

NEIL ANDERSON: Sound or Suspect?

Back in February 2010 I received an email inquiry asking me if I had come across 'Freedom in Christ Ministries' and the name NEIL ANDERSON was mentioned. In my reply I gave links to various informative articles and concluded by advising my inquirer to 'Take Heed'. Since then I have received a number of similar inquiries and so I have decided to post this information to the ministry web site via this article.

I propose to give the details of those links I quoted in my reply and to quote some short extracts from some of them just to give a flavour of their 'findings'. I then propose to quote in full a recent helpful article that I have come across and together these items should answer the question posed in the title of this article.

<http://www.pfo.org/wdemons.htm>

"Criticizing the teachings of popular author Neil Anderson might seem a risky task. After all, his books are advertised in *Charisma* and *The Marketplace* (formerly *The Bookstore Journal*) and endorsed by the likes of Bill Bright, Chuck Swindoll, Kay Arthur and Trinity Broadcasting Network favorite, Jack Hayford. His teachings focus on liberation from bondage—bondage from sin and the power of the devil, subjects any Christian ought to be familiar with. But a closer look reveals teachings that have far more in common with extremist Charismatic movements than with the Bible... Anderson would have us pray the following prayer: "I cancel out all demonic working that may have been passed on to me from my ancestors. ... I renounce all satanic assignments that are directed toward me and my ministry, and I cancel every curse that Satan and his workers have put on me. ... I reject all other blood sacrifices whereby Satan may claim ownership of me." These prayers are not intended to be said by someone seeking salvation, but by Christians who already have been "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son"... While Anderson may attribute sinful propensities to our own as well as our ancestors' demons, the Bible is quite clear in James 1, Mark 7 and Galatians 5 that man sins by himself, from himself, and that there is no exorcistic short-cut. Sanctification is a lifelong struggle... Anderson has in the past misrepresented the doctrine of sanctification. However, his most recent book, *The Common Made Holy*, (co-authored with Robert Saucy) is a toned-down, nuanced, sanitized and softer version of his false teachings. Though trying to make his ideas more palatable and less offensive, it is still the old "demons in Christians" error. The book is more a sales pitch and marketing tool for his other writings, which teach more blatantly the "demons in Christians" doctrine... The Apostle John said "Keep yourself from idols" (1 John 5:21). He did not say "Keep yourself from indwelling demons." John gives us great assurance when he says: "He who has been born of God keeps himself and the wicked one does not touch him" (1 John 5:18). The Greek word for touch is *hupto*. It means to fasten onto or to lay hold of. What Anderson says can happen, John is saying cannot happen... Scripture never suggests equating sin with demons. We are told to struggle against besetting sins (Hebrews 12) and we know that the flesh is ever with us. However there is no Scripture to ever suggest that demons can reside in a believer in the way that sin does. Sins are inclinations and actions; demons are fallen spirits. Scripture says a believer could possibly be controlled at times by the old nature but never by an indwelling demon... Michael Horton's words on Ephesians 6, the greatest single passage on warfare in the Bible, go right to the heart of Anderson's errors: "We are not left with our own weapons or armor, but with the same armor that won Christ's victory in the first place. He clothes us with his victory, with his righteousness, with his truth, with his gospel, and his salvation. His Word protects us from Satan's designs."

<http://www.oaim.us/deliverance.html>

“People flock to deliverance services to find freedom from the demonic influences in their lives. Demons are being cast out right and left. But is all of this biblical or is it merely another wild goose chase used by Satan to keep our focus off of Jesus? **The basic premise of deliverance ministries is that Christians need to be delivered from demonic influences.** Their theory is that it is demons that are behind our inability to stop certain sins, and in order to be free from these sins, we need to cast out the demons that are causing them... Deliverance ministries... deny the efficacy of Christ’s work on the cross, saying that on top of this we need to have **“seven steps to freedom”** to be truly free. The proponents of deliverance ministries change John 8:36 from, “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed,” to “So since the Son sets you partially free, we can help you become free indeed.”... **Probably the most popular deliverance minister today is Neil Anderson. His is also probably the most dangerous of the deliverance teachings because it is not 100% false** (although very few are 100%). His teachings are subtly true yet false and it takes a very discerning eye to see which is which. **Pastor Steven J. Cole sums up Anderson’s teachings quite well when he says, “Reading Neil Anderson’s *Victory Over Darkness* is like eating steak laced with arsenic. The steak tastes great and makes up the major portion, but the arsenic, imbedded throughout, will kill you”**... Much of Anderson’s teaching is quite biblical, yet he mixes this truth with portions of psychology and illogical Scriptural conclusions... **All deliverance ministries revolve around three basic beliefs:** the authority of the believer, the ability for Christians to be indwelt by demons and the practice of commanding and binding demons. Unfortunately, all three of these beliefs are not logical conclusions to what the Bible has to say. These conclusions have come about through the “experiences” of people who supposedly have a good deal of practice in deliverance ministries, **yet there are no biblical foundations for any of the three...** If the entire foundation of the deliverance ministries is based on anti-biblical thinking, then how can the ministries be doing what they claim to be? **They have no authority to be claiming such demonic influences in Christians and they have no biblical leg to stand on in regards to the binding of demons they do.”**

