is addicted to playing a violent computer game. It is affecting his studies. While he knows it is wrong he is powerless to stop. He is driven to play. In exploring his background you learn he has suffered rejection from others in a significant manner (stepfather, girlfriend, friends) and then when he could not find a job after graduation he also rejected himself as a worthy person. You can see that his computer addiction is related to his feelings about himself – including shame and unworthiness. He is also depressed. Could the addiction be demonic in nature? If so, how could you help him?
- 14) An international student is returning to a remote part of China to do research and share the gospel. She reports that last time she visited, she was tormented by demons who enticed her to stop sharing the gospel and kill herself. She suffered greatly. How can you prepare her to be victorious this time?
- 15) An international is having night terrors every night. She senses a presence in her room that would sometimes touch her on the side and was seeking to get inside of her. As a result, she is staying awake all night until the dawn comes, when she sleeps a few hours. How can you help her?
- 16) A staff person calls you, asking for counsel of how to deal with a fellow staff member who, having just returned from visiting returnees in a Muslim country, is making bizarre statements and believes she has committed the unpardonable sin. How will you respond?
- 17) An international student shows interest in studying the Bible with you. Every time he comes to the Bible study, he feels sick and spends most of the time in the restroom. How can you tell if it is just a nervous condition or a demonic interference?