

Exposing Witchcraft in the Church

by Phil Beach Jr.

Phil Beach Jr. addresses the insidious presence of witchcraft in the church, emphasizing its roots in the flesh and the necessity of living as new creations in Christ.

Duration: 50:59

Scripture: Galatians 5:16

Topics: "Witchcraft", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. addresses the presence of witchcraft within the church, emphasizing that it stems from the sinful nature of the flesh and a desire for recognition and power. He warns that the spirit of witchcraft can infiltrate both individual lives and church communities when believers seek to be heard and seen rather than focusing on Christ. Beach highlights the importance of recognizing our new identity in Christ and the need for humility to combat these tendencies. He draws parallels between biblical examples of rebellion and witchcraft, urging the congregation to seek deliverance from these spirits through prayer and a deeper relationship with God. The message serves as a call to vigilance against the subtle influences that can lead believers away from the true power of God.

Transcript

Close to a month, I have been engaged in quite a warfare in my own spirit, a deep, deep struggle regarding many times when the Lord wants to birth something into me, into my spirit. It is preceded by a time of groaning, groanings that cannot be uttered. And this message, which is not complete, by all means, I believe it's the tip of the iceberg.

But this message was born out of nearly a month of deep groaning and searching the scriptures and having the Holy Spirit search the heart of God. And I'm just asking the Lord to give us ears to hear and a heart to receive. Because as we were worshiping the Lord and just his presence came in such a wonderful way, it seems so clear to me that one of the goals of the particular subject that I'm going to talk about this morning is to rob us from the very presence and beauty that Jesus himself manifested in our midst this morning.

And so I'd like to open by just giving a title to this message here, Exposing Witchcraft in the Church. I know that that would appear to be a very peculiar subject to talk about, but I assure you, beloved, that it's one that we need to very earnestly consider and pray about and search the scriptures regarding this particular subject. I'd like to begin in a very familiar portion of scripture, exposing witchcraft in the church.

And now I want to say this, that when we talk about the church, remember we're not talking about a building. The church is made up of living stones. It's not witchcraft in a building, and living stones are broken down into families, our homes.

So the spirit of witchcraft and sorcery is present in our lives. And I'd like to begin by going to the book of Galatians. This is a very familiar portion of scripture, and so often we have read this and quoted it, and it has brought light to our hearts.

But I'd like to just point out a facet of this particular portion of scripture that we don't seldomly consider. Galatians chapter 5, beginning in verse number 16. Galatians chapter 5, beginning in verse number 16.

This I say then, walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. And these are contrary one to another, so that you cannot do the things that you would.

Verse 17 is simply saying that the desires of the flesh are contrary to the desires of the spirit, and the desires of the spirit are contrary to the desires of the flesh. So that therefore, if you would walk after the flesh, you cannot do the desires of the spirit. And likewise, if you walk after the spirit, you cannot do the desires of the flesh.

It's very simple. But if ye be led of the spirit, ye are not under the law. For the works of the flesh are manifest.

Now beloved, it is very important for us to understand that when we read these works of the flesh in this particular portion of Scripture, the Scripture is not referring to anything outside, but it's referring to the very proclivities, the very propensity, the very inclination, the very disposition of sinful flesh. Now you're going to find some very familiar words as we read this. The works of the flesh are manifest, adultery.

And so many times we have all acknowledged that the insidious desires of adultery and fornication are latent within sinful flesh. And we have heard hundreds and hundreds of messages on warning about the terrible infidelity that's occurring in the world today, have we not? And when we go to the root of it, we say, oh, the reason why adultery is so prevalent is because it's a work of the flesh. And unless we are very much united to the Lord Jesus Christ and drawing life from Him and living instead with His spirit, then we can be tempted with this very sin.

Correct? So we see that adultery and fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, and then lo and behold, here is the word, witchcraft. So the foundation that we want to lay, listen carefully, beloved. There is not a man here or woman who would say that there is no way that they would, there's no one here that would say that they don't have the tendency, if given the right opportunity, to fall prey to adultery or uncleanness or lasciviousness.

But when was the last time you or I recognized that apart from the grace that is working in us and the life that comes from Jesus Christ, we are inclined toward witchcraft? You just don't hear it, do you? So let me say to lay the foundation, witchcraft in the church, the root, the foothold, the door through which this finds opportunity to express itself is the very flesh itself. Just as in the law, the law of sin and death working in the flesh, just as the flesh has tendencies toward adultery, fornication, uncleanness, envy, jealousy, backbiting, and all of those things that we're quite aware of, are we not? And we're very careful that we are alarmed if we see any of those things happening. But right alongside of those evil works is the witchcraft.

