

## Sample Case Studies Guide

Rich Mendola  
International Friendships, Inc. (IFI)  
[rmendola@ifiusa.org](mailto:rmendola@ifiusa.org)  
[richmendola.org/resources/](http://richmendola.org/resources/)

The following are the approaches and outcomes of each of the case studies presented.

1. We explored:
  - a. Did she have any objects related to her past Buddhist worship, including family mementos. As we have discussed in other case studies, having objects, even if they are not used for worship but have been devoted to other gods, can sometimes be a source of spiritual interference. It is essential that these objects be removed from the person's house.
  - b. She was not aware of being dedicated to another god at birth nor were there any objects in her room dedicated to another god. We asked her to renounce any ties that were related to Buddhism through family practices.
  - c. We taught her how to use the authority of Jesus in the following ways:
    - Before she went to sleep at night, we invited her to pray acknowledging Jesus as her Lord and asking Jesus to be Lord of her dreams and of her sleep, since she was God's child. We also encouraged her to claim the promise that He gives His beloved sleep.
    - If disturbed in the night, she should learn to use the name of Jesus in an offensive way – she should pray something like this: "I belong to Jesus and I am his child. In his name, the name that is above every name, in the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce you, evil spirit, and command you to depart from me in His name. You have no rightful place here since I belong to Jesus. Be gone in his name."

I instructed her to continue to repeat and pray in this offensive manner until the spirit leaves.

Once this was done for several nights, the dreams completely stopped and she was free from any more interference. I have seen this repeated time and time again with a number of students.

2. This story actually happened to my pastor. The student, when challenged by the pastor to go ahead and pray because he believed that Jesus Christ was powerful enough to protect him and that in the outcome of nothing happening, he would have to acknowledge that Jesus was Lord. The student backed off completely and said that he

did not want to do that. Although the student did not come to Christ, it left a powerful witness to the student of the fearlessness of believers who are willing to live out the truth that they believe that Jesus is more powerful than every other spiritual force in the world and that every demonic spirit has already been defeated at the cross.

I found this confidence in the protection of Jesus to be especially useful when talking to students who use amulets. Some students say they do not believe in the power of amulets, but if asked to take them off or asked how they would feel if they did wear it, they say that they are afraid because they would feel uncomfortable being potentially exposed to something that would harm them. When I find someone with an amulet and I testify that I do not need any object to protect me because the creator of heaven and earth, the Lord of all, is with me at all times and protects me from all evil, the result is I do not need to fear any evil. Living in the awareness that God is a spirit and therefore does not need any object and does not live in temples made by human hands witnesses again to the power of Jesus Christ.

3. This was my introduction to spiritual warfare. When this happened, I had thought about the experiences I had read about that Jesus had in the book of Mark. When she fell to the floor and another voice was speaking out of her, I commanded, in the name of Jesus Christ, that the spirit would identify itself. The spirit did give a name and then we began to use Scripture to tell why the demon was a defeated foe. We engaged the will of the person involved in renouncing that spirit and confessing participation in that sin and asking for forgiveness. Then, when the spirit left, it left with a screech similar to what we read about in the Scriptures.

I was surprised to find out when that spirit left, however, another spirit manifested in her life and she continued to wither and contort. We went through the process again, identifying the spirit and then commanding it in the name of Jesus Christ to leave. We discovered, in some cases, there was an attachment in this person's life where we had to ask her, under the revelation of God, where that spirit gained entrance into her life. When we were able to discover that information, we were able to break the connection with that demon through her renunciation that spirit. Sometimes it is difficult to recognize that spirit was a liar. Then a great deal of striving and effort in prayer is required because the person has been dominated for so long by that spiritual force and the spiritual force makes them feel like this is actually part of them or that something bad will happen to them if it leaves. But in speaking the truth and using the word of God in the specific instances, the person was able to cooperate in the process. There were actually a total of seven spirits that manifested and were removed from this student's life that day. The spirits included self-condemnation, suicide, depression, jealousy, murder, and one or two others.

