

How Does a Person Become Demon Possessed?

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"Dear Mr. Wilson:

I have been watching your video seminars on the web. Thank you for making them available for free! A few days ago I was watching a segment on Revelation and I heard you say that predatory violence is the clearest evidence of demonic possession.

Maybe it's just me, but after hearing you say this, I am seeing predatory violence in the news almost every day. You probably saw the story about a disgruntled truck driver in Connecticut who killed eight coworkers before killing himself. Then, in California, an uninvited husband showed up at his ex-wife's birthday party and after killing her and her friends, he dropped their two children off with his parents and then killed himself.

Last week, three young men in Boston ordered pizza and they ambushed the 58 year old pizza delivery man. They stabbed him to death for about \$100 before eating the pizza. These tragedies are senseless and outrageous, but until I watched your video I had not connected the dots. If your conclusion about predatory violence is correct, then demonic possession is rampant! How does a person become demon possessed?

Thanks,
Cindy"

Hello Cindy:

Thank you for your email. You are correct: There is more demonic possession around us than people realize! Demonic possession is an important topic and many Christians shy away from it because (a) they believe demon possession is part of the occult, and (b) they believe there is nothing that can be done about it. Actually, demonic possession is not limited to the occult and there is something that can be done about it!

A demon possessed person is dangerous because he is not in control of himself. His need for gratification can eclipse whatever pain or suffering his actions may cause. When a person has no empathy for others and no controlling sense of right or wrong, everyone around that person is at risk.

The Bible speaks of demonic possession in many places (Matthew 4:24; 8:16; 8:28; 9:32; 12:22; 15:22), but it does not differentiate between mental illness and demonic possession. An important difference between demonic possession and mental illness is this: Mental illness has a predictable pattern of behavior which mental health experts can detect and diagnose.

Fortunately, many people with mental illness are helped with "leveling" drugs. Even though mentally ill people can be dangerous to themselves and others, they are not predators with a predetermined scheme or target. The three examples you cited indicate demonic possession to me. So, let us determine how a person becomes demon possessed.

First consider this thought: Everyone is a possible candidate for demonic possession. In fact, a time will come during the Great Tribulation when there will be two groups of people on Earth. One group will have the seal of God and the other group will be demon possessed!

Therefore, demonic possession is only going to increase and it is imperative that Christians understand the topic. The only way out of demonic possession is through divine intervention. (Matthew 10:1; Mark 3:15) Medical science cannot exorcise a demon. An ordinary person cannot help someone who is demon possessed and neither can a possessed person cast out a demon who has consumed him. (Matthew 8:28,29; 17:14-20)

Demonic possession comes through the process of sinking lower and lower into the clutches of sin. The Bible teaches there are four types of sin: defiant, willful, accidental, and ignorant. Of course, all wrongdoing is sin (1 John 5:17), but God deals with our sins in different ways as outlined in the following paragraphs:

Defiant Sin

To understand defiant sin, we must first understand how the Holy Spirit works in a person's life. The Holy Spirit sets the clearest evidence of God's will before us (the truth about God's will), strongly impresses us that this knowledge is true, and convinces us that God's will must be obeyed (conviction).

Defiant sin begins when we refuse to obey the knowledge and conviction given by the Holy Spirit. Over time, defiance can become habitual and when it does, the Holy Spirit will eventually cease to work within us. Let me be clear, when it comes to defying the Holy Spirit, there is a point of no return.

The Bible calls this point the unpardonable sin. After a person reaches the point of no return, he or she has no desire or internal urging to do what is right, to learn about God, or please and honor Him. When the Holy Spirit leaves a person's heart, it is as though a person becomes a zombie having little discernment or concern about right or wrong. There is no peace in such a soul only a restless, cold, tormented heart.

Accidental Sin

Accidental sin, on the other hand, occurs spontaneously without forethought such as telling a lie, uttering a bad word, being dishonest, etc. Accidental sins plague humanity because every sinner is "spring loaded" toward wrongdoing. This explains why the Bible says, ". . . . **all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**" We cannot help it, but sooner or later the carnal nature will rise up and cause each of us to accidentally sin.

Even though he had been a Christian for more than twenty-five years when he wrote this, the apostle Paul lamented, **"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me."**

Even though all wrongdoing is sin, God will not hold a person guilty for an accidental sin *if* that person confesses his sin (1 John 1:9) and restores or repairs the damage caused (makes restitution). (Matthew 5:23,24, 1 John 5:17) God knows that no one is perfect, but God does require that each sinner *show* sorrow for his sins by forsaking them and making things right.