<http://www.fcfonline.org/content/1/articles/Neil%20Anderson%20Review.pdf>

“Steak And Arsenic”: A Review of Neil Anderson’s
Victory Over the Darkness by Pastor Steven J. Cole

“**The main error is that Anderson repeatedly asserts that believers are not to view themselves as sinners, not even as sinners saved by grace, but as saints who occasionally sin.** If unsuspecting Christians buy into this aberrant view, they will end up minimizing what Scripture presents as the major enemy against which we must daily fight: the ongoing power of the flesh... For example, on pages 45-47 **Anderson has a long list of verses giving the positives of who I am in Christ. Great! But why did he leave out other verses, often in the same context, that aren’t so pretty** (Matt. 6:30; 7:5, 11; 5:4; Luke 17:10)? Anderson conveniently skips such “negative” verses. Concerning Paul’s late-in-life claim to be the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15), Anderson explains it as referring to his nature before conversion. But a study of the text in its context shows that Paul was talking about his ever-deepening awareness of his own sinfulness as he grew in grace. As Donald Guthrie comments, “Paul never got away from the fact that Christian salvation was intended for sinners, and the more he increased his grasp of the magnitude of God’s grace, the more he deepened the consciousness of his own naturally sinful state, ...” (*The Pastoral Epistles, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* [Eerdmans], p. 65)... if I am not to see myself as a sinner, then how can I deny myself (Mark 8:34)? Clearly, self-denial is to be a daily, ongoing exercise (Luke 9:23). Do I deny a slight tendency I have toward an occasional sin or do I deny my continual propensity toward selfishness, pride, and the deeds of the flesh?... **Anderson’s error runs counter to the experience and teaching of the most godly men in church history. Augustine, Calvin, Luther, John Owen (the great Puritan theologian), Jonathan Edwards, Charles Simeon, J. C. Ryle, Charles Spurgeon, Martyn Lloyd-Jones and many others all taught the ongoing depravity of the human heart, even after conversion.** How then can Anderson claim that if you see yourself as a sinner “you will live in a very mediocre manner with little to distinguish you from the non-Christian” (p.71)! Those men were hardly mediocre Christians!... **Dear brethren, do not be deceived!”**

<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/anderson/demon.htm>

<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/anderson/general.htm>

(In relation to these 2 links I don't go with every analysis that this ministry presents but many of their critiques are helpful)

<http://www.svchapel.org/component/search/?searchword=neil%20anderson&ordering=newest&searchphrase=all>

<http://www.letusreason.org/Pent24.htm>

<http://www.letusreason.org/curren21.htm>

<http://letusreason.org/Wf47.htm>

As stated earlier, I now propose to quote, in full, a recent helpful article that I have come across, and which I believe is a concise assessment of the problematical aspects of the ministry of Neil Anderson.

<http://taministries.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/NL2002-0708.pdf>

Neil Anderson, Demonisation & Sola Scriptura

In my travels I meet people who tell of dreams, visions, voices speaking to them, demonic activity, casting demons out of Christians, etc. When occasionally I have questioned the accounts according to Scripture I have been met with reactions ranging from anger to the question - 'so, what was my experience?' No doubt most of the people recounting these experiences are convinced of their reality. The difficulty is that, regardless of whether an experience is truth or error, no one can ultimately refute someone's personal experience! However, the danger is in the attempt to develop a theology to explain them.