The way that we knew that she finally was completely free from the control of these spirits was that her face became very peaceful and her body stopped withering and she was able to sit quietly. At that moment I was reminded of what I had read in Mark 5,

after the demoniac had been delivered from the legion of spirits that he sat at the feet of Jesus in his right mind, clothed and peaceful. She began to weep quietly, not in a sorrowful way, but in a way that indicated happiness. When I asked her what was going on, she said that, for the first time, she could hear another voice speaking to her in her mind and she recognized it was the spirit of God impressing on her the thoughts that she was loved. She also heard Jesus calling her his daughter and that she was welcome home. It was such a beautiful picture of what I had read in the Scripture and a beautiful picture of transformation that I decided right then and there that all who were oppressed by Satan should be freed so that they, too, could sit at the feet of Jesus with a peaceful heart and mind. I had experienced the truth of God in a powerful way.

4. As we know in the Scripture, this area is similar to an area of conscience mentioned regarding food offered to idols in Romans 14. Paul himself says in talking about idols in one place, that every idol has a demon behind it and in another place he says the idol is nothing. Understanding the context of those Scriptures is an interesting exposition. Through my study of Scripture and my personal experiences, I am not comfortable having objects of worship that have been devoted to another god, even though I know all things can be cleansed by prayer. There are many students who give objects of worship that they themselves are not worshipping and give it just as a cultural expression.

Therefore, you will need to exercise your own discernment as to whether or not those objects bring spiritual influences along with them, whether or not they communicate wrong messages to other who people who are coming into your home, whether the meaning of the object has changed sufficiently over the course of time that you do not feel that it is associated with a spiritual influence anymore. This is really a matter of conscience, but I would encourage you to read the Scriptures that are about idol worship and then make a conclusion yourself.

I do want to share with you one experience that I had with an Indian student who brought me a gift. I was so grateful that he had brought it all the way from India and thinking about me when he gave it. When he gave it to me, I asked him what it was. It was an incense bowl and I asked him if this was used in the temple or in home worship and he said, "Yes." I said, "Thank you very much." Afterwards when he left, I gathered my children and I said, "We have devoted our house and our family to Jesus Christ and I do not feel like this object should be kept in our house." So we decided to break it, destroy it, and throw it out.

Interestingly, the next week the student came and specifically asked me the question, "What did you do with the gift that I gave to you?" Little beads of sweat popped out on my forehead as I realized that I wanted to preserve the relationship, but I knew I needed to be honest with him. So I told him, "Rajanth, I was so grateful for the gift that you gave me and the thoughtfulness that it showed, but as a family, since we are devoted to serving Jesus Christ, I did not feel I could keep your gift in the home and so we got rid of

it.” He then responded, “Rich, after I left I thought about it and I realized it was not the best gift to give to you and so I am fine with that.” And our relationship was preserved and he became a Christian in the future.