So it is the purpose this morning of the Holy Spirit to help us to see that this sin and spirit of witchcraft has its roots in sinful flesh. And as Christians, we need to continuously affirm that as believers we are new creations in Christ, and that we are to have nothing to do with the flesh, the sinfulness of the flesh, but are to consider ourselves to have died to it. And now we are alive, living unto Christ and by Christ and through the energizing power of the Holy Spirit.

We are to have nothing to do with that which is indicative of what we were before we became new creations in Christ. Absolutely nothing to do with it. We have become new creations in Christ Jesus.

Behold, all things have become new. Everything has passed away. From God's reckoning point of view, when he sees the child of God who's been washed in the blood and has become a recipient of the new birth, he sees that which comes from himself alone.

He doesn't reckon anymore the old. And that's how we have to line ourselves up with the way God perceives us now and have nothing to do with the old. Paul said to put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.

I like Young's literal translation. It says, put on the Lord Jesus Christ and do not take any forethought as to how you might fulfill the desires of the flesh. Don't take any forethought.

You and I have no business trying to take forethought on how to fulfill the desires of that which God considers to be dead. We have been divorced from the flesh. It is a legal divorce.

We have died. Now listen, here's the thing. Sin has not died in me, that is in my flesh, but I have died to it by virtue of a new relatedness.

I am no longer related to what I was after the flesh, but I am now in Christ. I am one with Him. I am united to Him.

So therefore, by virtue of being translated out of the kingdom of darkness, out of the flesh, into Christ, I have died to what I was. When the Bible says, if any man wants to follow me, says Jesus, he must pick up his cross and deny himself. Well, we have learned in times past that that word deny is not so much to fight against, but it's as Peter, how did Peter deny the Lord? You see, Peter's denial of Jesus was very simple.

He said, I don't know Him. So the denial that we are to engage in, in reference to our old life, is summed up in simply stating, I don't know the man anymore. I am now preoccupied, infatuated with, and continuously looking unto Jesus, the new man, from whence I have received my new life.

If I want to see what God wants to do in my life, I don't see it by looking at what I was. I see it by looking at what He, the Lord Jesus, is, because that is the prototype from which God is drawing our very life. So let's turn our Bibles, if we would, to Acts, the spirit of witchcraft in the church.

Acts chapter 8, beginning in verse number 1. Acts chapter 8, beginning in verse number 1. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church that was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and men and women committing them to prison.

Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto

those things which Philip spoke, hearing and seeing the miracles that he did.

For unclean spirits crying with loud voice came out of many that were possessed with them, and many taken with palsies and that were lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city. Wow, this is a wonderful testimony.

The word of the Lord, the message of Christ is being preached. There's great joy in the city. People are being healed and delivered and set free.

Verse number 9. Now listen, beloved. When you learn to study your Bible properly, you'll find that God always has a seed that he introduces in the word. And then if you follow through, you'll find that every seed that is introduced in the word finds a maturity somewhere else in the word.

This is a seed that the Bible is about to speak of that got into the assembly of the believers, a seed. With the seed, you find that there is a quite interesting, exhaustive discourse on the circumstances surrounding the seed. Now this very seed finds its fulfillment in Revelation chapter 17 and 18, where we look at the harlot Mystery Babylon.

So here in seed form, we see something. And then at the very end, at the consummation of things, not only God's purposes come to fruition and maturity, where we see God realizing a church that is in the image of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, but we see in the kingdom of darkness a fullness, a growth, and a maturity. And you'll find in Revelation 17 and 18 that this very seed produced a harvest.

And it's the same spirit that was introduced here in Acts that has matured and brought forth a Revelation 17 and 18 scenario, which we see operating in the world today. Now, what we'd like to do is begin to read and begin to glean from the thoughts that the Lord has here in order to begin to put together what God is saying about this seed. But there was a certain man called Simon.

First of all, let us stop right here. The word Simon comes from a word simeon, and the word simeon means a hearkening to, or to hearken to. Now, it's very significant that this man's name is called Simeon, because one of the aspects of the roots, the foothold that the spirit of witchcraft has in our life begins to operate, listen closely, when there is a desire to be heard, a hearkening, a desire to be heard.