Today, too many are happy to accept extra-Biblical possibilities. Some use the following logic - '*We don't have Scripture to explain many things that happen in nature or the environment either, likewise Scripture does not explain these experiences.*' The deception in the above statement is that many things (in nature or the environment, etc) are *not spiritual and don't need to be explained by Scripture!* When strange things happen with my motor vehicle, do I need Scripture to explain them? But for experiences and testimonies that are *spiritual* and relate to the spirit or soul of man - we have a '**more sure word of prophecy...the prophecy of Scripture**' in which to judge by, (2Pet.1:19,20).

Any doctrine or teaching on spiritual matters must be based on Scripture *alone*. 'Testimonies' of demonic activity and casting demons out of 'Christians' are *spiritual* - they must be tested by Scripture. We are 'the temple of the Holy Spirit'. To allow for experiences of Christians supposedly being indwelt with demons is arguably blasphemy when one considers the truth of the Christian having the Holy of Holies inside and being indwelt with the Holy Spirit! No believer in Scripture ever had an indwelling demon, let alone was delivered of one! Yes, there are '*principalities and powers*' and demonic *oppression in the mind*, (2Cor.10:3-5). However, nowhere in Scripture is there license to speak to or name demons, or that Christians can be *possessed* and have demons cast out of them! Are we really prepared to be 'Sola Scriptura' ('Scripture Alone') *as it was originally taught?*

One Christian leader who well exceeds the boundaries of *Sola Scriptura* is author and Christian Psychologist, **Neil Anderson**. He is the author of best-selling books such as '*Bondage Breaker*' which is full of testimonies of 'Christians' being delivered of ancestral or indwelling demons...and by his methods and his 'steps' to 'freedom'. **Neil Anderson** has made a science out of *systematizing* experiences. He specialises in helping Christians with 'spiritual and emotional bondages' by going back into their past traumas and resurrecting reasons for them. But does not the Bible say, '**Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new**'? (2Cor.5:17)

Arguably we are in danger of accepting too much talk about experiences or voices from spirits and even the 'Holy Spirit'...instead of *the voice from Scripture*. So what should we think when a person relates to us an experience such as... '*one night a demon brushed my skin and I could feel the hair on the back of my leg...*' Perhaps our response should be: What does Scripture say about this? One Scripture that springs to mind to test the above mentioned 'hair raising' experience is: '**We know that whosoever is born of God...that wicked one toucheth him not**', (1Jn.5:18). Our mindset must have a *filter* for such subjective tales. This filter is the Bible! Sadly, today Christians feel a need to understand or explain 'religious' experiences. This opens the door for extra-Biblical teaching.

Neil Anderson teaches that we can receive full salvation from God yet still be in bondage to Satan and sin. We can still have demons indwelling us and controlling our behaviour. This teaching is a direct attack on the sufficiency of the salvation that God has provided through Jesus Christ! The issue here is the *sufficiency of Scripture* as provided through His written Word - the Bible. Romans 6 says we died with Him, were buried with Him and raised with Him in newness of life...That takes care of my 'ancestral' demons!

The door to this teaching has undeniably been *Psychology*. **Neil Anderson** echoes what Psychology says - that people are 'victims' of bad or demonic behaviour. Yet no Scripture supports us being a 'victim', inheriting a demon, or being in bondage to demons. No believer was ever demonised in Scripture! **Neil Anderson's teachings, along with many 'deliverance ministries', minimise the personal responsibility to resist sin and not to yield to unrighteousness**, (Rom.6:12,13); **to 'fight'**, (1Tim.6:12; 2Tim.4:7; 1Cor.9:26; Heb.10:32); **'mortify the deeds of the body'**, (Rom.8:13; Col.3:5); **deny our sinful ways**, (Tit.2:11,12); **'cast off the works of darkness'**, (Rom.13:12); **to 'cleanse ourselves' and be 'perfecting holiness'**, (2Cor.7:1).

'Christian warfare' ministry is big business! Christians are devouring these books written by the likes of **Neil Anderson** which are strongly promoted by most Christian bookstores. Some of the stories in **Anderson's books** describe intimate and sordid details of people's *sinful* lives including gross acts of sin. They, in themselves, are enough to arguably pollute some people's minds or tickle ears with sensational stories of apparitions of demons and amazing spiritual encounters. **Anderson** recounts hundreds of pages of 'true stories' of demonic and obsessive behaviour, manic disorders, obsessive thoughts, cultic bondages, etc. He gives story after story of 'Christians' who discovered 'freedom' from the bondages of the demonic realm. He says he counsels hundreds of people who hear demonic voices. It takes him 3-4 hours to 'free' the Christian from such.