5. The quote here is taken word for word from a letter that this student sent to me. Two of us got together to pray for this student and when we prayed, she began to cut herself under the influence of a demonic spirit. We dealt specifically with the lies that were in her mind by declaring God’s truth and aiding her to recognize those lies and to renounce them and to call upon the name of the Lord. As she recognized that the voice that she was hearing in her mind was not from God and that she did not need to accept what was being said and that there was a differentiation between her thoughts and the thoughts that were in her mind she engaged with us in spiritual battle against those spirits. There was a release from her life of those spirits. And she was able to then begin to memorize and meditate on Scriptures that had to do with her value in Christ, her being unconditionally loved, and with the fact that, in Jesus Christ, there is no condemnation. I saw a remarkable change in this young woman’s life so that she became very active in Christian ministry and service.
6. One of the greatest openings for demonic interference in a person’s life is sexual abuse. There is a connection between our body, our soul, and our spirit and we need to be very aware that it needs to be a team approach between sometimes doctors, medication, counselors or psychologists who can address the emotional issues along with spiritual warfare. In sexual abuse, I think often there needs to be the counselor and Christian psychologist who are involved in helping a person, along with the spiritual dimension. I have found that counseling that addresses the lies that go along with sexual abuse is foundational for dealing with any demonic spirit that is active. It is a both/and approach. I have found that every time I have encountered someone who has revealed sexual abuse, there is a demonic element that is involved in the person’s life.
7. The issue of forgiveness is essential to dealing with the problem of demonic interference in a person’s life. Jesus, in his parable about the unmerciful servant, states that the unmerciful servant was turned over to the jailers and tormented. That it is a picture of demonic torment. Unforgiveness and bitterness of spirit, according to Ephesians 4:27, allow Satan to get a foothold in our life. As long as a person is stuck in unforgiveness, they are giving permission for Satan to operate in their life. Therefore, in working with this Indian student, it is essential to help her go through the process of forgiveness in order to be freed from the torment. When this student was being helped and recognized the struggle to be able to forgive (bitterness) was addressed in her life during prayer, there was a manifestation of a demonic spirit: her demeanor changed, her voice changed, she had bodily motions that indicated she was not operating under her own influence and control. When she was able to forgive with the help of Jesus Christ and recognized and rejected the lie that her father did not deserve forgiveness, there was a release of the demonic interference in her life.

8. The issue of spiritual help that people receive when they turn to other influences is a major aspect of helping people to get free from demonic influence. We should recognize that people do receive some benefit, albeit with bondage and torment when they contact the demon realm. This is the reason they continue to operate in the area of witchcraft. Witchcraft is seeking spiritual powers and control apart from our Lord Jesus Christ. Many people want this type of power in their life and especially as it brings them help in dealing with people who are against them. They can become used to relying on demonic spirits for help. This student needed to understand and believe that Jesus Christ was a greater power who would help her to deal with all things and she did not need to have any other spiritual force or power in her life to gain control. As she went through the process of renouncing her connection to those spirits, identifying the lies, accepting God's truth, and then speaking against the spirits that she had accepted in her life, she gained freedom.
9. This is another very good example where the interplay between the psychological and spiritual comes in. Sometimes psychological problems can be spiritualized and become an ideation, but we must not discount the spiritual realm as being involved when someone has statements that relate to the spiritual world. In this particular case, the person involved was not open to spiritual help and also not open to psychological help. So there are limitations involved in being able to access the situation. Although this person seemed to be reaching out, at the same time the person was hiding away. It is not uncommon, in my experience in working with demonized people, that the demonization makes them afraid of getting help. In fact, in the case of Charlene discussed above, when the woman came to the door of our home, intrusive thoughts of, "Run away, get out of there" and "You do not want to be here" were pronounced. She later said that she was able to recognize this same voice as the one who spoke condemning messages.
10. The answer to the question about whether something is spiritual or psychological is not very apparent sometimes. A doctor, when presented with certain physical problems, is often not sure of the origin. Therefore, the doctor runs tests to try to determine the cause. Even after testing, sometimes he/she has to run further tests. In working with spiritual problems, sometimes we have to go through tests in order to determine the origin of certain problems. I am willing to explore with a person through a process of prayer to see if the Lord would identify any hidden wounds or surface any demonic spirits. I do not conclude what the problem is ahead of time, but with the Holy Spirit's help and the word of God seek to reveal what is hidden. In this particular case, having asked for God's revelation and seeking to see if there were things in the past that would have affected her and addressing any demonic interference, there seemed to be no evidence of a spiritual realm involved. Our conclusion was, therefore, that there must be something psychological and she would need to get further help in that area.
11. The international student involved in this situation experienced what a number of people do, which is blockage in their relationship with God because of childhood trauma

and because of spiritual interference. There is a psychological and spiritual dimension to this person's problem. We know in the Scripture that when demonic forces surfaced in a person's life, such as in Mark 7, there would be a crying out. The demons would sometimes cry, "What do you want with us, Son of God? We know who you are, Jesus. Have you come to torture us?" (Matthew 8:29). Sometimes a person can cry out just in remembrance of a painful experience, but the cry can also be the evidence of a demonic spirit being brought into the forefront.