Brothers and sisters, there is too much of a desire to be heard and not enough of a desire to listen that we might hear God. There is too much of a desire within the assembly of the Church of Jesus Christ in this late apostate hour to be heard. There are too many men standing up saying, listen to me.

You can be assured, beloved, if God does not deal with that inordinate desire to be heard and seen of men, you can be sure that the spirit of witchcraft will come to you and find the ground already in you, just like the spirit of adultery will come when there is a man or a woman who is not privy to that adulterous proclivity in his own heart and alert and constantly drawing grace from Christ. That spirit of adultery will meet with that proclivity in the flesh and the two will join together and that spirit will cause that desire to be inflamed into a fire. So likewise, the spirit of sorcery, the spirit of witchcraft, is running wild in this country today and is finding an inroad within the house of God because there is latent desires for people to be heard.

And this not only is limited to the setting of an assembly, but it's also applicable in the home. When there is an inordinate desire within the household for either a husband or a wife to be heard, to exert themselves, to exert their authority, exert their influence, exert their intellect, exert their emotions, I want to be heard,

I'm going to be heard at any cost, you are setting yourself up for a spirit of witchcraft to come and seduce you. So Simeon, a man whose name means hearkening, was there right in the midst of the move of God, right in the midst of the work of the sovereign God moving, saving people.

Now let's read a little bit and see about this man named Simeon, which before time in the same city used sorcery and bewitched the people of Samaria. Now listen, make sure you're taking notes. Just begin to take these notes.

The ground is the flesh. Witchcraft is a work of the flesh. The introduction to the seed is found by the name Simeon.

Hearken, hearken to me, an inordinate desire to be heard or seen. Now what do we do with that inordinate desire to be heard or seen? We bewitch people. Now the word bewitched simply means to amaze, to amaze.

We're putting it together here right before our eyes. God is putting together a dreadful thing that is happening right in the church today. He bewitched, he amazed the people of Samaria.

Here it is, giving out that himself was some great one to whom they all gave heed. So not only do we see, listen to me, I'm somebody special. I'm going to amaze you, but we see a response.

The spirit of witchcraft always finds people who will follow it. It's almost a mesmerization, mesmerized. The scripture says, giving out that himself was some great one to whom they all gave heed from the least to the greatest, saying, this man is the great power of God.

This man is the great power of God. Now beloved, it is very important for us to see that this is the beginnings of something. And the Holy Spirit masterfully put together the scenario here.

And as we meditate on these things and pray the Holy Spirit, open our hearts, we can see the very qualities and characteristics and features that are necessary for the spirit of witchcraft to work. I want to be heard. I want to be seen.

I want to amaze you. I want you to listen to me. I want you to suppose that I am the great power of God.

In 2 Samuel, I'm sorry, 1 Samuel 15. I believe this is it. Yes.

Thank you, Lord. 1 Samuel 15 verse number 23. These are the scathing words that Samuel spoke to Saul after Saul disobeyed the Lord.

Listen to what he said. For rebellion, now the King James has in italics *is as*, which means that the translators added those words because they felt it would help us to understand. In other words, the translators thought the Holy Spirit was here making a simile, comparing rebellion to witchcraft.

But really, if you go to the literal translation, *is as* is not necessary. So really, the way this could read as it does in a literal rendition of this particular portion of Scripture, it simply says, for rebellion, the sin of witchcraft. So while the translators tells us that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, we could possibly, by taking out those two words that were added by the translators, come up with a more decisive and more sobering thought to simply state rebellion, the sin of witchcraft.

Witchcraft has its root power in rebellion. Rebellion against God's authority. Rebellion against Christ.

Now listen closely. There's a story in the Old Testament. It's in the book of Numbers.

I'm not sure exactly where, but it has to do with the rebellion of Korah. I'm just going to sum it up real quick. It's in Numbers.

If somebody finds it, just you can read out the chapter, but listen closely. Before I go on in the book of Acts, I just want you to see this thing building up. Moses was leading the children of Israel, and God was speaking through Moses.

And the sons of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, Korah, Dathan and Abiram began to say to themselves, are you the only one that speaks for God? We can speak for God too. They wanted the priesthood that was given to the Levites. They wanted something that God chose.

They wanted something that God chose the Levites to have. That is the priestly authority. And so to make a long story short, God opened up the earth and Korah and his family were swallowed into the earth, which basically God was saying, I'm sorry Korah, but you are asking for something that doesn't belong to you.