But are these pictures of people who have died with Christ and living as new Creatures in Christ with resurrected lives? Is not Jesus and His Word sufficient? Did God leave holes in His plan so that we need people like **Neil Anderson** and their worldly psychological methods? Did I not get the freedom that Neil Anderson promises – *at salvation*?

No doubt some of these evil stories occur, but who said they were demonic? Why do we shy away from assigning such behaviour as *fleshly* and sinful? And what of the two weapons we have - the Holy Spirit and the Word of God? **Is not the Gospel 'the power of God unto Salvation to everyone...?' (Rom.1:16); or should we include Andersons seven steps to freedom?**

Yet **Neil Anderson** says: '*Now you can learn from their stories*'. But go into Mental Health Wards and you will find many of the patients are religious and one could fill books with their religious experiences. Is this where we learn from? '**Sola Scriptura**' **resists the temptation to look outside for answers to sinful and fleshly behaviour.**

Anderson says we can go through his seven steps and discover the freedom in Jesus Christ. If he was speaking here to the unbeliever his teaching might have some value. But **Anderson** is targeting 'Christians'. His teaching is essentially telling Christians that Jesus, the Gospel, the indwelling Spirit and the Bible, are not enough.

Because **Anderson** and others have books of stories and experiences, they must systemise them to fit into a theology that answers their questions as to why they occur. I do not make light of the troubles we have as believers - they are real enough and the flesh is at times at war with the spirit and our behaviour is not what it always should be. But **Anderson** speaks of sinful behaviours (fear, anger, etc) as habits that cannot be broken except by counseling or deliverance from demonic control. **To detract from the personal responsibility we have as believers for our fleshly and sinful behaviour is exactly the error that Eve made in the garden when she blamed Satan for her own sinful act!**

Anderson cleverly sets up 'straw men' by quickly moving from Christians being demonised to saying that the 'teaching today is that Christians are free from demonic activity or cannot be oppressed by the Devil'. But we are not here saying that Christians do not get attacked by Satan! But rather, sin should not be blamed on Satan.

Anderson says 85% of Christians have demonic problems. But he mixes and confuses terminologies to do with demonisation. 'Demonisation' is a demon entering into a body and possessing it. As previously stated, according to Scripture this is impossible for the Christian! Although some admit that demons cannot enter into the *spirit* of a Christian, they allow for demons to enter into the *soul*. They take the picture of the temple in the Old Testament, containing the 'Holy of Holies', the 'Holy Place', and an 'Outer Court'. They spiritualise this to: the human spirit being the 'Holy of Holies', the soul being the 'Holy Place', and the body being the 'Outer Court'. Therefore, although demons could not enter into the 'Holy of Holies' where the presence of God was, they could enter into other parts of the temple - the 'soul'.

Firstly, this understanding of a demon in the 'Holy Place' or anywhere in the temple would be *blasphemous* to the Jews. Secondly, it is not taught in either the Old or New Testaments. Thirdly, the person of a believer as a *whole* is the temple or the dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Some use 1Thessalonians 5:23: '**And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**'. However, this does not teach three separate entities but rather three parts of *one whole*, (similar to the Trinity). The words '**wholly**' and '**whole**' show this clearly.

We are not here saying that a demon cannot oppress the mind of a Christian (2Cor.10:3-5), but demonic indwelling (possession) of a believer is not found in Scripture and violates the teaching of Sanctification, the indwelling Holy Spirit and 1900 years of 'the faith once delivered'.

Anderson says most Christians who are 'suffering' from demonic control live '*relatively normal lives*' and that no causes are evident. He even attributes physical problems such as headaches and dizziness in Christians to demonic control. He tells stories of people who were '*dealt a bad hand in life from the beginning*'. But was not everyone born in sin? Most of us could have tales to tell of bad experiences in childhood. But what does this prove? Perhaps it seeks to explain away what few want to hear - that we are not 'victims' but that we inherited a depraved sin nature from Adam and Eve which must be acknowledged!