We should not underestimate the spiritual influences that are brought through ancestor worship into a person's life. Ancestral spirits can attach themselves when they have sought those spirits for spiritual help, protection, and guidance. In such cases, we must lead students through a process of separation and renunciation from those spirits, a confession of sin of having relied on those spirits, confession of the sins of the forefathers, and a severing of connection between the practices of his/her ancestors and their lives. We must also teach how Jesus took our curses on himself at the cross.

In this particular case, there were ancestral spirits present that were bringing blockage to her, as well as the emotional wounding issues related to her father. Those wounding issues did open her life to a spirit of rejection. Not every person who experiences rejection will have a demonic spirit involved, but there are people who, having experienced such severe and ongoing rejection and having internalized it, have provided an opening for a spirit associated with that rejection to also be operating in their life.

There are many other types of spirits that are connected to certain conditions, such as fear. Not every fear or phobia is a spiritual condition, but there is a spirit of fear that is an actual spiritual entity. We know in 2 Timothy 1:7 that we have not been given a spirit of fear. While such an expression could be an allegory, it can also be specific to indicate the work of a spirit in a person's life. Psalm 22 presents an allegory of the cross where wild animals are surrounding it. These animals picture something that was happening in the spiritual realm – Jesus was being tormented by taunts, accusations, and mocking of Satan. The people who mocked Jesus were expressing demonic opposition.

One time when I was witnessing to someone, they told me, "I spit on Jesus." At the time the spirit of God quickened to my remembrance the story of the people who spit on Jesus during his crucifixion. I understood that that cruelty, disrespect, and mocking of our Savior was not simply human meanness, but also spiritual fury. I was able to recognize the spirit behind the voice that was speaking to me. I told him, "I recognize that voice and Jesus still died to you."

12. The student involved in this study clearly understood herself to be assaulted by evil spirits, although we clearly could see psychological elements involved that counseling could help her with. She herself recognized that the torment and the suicidal thoughts were spiritually linked. Therefore, she wanted help with being freed from demonic spirits operating in her life. In the process of prayer, a number of those assailing,

accusing thoughts were relieved as a result of taking authority over those evil spirits and casting them out. It has been an ongoing process where she has been greatly strengthened and there has been a need for significant follow-up after the prayer sessions because there is still a vulnerability. Jesus taught that a spirit that leaves a person can go and find other spirits and come back if the door to the house is not shut. She was delivered from ancestral spirits, as well a spirit of suicide. She is considerably better, more functional, and able to serve the Lord as a result of the spiritual warfare that has been done together with her and on her behalf.

13. Addiction is a very strong area for demonization. We must recognize that evil is not an impersonal force, but when we are brought into addictions, there is personalized evil that is operating in our lives. Addiction is a very difficult thing to see broken in a person's life, but all things are possible with Jesus Christ. Preaching the Gospel and helping the person to understand that they are loved by God, rather than their performance and what their value and worth in God is what is part of gaining correct thinking.

It is important to rule out the demonic activity in a person's life. It is essential that we know how to engage in spiritual warfare as a means that God has given us to have personal victory and help others obtain personal victory. Jesus Christ was manifest was to destroy the works of the devil (I John 3:8). It is the right of every believer to operate under the authority of Christ and to use his authority as we go out and make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20). We are to do the work of rescuing people from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light (Acts 26:18). In this particular case, the student was not open to spiritual help and warfare. Unfortunately, sometimes we can see that people need help, but we cannot help them unless they want freedom in their own lives. Unfortunately, there are many people affected by spiritual forces of darkness who are not yet at the point where they want to gain the freedom that they can find in Christ.