I already ordained who I was going to give it to. And of course, that is a picture not as some preachers would have us think. Some preachers think that the rebellion of Korah is equal to people questioning their authority.

Don't question my authority. I'm the man of God here. I'm the prophet of God.

And if you question my authority, you see what God did to Korah and to Dathan and to Abiram, he'll do it to you. That is not what God had in mind. The authority that they were questioning was the authority of God, which has been fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.

Christ is both the power and the wisdom of God. He is also the authority. All authority has been given to me, says Jesus, in heaven and in earth.

God has placed and vested in his son all authority. God, who in sundry times and in diverse manners spoke in times past by the prophets, but hath in these last days spoken to us in his son. God has said, in the past I was a prophet.

I spoke through this way and I spoke through that way. But now the fullness of time has come, and I have delivered not only my words, but my very heart and nature and character into my son. Hear ye him.

Hear ye him. Don't be looking for prophets. Don't be looking for people.

Look to him. Moses said, would to God all the Lord's people were prophets. Would to God every member of the body of Christ would know his authority and speak his word.

This is not an issue of who's in control here. The issue is Christ is in control, and we're all united to him, and we're all believers, and we all can hear God, and we all can speak God's word, and we all can have a relationship with him. We're all priests, son, to God.

We're all priests. We're all members. We're all significant to God.

There's no big I's and little u's in the kingdom of God. There is none. None.

Now listen. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. I want to share with you what their names mean, because in understanding the names, we catch a glimpse into the why.

What is the root cause of this rebellion? What is the spirit of Korah? What it is not is men and women questioning what some preacher says. That's not Korah. What it is not is questioning the authority of some man.

But what it is, what it is, is resenting the place of all authority and not coming under submission to it or to him, and that's the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what the rebellion of Korah is. Now, there's three prongs that make up the root cause of rebellion.

Korah, the word means bald, no covering. Bald, no covering. Dathan, the word comes from a Hebrew word which means out of a spring or from a spring.

And Abiram, this is good, literally means the father of loftiness and highness. Those three words and the meanings thereon are the basis upon which rebellion can take a hold of our life, and when rebellion takes a hold of our life, witchcraft, which is latent within the old law of sin and death, which walking in the flesh, can then begin to get a foothold, and the spirit of witchcraft can see that. Now, Korah means no covering.

Beloved, listen to the words of God. The Lord Jesus Christ is our covering. The head of every man is Christ.

He is not only the head of every man individually, but he is the head of the body collectively. There is no other head. There is no other headship.

There is no other authority but that which is given to the son of God, the blessed one, to whom alone belongs glory and honor and power and dominion and majesty, to whom alone belongs all honor and praise. The fallen 24 elders and the creatures don't fall down and worship men. They worship the man.

They don't fall down in heaven and cast their crowns to some superintendent of a religious movement or to some so-called prophet. They fall down and worship the one who says, Behold, I am he that became dead, but now I am alive forevermore. That's who we bow down to.

It's Jesus. No covering. Dathan of a spring.

What this indicates is that when there's no covering, then there is a tendency to say, I've got a spring within. I've got a flow. I've got life.

I've got water. I've got something to give. I have something to give.

And abiram means the father of loftiness. This whole thing is rooted and grounded in the self exultation, the lifting up, the loftiness, the exulting ourself, the placing ourself high up. We want to be seen.

The hearken, hearken. Simeon, hearken to me. See me.

Hear me. Know that I am the power of God. I've got the power of God.

I can move my hand and people can fall. I can do this. Watch out.

Watch out when I come around. Watch out. You don't know who you're messing with.

You watch out. The epitome of loftiness and an inflated ego. There's the seeds of rebellion.

And unless, unless the Holy Spirit of God gives us an ongoing, increasing revelation of the beauty of Jesus, and we are washed by the pure word of God, and our lives are changed and dealt with, we can fall prey to such things. All right. Back to Acts chapter 8. We're going to close in five minutes.

Verse 11. And to him they had regard because of a long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Then Simon himself believed also. Now here's the danger. Here's the danger.

We see a man, the motive of the man, the makeup of the man, and the vision of the man. Now we see that man believes, but the man stays the same. Now watch what happens.

Watch what happens. I love the song we were singing. Come behold what? What else? Behold what? Behold the king.