Ignorant Sin

Even though every sin has guilt, God does not condemn a sinner of wrongdoing if he is ignorant of his sin. This may sound comforting; however, *ignorance is not bliss. Each sin has seeds of death within it.* Each sin (big or small) has the potential for a deadly outcome even if we ignorantly sin! For example, consider the past 6,000 years. What has been the outcome of Eve's *ignorant* sin (Genesis 3:13; 2 Corinthians 11:3) of eating the forbidden fruit?

Ignorance will not alter the consequences of wrongdoing. For example, what difference does ignorance or knowledge make if a person falls out of a tree? The law of momentum is impartial and so is the law of sin! The law of sin demands that ignorant and informed sinners reap what they sow. Look at the stories in the newspapers; people are reaping all that has been sown. Even worse, history says that we are corporately reaping the consequences right now which generations sowed in the past!

This brings us to a profound point. Sin is not a set of arbitrary rules which God made up according to His pleasure. God infinitely understands the seeds of death found in every sin and He wisely set up boundaries (laws) to protect us from sin's deadly harvest (the consequences of wrongdoing). Because every sin has the potential of a deadly harvest, God commands us to avoid wrongdoing *for our benefit*, not His. So, blessed are those who are honest in heart, willing to grow in discernment about matters of right and wrong and double-blessed are those who walk in the light!

Honesty

Knowledge is a doubled-edged sword. Knowledge can save us or it can condemn us. Consider the following two examples: A sinner receives knowledge and the Holy Spirit convicts the sinner to obey the knowledge; however, the sinner refuses to obey because he prefers to indulge in the pleasures of sin. God reads the sinner's heart and sees that the sinner has chosen to rebel. In this example, God holds the sinner guilty of *defiant* sin.

In this next example, suppose a devout person loves God but he has chosen to *honestly* refuse to embrace advanced truth about God's will because the new information is contrary to his present knowledge of God. In this situation, the sinner's rebellion stems from his love for his religious heritage instead of the pleasures of sin.

Even though this sinner insists on remaining ignorant, God sees that he has an *honest heart*. God will not hold this sinner guilty because guilt is not imparted unless knowledge and conviction are both present. Unfortunately, the person in this example will not benefit from advancing truth.

This was Israel's experience and we know they wandered in the wilderness forty years, eventually dying there. Again, the point is made that ignorance is not bliss when it comes to sin. In this example, we see how "honest rebellion" can keep a sinner in the wilderness throughout his life, even though he will not lose eternal life.

God reads the heart. He understands defiant, willful, accidental, and ignorant sin. He sees our knowledge base and the amount of Holy Spirit conviction in each heart. (1 Chronicles 28:9) God is more than fair in His judgment. Human beings sin every day (through acts of commission or omission) without any awareness that our actions are sinful in God's sight, but a merciful God overlooks our ignorance as long as we are honest and faithful according to all that we believe to be right and true.

When it comes to pleasing God, He is primarily concerned with our honesty and faith. Human beings cannot comprehend God's higher ways because God is infinite. His ways are a thousand times higher than our highest thoughts! Therefore, honesty and faith are nonnegotiable in His sight.

Honesty is an openness to the facts and a willingness to know more truth. If we are honest in heart, the Holy Spirit will be able to show us new concepts from God's Word. After we receive knowledge, the Holy Spirit will produce conviction. Together, these produce a compelling sense of "this is the way, therefore, walk in it."

When knowledge and conviction come together, a testing truth occurs. God tests us because He requires everyone to *step out in faith* and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, even though our friends and family may think we are crazy. Therefore, honesty (an attitude of openness toward new truth) and faith (our willingness to act on conviction) enables the Holy Spirit to sanctify (purify) us.

Deliberate Sin

Sin is a topic that has multiple dimensions and we have briefly looked into defiant, accidental, and ignorant sins. Now, we need to examine deliberate sin because this sin is the doorway through which demons attempt to gain control over people. *When deliberate sin finally becomes defiant sin, demons rejoice!*

When Jesus created Adam and Eve, He gave them intelligence. Because we have intelligence we have the capacity to think and analyze situations and to intelligently reason from cause to effect. Even teenagers can analyze some aspects of life and determine what is good and what is evil. (Smile.)

Prior to sinning, Adam and Eve knew the difference between right and wrong, (Genesis 2:17) but they did not have the knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 3:22) Prior to sinning, Adam and Eve had a *natural* tendency toward right doing. They did not have to struggle to do right because it came *naturally*.

When Eve ignorantly (Genesis 3:6,13; 2 Corinthians 11:3) sinned and then Adam deliberately sinned, the result was the same. Both became subject to the law of sin which leads to death. (Romans 7:23,24) They lost their sinless natures and wrongdoing came *naturally* not only to Adam and Eve, but to their offspring as well!

Sinners commit all four types of sins from time to time and God knows that we cannot prevent it. (Romans 3:23; 7:12-20; 8:5-12) But, a God of amazing grace and bountiful mercy does not give up on us until He sees there is nothing further He can do with us!