One of the students who was not a believer shared with me the night terrors and the spirits that attacked him and asked what the Christian answer was to this problem. I told him that the authority of Jesus Christ was so great that every spirit was subject to His control and that those demonic spirits would not be able to bother him if he followed Christ. I explained to him, however, that if he did not follow Christ, that none of that authority and power would be his. He was not sure he wanted to become a Christian, but after experiencing ongoing struggle in this area and wanting freedom, he came back and said that he would like to become a Christian. After becoming a Christian, I taught him how to pray offensively against those spirits and to use the name and authority of Jesus Christ. He explained that the first time that he prayed, the spirits went away. He came back rejoicing like the disciples did when they saw the demons were subjected to them. Just as Jesus told his disciples not to focus on that, but be to thankful that their names were written in heaven (Luke 10:20), I taught him to give thanks to God for his salvation and not to get focused on spiritual power.

14. The student who had previously been subject to demonic attack came to understand:

- a. Her authority in Christ
- b. The way the ancestral spirits operate
- c. How to pray spiritual protection
- d. How to develop a prayer partner team to support her in prayer
- e. How to memorize key Scriptures as part of her defense
- f. How to put on the spiritual armor
- g. How to submit to God and resist Satan (James 4:7)

15. In this case study, the international student having this experience came from a Hindu background. When we inquired as to whether or not she had any spiritual objects related to Hinduism in her room, she said, "Yes." But she said she did not use them in any form of worship, but were cultural symbols that had come from her family. We explained the potential spiritual interference that could be taking place as a result of these objects. She agreed to remove the objects from her room. We also taught her how to pray with authority in the name of Jesus Christ and to submit herself to God and resist Satan. After removing the items from her room, she had another night terror, but the spiritual presence was less intense and after she prayed, she was able to go to sleep. By the third night, the night terrors had stopped completely and she has been able to sleep peacefully ever since.

16. Unfortunately, I have seen where staff people have come under demonic influence and bondage as a result of having their defenses lowered when put into a situation of spiritual oppression, such as going overseas to a Muslim country. The staff person in question started having religious ideations such as having committed the unforgivable sin and having some paranoid tendencies. During times of prayer she would manifest extreme reactions and it seemed that she was not only having a psychological problem, but a spiritual one as well.

I have known two other cases where people traveling to Muslim countries have come back with a type of paralysis in their legs and unable to walk. In the one case, after an all-night prayer meeting where spiritual warfare was done, the person was able to walk again. This was after months of being unable to walk. In the other case, where the doctors have been unable to find an ideological cause for the paralysis, she still has been unable to walk.

17. Becoming sick each time coming to the Bible study is strong evidence that this was not a physiological condition, but a spiritual one. We know that Satan tries to steal the word of God out of our hearts and would use any means necessary to keep someone from Christ. Why physical symptoms occur in one person and not another is difficult to explain. This student has not yet overcome this situation, but having recognized what is going on, we have started to pray with the authority of Christ against any spirit afflicting



his body when he comes to the Bible study. We also need to explore whether or not there is some spiritual presence in his life as a result of ancestor worship.

I have experienced physical symptoms as a result of demonic interference.

Normally I am not a person who feels sleepy in the afternoon or who has ever felt the need to take a nap. Yet, when I had an afternoon meeting with a student for a Bible study, I would experience a tremendous tiredness and sleepiness come over me every time. I had to use all of my energy just to stay awake to engage in the Bible study with him. I felt the same pressure that the disciples felt to go to sleep in the garden. It was not simply that they were sad and tired; they also had spiritual opposition to pray.

I hope these case studies have been helpful to you to illustrate the various aspects of spiritual warfare and the importance we have of helping students to gain freedom in their walk with Christ.

I would be happy to hear about any of your own experiences, especially since God has put it on my heart to write a booklet on spiritual warfare that can be helpful to international student ministry workers. If you have other stories or experiences to share that could reinforce or bring out other areas, I would gratefully appreciate if you could send them to me at [rmendola@ifiusa.org](mailto:rmendola@ifiusa.org).

**No part of this presentation may be reproduced without permission from the author.  
© International Friendships Incorporated 2019**