

# CARING FOR OUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH

## Are You Living in a Haunted House?

by the Rev. Kathleen Christopher, Director, Healing and Prayer

You might be surprised to know how often I, other Clergy, and our prayer ministers get requests for help from a home where strange things are happening. Occasionally, it is dramatic: objects seeming to move of their own accord—lights flashing off and on for no apparent reason—doors opening or shutting on their own. More often, there is simply a sense of the presence of darkness, often accompanied by unnaturally vivid and frightening dreams or things glimpsed from the corner of one's eye. Frequently, these requests for help come when children in the home are affected. We adults do ourselves a disfavor when we dismiss what children are experiencing as just their lively imaginations! Children truly are much more sensitive and aware of the spiritual than the average adult, who has learned to disregard anything that's not perfectly rational. Children—and sensitive adults—may



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report seeing hooded figures or even frightening creatures as they fall asleep, when they wake up, or as they round a corner of the house. Persons may even experience what has been called “sleep paralysis,” where a person is in bed awake but unable to move or speak, but aware of a menacing presence. Members of the family may start experiencing outbursts of anger or being overcome with fear and anxiety for no apparent reason. Or maybe one apparently random crisis after another afflicts the same family.

Of course there can sometimes be rational, non-spiritual, explanations for any of the above. But as Christians we know that we live in a spiritual battlefield. As Paul says in Ephesians, “We war not against flesh and blood but against powers and principalities.” We owe it to ourselves to consider the possibility that there just might be something supernatural

going on. Time and again, as I and other lay or ordained ministers have responded to these requests for prayer, we have discovered that as we remove unholy objects and influences from the home and from the lives of the household members, or pray for release from the effects of activities in their own or others' lives, the problems cease. Often, the release is sudden and complete; sometimes it requires persistent discernment and prayer. In all cases, spiritual housecleaning and calling on the Name of the Lord Jesus has brought about a shift in the home, from darkness to light.

“How can this happen to Christians?” you might ask. The simplest explanation is that “like attracts like.” When ungodly behavior take place in a residence, or when the focus is placed on things of “the world, the flesh and the devil,” or when unholy objects (things representing the kingdom of darkness) are

brought in, they attract like-elements of the spiritual world. In contrast, when a place is filled with prayer and the Lord is praised, the Spirit of God resides there and the space itself feels holy and peaceful. Whether it is a church, a home, or a place in nature, when we enter it, we just know that the presence of God is nearby. In contrast, when a space is used for unholy activities, or even where trauma or violence has taken place, demonic elements actually enter into the space, attracted by darkness, evil, or even extreme negative emotions. Just as the angels of heaven delight in being in the presence of the Holy, demons delight being in the presence of sin, evil, and trauma.

The more I witness the degradation of our culture, the more I see persons, especially young persons, affected by the demonic. We can unwittingly invite elements of the kingdom of darkness into our homes: when we consistently

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watch certain kinds of movies, e.g., those that glorify blood and violence or have a dark supernatural setting; when we play video or other games that are highly sexual, violent, or based on occult knowledge and skills; when we listen to music that obsesses on violence and sex, degrades women, or exalts satanic powers; when we read books that make things like witchcraft and the occult seem desirable, e.g., Harry Potter and the Twilight series; and when we engage in and/or watch perverse sexual activities and media, e.g., pornography. All of those things bring a kind of spiritual pollution into our homes. The effect is never a positive one, but often goes unnoticed, or attributed to circumstances, until something draws our attention to the dark supernatural element involved.

Another key factor to consider when a household is experiencing spiritual oppression is whether there has been personal or ancestral involvement in any activities or organizations that incorporate non-scriptural spiritual elements (such as the Freemasons, Mormons, or New Age spirituality). Also significant is what has taken place in the residence, or the property on which it sits, in past history. Since “like attracts like,” events relating to death, violence, or the occult will have attracted dark elements. Praise the Lord, spiritually cleansing the space and asking the Lord Jesus to be present can transform any location.

To many readers, it may seem superstitious to believe that demonic presences can actually oppress us in this modern day and age. I write these things not to frighten, but to educate. As the apostle Paul said, “so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.” (2 Corinthians 2:11) Scripture makes clear that we are living in a spiritual battlefield. I would recommend reading Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, which states that “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12) and goes on to give instruction for how to spiritually arm ourselves for this battle.

Whether or not you or your family has experienced anything out of the ordinary, I strongly encourage you to do a bit of spiritual housecleaning. You may be surprised at how much better things are when you have removed the articles

or activities that are displeasing to the Lord, and made your home a “Holy habitation.” Here are a few basic steps to take:

1. **Learn:** Become aware of what is pleasing and what is displeasing to the Lord. For example, does it glorify the Lord for your children to be playing with dolls and toys representing monsters, or occult figures? Are there religious artifacts from other cultures in your home? Ask the Lord to grant you a sensitive spirit.
2. **Pray:** Dedicate yourself, your family, your residence to the Lord; command in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for anything that is not of the Kingdom of God to depart and not return.
3. **Clean:** Go through your home, asking the Holy Spirit to give you spiritual eyes; to shine a light on anything that is displeasing to the Lord and/or an invitation to the enemy. Remove and destroy those things. Don’t give them to someone else—would you give someone a flea-infested blanket or anything else you knew could harm them?
4. **Sanctify:** Go through your house room by room, asking the Lord’s blessing on each space and on its inhabitants and any visitors.
5. **Fill:** Continually fill your home with God’s Presence, through praise, prayer, and the focus of your time and attention.

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There are many good resources on this topic, some of which I have listed below. If you have other questions, any of the prayer ministers with TFCA should also be able to help you.

*Spiritual Housecleaning*, by Eddie & Alice Smith (2009 ed)  
*Let Our Children GO*, by Rebecca Greenwood (2011),  
*Protecting Your Home from Spiritual Darkness*, by Chuck Pierce & Rebecca Sytsema (2004 ed)  
*The Bondage Breaker*, by Neil Anderson (2000)  
And the website of Above and Beyond Counseling Ministries:  
<http://aandbcounseling.com> †