The Knowledge of Good and Evil

God has given us the Bible for several reasons. First and foremost, He wants us to know about His love for us! This knowledge can be transforming if properly understood and embraced. God also gave us the Bible because it contains the truth about good and evil. God wants every human being to understand good and evil because seeds of death are within every sin.

The Royal Law contains the greatest two commandments (Matthew 22:34-40; James 2:8) and this is followed by the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3-17) which show us what love will do and not do. The Bible also tells us about the thirst of the carnal nature (Galatians 5:17-21) and it reminds us that sins of omission are treated like sins of commission.

Finally, the Bible tells us there is the sin of failing to bring glory to God. (Romans 3:23; 1 Corinthians 10:31) This knowledge may appear to be overwhelming, but sinners are not helpless and neither are they hopeless. This is a fact: In our own strength, we cannot overcome sin. Here is another fact: We can overcome sin by allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us from within!

John wrote, **"No one who is born of God will continue to [deliberately or defiantly] sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God [and power to overcome sin is given to everyone born of God]. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother."** (1 John 3:9,10)

Of course, the devil does not want people reading the Bible or advancing in the knowledge of God's love or the Bible's definition of good and evil. Consequently, the devil tries to reduce or eliminate the importance of the Bible, and sadly, his efforts are paying off very well. (Recent surveys taken by the Pew Research Center indicate that succeeding generations of Christians tend to study the Bible less than the previous generation.)

To further reduce the effectiveness of our minds (so that human beings cannot determine good from evil) and reduce self-control (so that human beings will find it easier to do evil), the devil and his demons have introduced all kinds of mind-altering substances into society.

The demons well know that mankind is "spring loaded" to do evil. Therefore, demons prey on young people because (a) they are largely ignorant about matters of good and evil, (b) having the carnal nature, they are spring loaded toward wrongdoing, and (c) they are fascinated with mind altering substances that give a delusional sense of well-being. Add promiscuity and sexual immorality to this mix and there is a doorway to pleasure that most young people cannot resist. (Galatians 5:19; 2 Timothy 3:4; Jude 1:7)

God hates promiscuity and sexual immorality (Colossians 3:5,6) because once a person becomes involved in sexual immorality, there is a possibility that sexual gratification will shut out self-control. (Leviticus 18:1-30; Matthew 5:17-20; Acts 15:29; Hebrews 13:4) In other words, it is very easy to become a slave to passion. (2 Peter 2:19,20) If a person willingly engages in sexual immorality, knowing that it is sin, then it is deemed a deliberate act and God holds that person guilty for his sin.

On the other hand, if a person ignorantly engages in sexual immorality, the consequence of this sin will be horrible even though God may overlook the sinner's guilt. Remember, there is no difference when falling out of a tree. The man who understands the law of momentum hits the ground just as hard as the man without knowledge. There is a sorrowful harvest for every sin because seeds of death are within every sin.

The Doorway of Hatred

There are other doorways besides sexual immorality that lead to demonic possession and we must consider one more doorway involving passion. This passion is hatred. (God's anger toward evil is sometimes called hatred (Deuteronomy 16:22; Psalm 45:7; Proverbs 6:16; Malachi 2:16), but God's hatred is unlike human hatred.) Human hatred is the inverse of love.

The ultimate desire of human hatred is murder. (John 8:44) Hatred generally springs from bitterness, jealousy, or vanity. Hatred can grow from real or imaginary injustice. Hatred can become a passion and it can become so powerful in a person's heart that he cannot free himself of it. Prisons are full of people who are bound internally with hatred.

Demons can easily possess a hate-full heart because hatred does not care about right or wrong, justice or truth. Hatred is blind. If possible, it would seek more than death can offer! Hatred is like a bucket with a hole in its bottom that cannot be filled. Demons seek out people who harbor hatred because such people will often commit predatory violence.

John wrote, **"Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. [So,] Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you.** Cain was humiliated when God honored Abel's offering, but refused to honor Cain's offering and this

made him furious with Abel.

Cain's hatred for Abel led him to kill his brother for revenge.] **We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.**" (1 John 3:12-15, insertions mine)

The Fight to Do Right

As long as the carnal nature is within us, we must not stop fighting the good fight. (1 Timothy 6:12) The greatest battles on Earth occur within the human heart the fight to do right must never end. We cannot give in and allow passions of hatred, sexual immorality, or pleasures to overtake us.

Be assured, the devil has a custom set of temptations carefully crafted for each person. If a person is too old or too wise to chase after pornography and knows better than to indulge in the temporal pleasures of sexual immorality, then be assured that the devil has plenty of other temptations.

