

Introduction: It's Oct. 31st, Halloween. How did it begin.

- The Samhain festival served as the New Year for the Celtic People, as their calendars started on November 1.
- In the 600's A.D., November 1 was designated by the Pope Boniface IV to be All Saints Day; a day to celebrate and honor Christian saints and martyrs.

Because of the emphasis on the dead it took on morbid, ghoulish quality. In the 19th century it lost its religious meaning and became a holiday for the change in season and a party for children.

Due to its emphasis on death and the supernatural it was linked to pagan practices and Satan. To where many Christians feel it opposes the values of Christianity and thus church kids have to dress up like some Bible character, don't get good candy.

This was too good of an opportunity not to take some time to talk about one of the key areas of breakthrough Jesus came to bring and that is freedom. Freedom from bondage, freedom from the controlling and compelling influences in our lives.

Can't help but see in Mark the number of encounters Jesus had with demonic forces. Many of the illnesses and forms of bondage in people Jesus encountered were due demonic influence.

If we hold to a biblical worldview we cannot ignore the fact that there is a Devil who is out to destroy our lives. We must agree with the apostle Paul who said, ***"That which is unseen is more real than that which is seen."***

The Devil's best lie is that he doesn't exist. But see his works everywhere. We feel his influence whenever we are tempted to lie, steal, or lust.

Story: Pastor's wife bought a nice dress they couldn't afford. The Pastor's wife asked her why she did it. "When I tried it on in the store, Satan whispered in my ear that I should buy it." The husband asks if she told the devil "Get behind me Satan!" as Jesus did. "Yes I did," she said, "but then he said I looked nice from behind as well."

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Eph. 6:12

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. I John 3:8

“destroy” - luoô; a prim. vb.; to **loose**, to **release**, to dissolve: **untying** used 4x

Demons=evil angels that sinned/rebelled against God and now continually work evil in the world

Satan=leader of these evil angels; Devil=Greek translation of the OT title of Satan;

Devil=“adversary or slanderer”; other titles= serpent, prince of power and air, Beezlebub “lord of flies”, ruler of this world

Demonic influence, control, or even possession has been sensationalized in media. How many remember the movie, The Exorcist?

I can't full explain how demonic influences work, but I know it's real and how to respond to it. **Jesus gave authority to His disciples & followers to release people from grip of Satan.**

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. ²⁰However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." Lk 10:17-20

How much influence can the Devil have on son or daughter of God? Some believe none. Others believe that Christians can be influenced and even controlled by evil spirits.

What does Bible say?

- ***“and do not give place to the devil.”*** Eph. 4:27
- ***“do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”*** Rom. 12:21
- Woman “daughter of Abraham, satan has bound these 18 years. Luke 13 (physical manifestation)

How does the Devil gain ACCESS and influence and control? Doorways?

1. Sin

Continuing in sin allows Satan to access our lives and manipulate us through our vulnerability.

Many have these weaknesses. The same sin that trips us up over and over and keeps us under condemnation and stops us from living the kind of life God intended. An area you can't gain victory over; an area that you have a propensity to sin in; something you fall back to all the time → stronghold in your life

Acts 5:1-11 – (Ananias and Sapphira) “why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?”

2. Trauma/Wounds

Deep wounds from betrayal, abandonment, abuse can keep us bound in fear, mistrust, isolation, and pain. Many forms (not all) of depression and mental illness result from these wounds.

"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷and do not give the devil a foothold. Eph. 4:26-27

3. Generational

You hear people say all the time, “*I come from a long line of...*”, or “*I'm just like my dad*”, or, “*that just runs in our family.*”

Question: What are some things attributed to that?

Issues such as mental illness, addiction, anger, or other destructive behaviors have come down to us through our parents.

"Our fathers have sinned, and are no more; and we have borne (been punished for) their iniquities." Lamentations 5:7

Another reason you want to be free → for your children and to help others

SUMMARY: demonic access comes through generationally, others have done and what we do.

How do we experience the freedom Jesus came to bring?

You don't have to out-shout, out-power, or out-muscle the devil you only need to out-truth him.

You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. John. 8:32

Illustration: opposing football team that can't win; try to trash talk and intimidate you

Truth vs. Lie – Satan's goal is to get you to believe a lie

Example: "This is who I am" or "I cannot change"

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 1 John 4:4

1. If sin is the problem repent.

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,¹³ and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. Rom. 6:12-13

2. If you have been through some type of trauma you need healing.

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. Psalm 147:3

Set me free from my prison, that I may praise your name.

Then the righteous will gather about me because of your goodness to me. Psalm 142:7

Every Sunday we offer prayer. I am surprised when people don't take advantage of it.

3. If you have weaknesses or tendencies that have been handed down you need to break this connection.

"I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me; John 14:31

Or ***"...he has nothing on me, no claim on me."*** (The Message)

Or ***"...he has no power over me,"*** NCV

"redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers... by the blood of Christ" 1 Peter 1:18

Story: breaking the pattern of nervousness & worry

Conclusion:

If you are here today and you feel like you are in bondage, or you sense there is an attack against you, you can find freedom.

Ask God to show you if there is any place you have given to the Devil and points of access into your life.

- If God reveals sin, repent.
- If God shows you it is from a trauma then pray for healing. Forgive & ask God for healing.
- If God reveals it is something that has come to you generationally, renounce it and declare the freedom that Christ won for us.

We are here to pray with you. Many times you need the power of agreement, joining with someone else's faith to overcome some of these strongholds.

The good news is that when you gain victory in an area of your life you can minister to others and help them gain victory.