Behold the glory of the Lord. Behold Jesus. But what was Simon beholding? Then Simon himself believed also, and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip and wondered.

Now, listen carefully. The word wondered there is the same Greek word that described what he was doing to the people, bewitching them. He was infatuated.

He was amazed. He was wondering at what? Beholding the miracles and the signs which were done. Brothers and sisters, hear the word of the Lord.

Beware when people become infatuated and amazed and enthralled and bewitched by signs and wonders and personalities and people, because in the midst there lurks the spirit of sorcery. He was wondering at the miracles and the signs. Now if you go to Revelation chapter 13, you'll find that the whole world was amazed and wondered at who? The beast.

And they said, who can make war with the beast? For he is greatly to be wondered at and amazed. The same spirit that the Revelation 13 is talking about in describing the spell that the beast has over all the world is the same spirit here. When God doesn't get a hold of our heart and change it by grace, or if our heart is changed by grace, but through lack of diligence and lack of cooperation with the Holy Spirit and stubbornness of heart, we give way to the things of the world, we will find that our hearts will be looking at something other than Jesus.

And when that happens, there's danger. Now let's read on. Now when the apostles, which were at Jerusalem, heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who when they would come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

For as yet he was falling upon none of them, only they that were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money saying, give me also this power.

Give me this power. Why? So that I could be delivered from the slavery of sin, from the tyranny of self, from the voluptuous powers of this world, and become a bond servant toward Jesus Christ, willing to lay

my life down for him? Is that why he wanted power? No. He wanted power because he liked to bewitch people.

He liked to make people think that he was the power of God, that he was something. And he saw that the ministry of Philip was greater than his power. It took the people from him and delivered them.

So he wanted it so he could take them back. He wanted power for his personal gain and interest. He wanted power for his personal plans.

He wanted power because he had an insatiable lust to be seen and heard by people. But Peter said to him, thy money perish with thee because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. The spirit of witchcraft is in the church today because God's people are looking at the power of God and the move of God and the spirit of God with a motive like and unto that of Simon.

I want it so I can be something in the eyes of other people. I want it so I can mesmerize people, so I can get people under my control, so I can make them think I'm somebody. I want it because I want to be something.

And beloved, in the meekness of Christ, I have to close, running out of time. God is grieved with much sorrow because there is a cry going on in the church for power and for revival and for the anointing. But God, whose eyes are like a flame of fire, can see through the veneer and he sees that the spirit of Simon hearken to me.

God, give me power so I can be heard and seen and do great and mighty things. And I'm telling you, beloved, not only is the heart of God grieved, but the enemy is getting a significant stronghold within the house of God today because of this root problem. And only as we come to God in brokenness and humility and pray, oh God, deliver us from this insatiable lust to be seen or to be heard of men.

Deliver our homes from rebellion. Deliver my heart from rebellion. Men, deliver me from rebellion.

Women, deliver me from rebellion. Give me meekness and gentleness, Lord. Deliver me, Lord, from the motive that comes into the things of God.

Simon came to the work of God and he saw what was going on and he wanted it for himself. May God deliver us and encourage us. As I said, this is only a very small portion.

As God gives utterance, I'll share more. But I'm closing with this, and that is in the book of Revelation, when Jesus spoke to the seven churches, two of those churches have the spirit of witchcraft working in them. One through the prophetess Jezebel and the other through the teachings of Balaam.

Both the spirit of Jezebel and the teachings of Balaam were examples in the Old Testament where sorcery and witchcraft were working in seducing Israel. So if two churches out of seven had it, I believe that that's a picture that it's in the house of God today. And we need to pray that God gives us a love for his word and humility and meekness to be delivered from it and stand against it because Jesus will not share his glory with any man after the flesh, but only one man and only those to whom it is granted, and that is they who

allow God to transform them into the image of the Son of God.

They too shall be partakers of his eternal glory, but it will be to the praise and honor of his name, not theirs. God, we thank you and praise you for this word. We thank you for the Holy Spirit and for the wonderful presence that you brought to us in worship today.

We thank you for the song that we sung. We give you praise and honor. We ask that you'll continue to minister to us, to bring us closer to you, Lord, and forever search our hearts.

And as the song says, Lord, make us vessels where you can live in us and feel comfortable and have a home. We pray in the name of your Son. Amen and amen.

Praise the Lord. Well, it's about 1246, so if we can begin to break down all the things so we can be out by one, we have.

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