

Chapter 11

SPIRITUAL HOUSE CLEANING

Georgia was becoming uneasy about the Ouija board in her home. It had been given to one of her three daughters as a gift. At the time, she did not think that it was anything more than a harmless board game. The church she attended had never mentioned the dangers of such things. The girls were asking the board questions, and it was responding with accurate answers. The answers in some cases were information not known by her daughters. How mysterious! As time went by, the board started "saying" critical and unkind things about one of the sisters, and the other two would laugh and repeat the negative phrases, which became a source of contention among the girls. The girl that was being picked on was pouting and crying. Although Georgia thought that probably the two girls were spelling out the hurtful messages, she decided things had gone far enough. One night when she was the only one at home, she decided to destroy the Ouija board. It was a cold Colorado night and she had a big fire in the fireplace. She placed the board on top of the fire, and to her amazement it started giving off a reddish light, and then she started hearing weird moans and cries. She experienced a great deal of confusion and fear. The thin little wooden board took over 30 minutes to burn.

My conviction is that the Ouija board was harboring demons and that those demons started to gain some control over the girls. The incident illustrates the reality that our homes can sometimes become spiritually polluted. It also vividly demonstrates the warning in the Bible about idols. The Amplified Bible defines idolatry in 1 John 5:21 as follows: *Little children, keep yourselves from idols* (false gods) – “from anything and everything that would occupy the place in your heart due to God, from any sort of substitute for Him that would take first place in your life.” To look for wisdom or direction in life from the stars, cards, tea leaves, a spirit guide, a dead ancestor, or a Ouija board, instead of from God's Word and God's Spirit, is an abomination to God. It is also an aspect of idolatry.

Consider idolatry for a moment. Idolatry always accompanies rebellion and, according to the emphasis given to it by the Word of God, is possibly the greatest sin of the human heart. The first two of the Ten Commandments address this sin: “You shall have no other gods before Me,” and “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, (nor shall you) bow down to it.” To break these two commandments means that you “hate” God.¹ The pattern of the Book of Judges, a period that lasted over 300 years, was that the children of Israel forsook the Lord God and followed other gods, such as Baal and the Ashtoreths, and bowed down to them.² God brought judgments against Israel; they repented and cried out to God; He mercifully raised up a “judge,” defined as one who ruled with wisdom, to deliver and lead them. God's prescription for the sin of the people was two-fold, as

exemplified in His instructions to Gideon in Judges³: First, "Tear down the altar of Baal that your father has built, cut down the wooden image that is beside it, and burn the image." Second, "Build an altar to the Lord." Very important: **God hates mixture.** For the people of God it is usually not a matter of completely renouncing the God of the Bible. What they do is to continue to worship God, but in their hearts they are also bowing down to idols. King Solomon did not tear down the altar of Jehovah; he added altars devoted to other gods.

. To extrapolate to today: God is our Judge, and He sent a Deliverer to release us from our bondage and to lead us. Since we can't serve two masters, God and mammon⁴, we are to "turn to God from idols."⁵ The new converts at Ephesus brought their books of magic (occultism), worth 50,000 pieces of silver, and "burned them in the sight of all."⁶ The rich young ruler was instructed, first, to sell his possessions and give the money to the poor, and, second, to "come and follow Me."⁷

An article in *Charisma* magazine⁸ discussed the important practice of cleansing our homes spiritually, a real need many people do not recognize, and listed some indicators of that need:

When might a house need spiritual cleansing? Common symptoms include:

- continual bad dreams and nightmares
- JESSE – PLEASE BULLET INSTEAD OF LETTERSinsomnia
-

- behavioral problems
- ,relational problems, continual fighting and arguing
- lack of peace
- ,restless, disturbed children
- ,unexplained ongoing illness or bondage, nausea, and headaches
- seeing "ghosts" or demonic apparitions, an experience particularly common to children
- ,foul, unexplainable odors
-
- a, tmospheric heaviness that makes it hard to breathe

Many of these problems may be the result of generational curses or witchcraft curses placed on a person or family by others. But another cause of the spiritual problems can be something in the home itself. Doing "spiritual house cleaning" often solves these kinds of problems. Ephesians 5 says that we are to find out what is acceptable to the Lord and that we are to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather to expose them.