Anderson tells people not to perceive themselves as evil or bad, but as 'victims'. The blame is invariably put to demons. He tells stories of foul spirits speaking out of 'Christians' and that he (**Anderson**) 'takes authority over them'. The question must be asked - what were these people saved from? Were they not saved from the power of Satan? Ephesians 2 says we *were* once under Satan's rule, reveling in the flesh and without hope in the world...but *now* we are seated with Christ and in His workmanship to good works. **The only offensive armoury we have against Satan in Scripture is not 'deliverance' or Neil Anderson's seven steps, but rather the Word of God, (Eph.6:17).**

Anderson says we must speak aloud Gods Word in defence because Satan does not know what we are thinking. But what does God's Word say?: '**Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you**', (James 4:7). Is this not enough?

Anderson says Matthew 12 instructs us to '**bind the strong man**' before we can release captives from 'demonic' behaviour. But let the reader examine demonic activity in Scripture and compare it with what Neil Anderson teaches. Read Matthew 12 in context to see that it is a demonstration of Christ's power and his *Messiahship* and the defeat of Satan at the cross.

Neil Anderson admits that many of his ideas have come from 'counselling' Christians - this he says is how he has found out about the devil and his works. He has discovered that 3am in the morning is the prime time for demonic activity. Where did Neil find this out? - from a satanic high priest! So, what are gullible Christians to think next time they look at the clock and it is 2.59am?...(Personally, I wake up most mornings at 3am! Do I suffer from demonic activity? To be honest, I rarely even think of demons. According to Anderson, I am in the rare 15% who do not suffer from demonic activity).

People pay large sums of money to listen to Neil Anderson's methods and he makes merchandise of God's people, (2Pet.2:3). One seminar gives information that will surely have the '85%' of Christians thinking they have a demonic problem. An 'advanced' seminar teaches you how to counsel such a 'victim'. The bait he uses in books and seminars are all-encompassing questions such as: '*Have you ever had lustful thoughts, greed, anger, fear...*' The problem is most people will identify with something or someone in his books but then accept the associated false teaching on demons and deliverance.

Anderson wrongly equates the Gadarene demoniac with Christians. He says demonic control is internal and it affects the central nervous system. This is clearly demon possession! Where does he get this from? - not from the Bible but from experience, counseling and testimonies. He says adopted children are more prone to demonic control. He says every person he has counseled having demonic control has expressed some kind of sexual aberration. He calls it 'demonic sexual attack' and that demons are transferred by sexual union.

He tells pastors present at 'deliverances' ('exorcisms') to be sure of their standing with God so as not to allow transfer of demons! In one case he cites a lady who said '*the demons attacked my sense of right and wrong...and I became involved in immorality*'...so she became another 'victim'. But don't we already know immorality is sin? What does the Bible say? *Paul calls this fornication!* (1Cor.6:9)

What has the church been doing for 2000 years before the likes of **Neil Anderson** came along? What will a generation of young people raised on this teaching think? Will they have a high view of the Word and see no deficiencies in the salvation provided by Christ? As we submit to God and resist temptation and fleshly desires, the Holy Spirit empowers us. Too many Christians have submitted themselves to the authority of this man's new teaching and psychological methods, instead of to Scripture alone! **Forget Anderson's 'steps' to freedom. There is one step in Christ and from thereon it is a battle, but with victory already won.** Terry Arnold

I want to conclude this article by quoting a portion from an article written some years ago by **Alan Morrison** and entitled '**Deliver us from Evil**'. Alan wrote –

The Christian Believer and Demon Possession

Regarding the question of whether or not a Christian can be 'possessed' by a demon, the biblical answer must surely be a resounding 'No!' Some samples of the evidence from the Scriptures are as follows:

- The Christian is '**a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new**' (2 Cor.5:17).
- The Christian has been '**sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise**' (Eph.1:13).
- The Christian has been fully delivered from the authority of darkness and therefore from the power of Satan (Col.1:13; cf. Acts 26:17-18).

