

## Does Demon Possession Exist Today?

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In the world we live in today, it is almost natural for people to believe that demon possessions are currently taking place. In fact, a recent study found that more than 50% of Americans would affirm demon possession is not only an activity of the past, but a reality today. Certainly, there are many reasons why more than half of the population would come to this conclusion. If you think about it, there is not a verse in God's Word that says, "Demon possessions have ceased," and so, for that reason many believe demons are still taking over the lives of men. Also, when we consider the vast number of movies that have been produced in Hollywood on this subject, it should be no surprise people gravitate towards believing *The Exorcist* and *The Conjuring* are true events rather than fiction. Even within many denominations there are men who claim to be "pastors" and every now and again, they will have possessed individuals come up on stage, so the "pastor" can cast the demons out. Based on all these things, for one to proclaim demon possession does not take place today would be outlandish. However, just because the majority of people might believe something to be true, that does not mean that it is. With that in mind, let us consider a couple of things that affirm demon possession does not occur today.

First, it is important for us to recognize the reason that demons were permitted to possess. When we examine the Old Testament, we notice there is not a single example of a demon possession. When we arrive to the New Testament, we recognize there is demon possession in the Gospel accounts as well as the book of Acts, but the examples of possession are limited to those books. Now, why exactly is that important? Well, it is important and relevant because of what Jesus says in Matthew 12:28. In that passage He says, "**But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.**" You see, it seems based on what Jesus is saying, demon possession and demons being cast out had a direct correlation with the kingdom of God. It was evidence that the church was about to be established, or that the church had just been established in regard to the book of Acts. That is why there is no demon possession in the Old Testament, and as the church grew, demon possession faded away. God allowed demons to possess people in a certain time (Gal. 4:4), in a certain place (Mt. 8:28), for a certain purpose (Mk. 16:20; Acts 2:22).

Second, we need to think about some implications that are true if demon possession still exists. We recognize that Jesus had the ability to cast out demons (Mk. 5:8), and He gave His apostles the ability to do the same (Lk. 10:17). As time went on, the apostles of Christ would

then have the capability to pass on spiritual gifts through the laying on of hands (Acts 6:6-8; 19:6, 7). At this point in history, it would be perfectly logical to believe that demons could possess men, so that the Jesus, the apostles, and those who had spiritual gifts could cast the demons out, and point men to the kingdom. However, when spiritual gifts ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-10), would it be logical to say demon possession did not? If spiritual gifts ceased, but demon possession did not, that would imply God has given us a problem we cannot solve. Demon possession also implies the removal of free will (Mk. 9:18), which is something not even God Himself will do to a soul (Josh. 24:15).

Demon possession is certainly a topic that many are interested in, and many believe it is active today. However, when we know the reasoning behind demon possession, and the implications that must be true if it still occurs, we can clearly recognize demon possession is a supernatural event of the past.