In the game of life, the devil uses chips such as money, power, fame, drugs, leisure, shopping, sports, and materialism to capture our affections. He uses these chips as a foothold into our soul and too many sit at his game table, winning very little, but having a great time (they think) as he overtakes their souls!

There is a doorway into each heart and the devil and his imps know where it is. They are doing their best to kick it down with tailor-made temptations so that they might overpower us and possess us. Until the sealing of God's children is completed ([See Chapter 6 in my book, Jesus: The Alpha and The Omega](#)) the war between Christ and Satan over the souls of human beings will not end. If, through Christ's strength, we persevere and win a victory over one passion, watch out for a "door kicking event" in another area. The devil doesn't knock.

He lures us into temptation and when opportunity is present, he attempts to kick down the door with everything he has. Jesus said, **"When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, I will return to the house I left.**

When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first." (Luke 11:24-26) We see here that no victory over the flesh is final until the sinful nature has been removed. So, be on guard fight the good fight!

Lucifer has been called a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44) because he was the first to be filled with violence. When Lucifer saw that he could not have what he wanted, violence broke out in Heaven. (Revelation 12:7-9) The same process holds true on Earth. When someone is

filled with insatiable bitterness, craving, or passion, predatory violence often follows.

The devil and his demons never sleep. They are doing everything possible to increase the misery index of mankind. They are on a mission to destroy us by (a) eliminating the Word of God (which tells us about God's love for us and the knowledge of good and evil), (b) dulling our minds with addictive substances, and (c) inflaming carnal passions and pleasure.

These demons are relentless because *they know that they can overtake a person when a sinner gets so deep into sin that he stops struggling to do what is right.* Listen to the words of this wise woman: "Whatever weakens your reasoning, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes away your relish for spiritual things, in short if anything increases the authority and the power of the flesh over the spirit, that to you becomes sin, however good it is in itself." Susanna Wesley (mother of John Wesley)

Is There Any Hope?

Is there hope for a sinner after he sins defiantly, willfully, accidentally, or ignorantly? Yes! Yes! Yes! There is hope for any sinner *unless* he becomes defiant and remains defiant. Defiant sin leads to the unpardonable sin. (Matthew 12:31,32) The Holy Spirit only gives up on a person when that person becomes so stubborn that nothing further can be done to change his mind.

The Holy Spirit knows the incalculable value of eternal life. The Holy Spirit loves each sinner with boundless love. The Holy Spirit knows the devil's games. Therefore, the Holy Spirit does a little "door kicking" at times in an effort to get through. The Holy Spirit is not temperamental or easily discouraged.

He dearly wants to enter a sinner's heart and bring that sinner to Christ so he might be saved! **"My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."** (1 John 2:1,2)

Summary

The human race is caught in a war for souls that is intensifying. The Holy Spirit is working hard, but the devil and his demons are winning the battle just as they did in Noah's day. (Genesis 6:3) Sinful natures mean we are hit with a double whammy! We have a carnal nature and there is a devil.

The Bible teaches there is a sin that does not lead to death (Romans 3:23; Romans 7:11-20; 8:5-12) because God knows that it is impossible for someone with a sinful nature to *consistently* live without sinning. (1 John 5:16,17) Yes, Jesus offers victory over every temptation. (Romans 6:14; 1 John 1:9; 1 Corinthians 15:57) Jesus offers to transform the desires of our hearts and minds so that we will not become a victim of our own passions.

When temptation comes knocking, we should recognize that the devil is hiding, ready to rush in, kick the door down and take over another soul. On our own, we cannot overcome a single temptation for very long, but we can overcome a whole world of temptations through honesty and faith in Christ.

Prayer is the key to overcoming. Pray ahead of temptation. If we ask the Lord to change our heart from within, He will! When He sees that we really mean what we say, He will repair the damage within us and that temptation will have no appeal! If we abide in Christ, we will become and remain conquerors, and like Peter, walk *on* the water.

It is highly important that we *show* the Lord our sincerity. If pornography is a problem, show the Lord you recognize it is a problem by throwing it out of your house, shut off the internet and all sources through which it comes. Buy no more of it! If sexual immorality is a problem, show the Lord you recognize it is a problem by breaking off the relationship.

If it is an ongoing relationship, by all means, do not get married until the relationship is rebuilt on solid ground and the Lord is at the center of it. If substance abuse is the problem, show the Lord your sincere desire to stop the problem by seeking a counselor who understands the twelve step program.

If spending or shopping is a problem, show the Lord you are aware of it and seek a godly counselor who understands problems involving insatiable desires. Most of all, we have to stop looking to this world as a pattern for our lives. We have to focus on God's Word: **"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is his good, pleasing and perfect will."** (Romans 12:2)

I hope this helps!

Larry Wilson

[Watch a detailed seminar on Youtube about how Lucifer uses demon possession](#)