- The Christian has not received **'the spirit of bondage again to fear'**, but he has **'received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father"'** (Rom.8:15).
- The Christian is one of a company of whom the Apostle can say: **'For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind'** (2 Tim.1:7). The Greek word translated here as 'a sound mind' literally means 'self-controlled' (as opposed to demon-controlled).
- The Christian has **'the mind of Christ'** (1 Cor.2:16), not the mind of Satan.
- The Christian is not his own person, but belongs to Christ, in both body and soul (1 Cor.6:19-20; 2 Cor.10:7; Gal.3:29). It is no longer the 'I' who lives but Christ in the believer (Gal.2:20).
- When John tells his flock to **'test the spirits'**, he can then go on to say: **'You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He [the Spirit of Christ] who is in you is greater than he [Satan/spirit of antichrist] who is in the world'** (1 Jn.4:1-5). How can a demon possibly possess a person who is already indwelt by the infinitely superior Holy Spirit? Surely there can be no house-room!
- The Christian is clothed with the whole armour of God, which is Christ (Eph.6:10-18). This armour — truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, the sword of the Spirit — is a panoply of gifts which every Christian has received from God through Christ. They cannot be cultivated by human endeavour. When you put on Christ (Gal.3:27; Rom.13:14), you put on HIS truth, HIS righteousness, etc. Christ is all in all.
- The Christian is **'the temple of God'** and the Spirit of God dwells in him (Jn.14:23; 1 Cor.3:16). As Paul then says: **'If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are'** (1 Cor.3:17).
- The Christian is one who has received the greatest freedom possible; **'If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed'** (Jn.8:36). No more bondage for the Christian — to sin, to Satan, or to anyone.
- The Christian is part of the Body of Christ — the Church — against which the gates of hell can never prevail (Mt.16:18).
- Jesus said that no one can snatch His sheep out of His hand. **'My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no-one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and My Father are one'** (Jn.10:28-30).
- The Christian is the one who has only to **'Resist the devil'**, (steadfast in the faith, 1 Pet.5:9) **'and he will flee from you'** (Jas.4:7). This simple antidote is overlooked by many brethren today.
- The Christian is the one who can never be separated by anything (even evil angels and dark powers) from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom.8:38-39). As Paul puts it: **'If God is for us, who can be against us?'** (Rom.8:31).
- This, above all: **'We know that ALL THINGS work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose'** (Rom.8:28).

These are but a few of the realities of our life in Christ. Surely this must drive us to the conclusion that it is a most serious blasphemy to assert, as many do today (even among evangelicals) that the Christian can actually be possessed by an evil spirit.

When the Pharisees dared to suggest that Christ cast out demons by the power of the devil (they had also claimed that He had a demon Himself), He implicitly accused them of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mt.12:24-32). Surely when it is claimed that the person indwelt by the Holy Spirit is also possessed by a demon, this must constitute a very similar blasphemy.

However, the fact that a Christian cannot be 'possessed' by demons does not mean that he is impervious to being 'pestered' by them. This should not surprise us, given that Satan and his cohorts go about like a roaring lion, seeking whom they may devour (1 Pet.5:8). The adversary makes constant war against those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev.12:17). Even Paul the Apostle had a thorn in his flesh, a messenger of Satan (2 Cor.12:7-10). But this was designed by God for a specific gracious purpose: namely, the restraining of Paul from pride and vainglory. So although Satan could rub his hands together with glee about this thorn in Paul's flesh (whatever it may have been: illness, false teachers, etc.), the fact is that it was happening under the sovereignty of God and for His glory alone (He always gets the glory in our weakness).

William Green throws much light on the relationship between Satan and the believer, when he writes: **"If you steadfastly resist the devil, confiding in the grace of God and the salvation of Jesus, he cannot touch a hair of your head. Temptation and sin, if you bravely resist them, will react to your everlasting welfare: your position is impregnable, the protection is ample, the armament is invincible, the supplies abundant, and the fortress can never be entered by the enemy, unless betrayed into his power by your own treacherous hands".**

Professor Green here asserts that great biblical truth of deliverance: **'Submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you'** (Jas.4:7). It is that simple. No complex exorcisms for the Christian are set forth in Scripture. No need for reliance on medicine-men, witch-doctors and shamans to incant *'abracadabra'* and other strange commands. Instead, we have the simplicity which is in Christ and the strength which is guaranteed us by the Spirit.

It is so very challenging of Professor Green to say that Satan has no power over us as Christians, unless we give it to him. This must be understood properly. He is not suggesting that the Christian can be actually demon-possessed, but, rather, that he can certainly be demon-*pestered* if he does not oversee his spiritual life with care.

And as Christians, who are heirs of God through Christ, we exercise a good measure of personal responsibility under the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit (cf. Phil.2:12-13). It is precisely for this reason that the Apostle Paul tells us not to 'give a foothold to the devil' in our lives, through falling into flagrant sin (Eph.4:25-32).