In my experience, there are some things that frequently cause problems in the homes of believers and non-believers alike. It is important to be aware of and to avoid objects devoted to the deceiver and enemy of our souls. This is a list of some common objects to avoid or get rid of:

1.

Ouija boards, also known as witches' boards. "Georgia," in the anecdote that started this chapter, was a close friend of my wife. I was her pastor at that time, and I was totally oblivious and skeptical about the things I am now teaching. Because of my ignorance, I left her and her family exposed and vulnerable to an attack of the enemy.

2. Games such as *Dungeons and Dragons*, *Masters of the Universe*, *Pokemon*, and many internet and video games.

1)

3. Artifacts from Buddhist, Hindu, and other eastern religions.

Some people don't realize that having a little Buddha figure in their home, or any other artifact representing a god or goddess, violates Scriptural teaching. Exodus 20 says that we are not to have any idols and that we are not to bow down to idols. Someone might protest, "I am not bowing down to it; it is just a souvenir." However, these things are offensive to God. Remember that behind every idol is a demon. Many idols were specifically made for use in religions and for worship. In some circumstances, the idols have been dedicated to other gods and those "other gods" are in reality Satan, the master deceiver.

4. T

hunderbirds and southwest Indian art, especially idols, masks, and sand paintings; as well as African art, and art from Pacific and Caribbean islands.

5. Books on Satanism, witchcraft, and the new age movement

6. Books and items related to horoscopes and astrology.

7. Comic books, posters, music, and other materials with images of darkness, violence, or sorcery.

We should be very careful to protect our children. Satan is after our children. Comic books, video games, children's programs on television, and many books and movies such as the Harry Potter series are full of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft designed by the enemy to draw our children into these dark practices. (It has been reported that every time a new Harry Potter book or movie comes out thousands of children and young people inquire about how to enter into witchcraft.)

8. Sun calendars that portray the sun as an object of worship, as in Mexican art for example.

9. Art with representations such as snakes and dragons.

One time I was having a session to cast demons out of a lady, and we were stymied. Then I noticed she had on a bracelet of intertwined snakes and asked her if she would remove it. When she removed it, we were able to complete the deliverance and set her free. Then I asked her if she would permit me to throw the bracelet away, and she did.

10.

Materials related to Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Unity Church, and to other cults such as Freemasonry, and Eastern Star. If you don't understand what might be the problem with some of the organizations in this list, I refer you to the books on cults by Walter Martin and by John Ankerburg. These books can be found in any Christian bookstore.

11. Good luck charms, amulets and fetishes.

Remember that these things are appealing to a power, but it is not the power of God. One should wonder what the other power is.

12. Movies with occult, supernatural images, extreme violence, or gore.

A young woman in Mexico went to see the movie "Stigmata," which deals with occultist symbolism and power. I was told that she had become agitated, nervous, fearful, and tormented afterwards. I assume she was vulnerable because of her spiritual condition. That is to say, not every child or young person who is exposed to the things on this list will be affected in the same way. Satan takes advantage of people's vulnerability. We must be aware and protect our children and young people in all of these areas.

Someone in a men's group I was teaching about spiritual housecleaning asked, "How could there be a problem with an object? How could an object become spiritually polluted or demonized? Is it common sense to believe such a thing?" I agreed with him that such a thing is not "common sense" from the standpoint of the natural man. I Co. 2:14 says, "*The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.*" Spiritual sense often contradicts the spirit or worldview of the age. Part of the "uncommon sense" revealed by the Bible is that when people honor or recognize some ultimate power other than God - the Emperor, mankind, nature, money or a bull - that object

attracts demonic power like a magnet. Although the Scriptures may not explicitly state, "Behind every idol is a demon," the principle is clearly taught by Scripture. Read 1 Corinthians 10:19-21 and Psalm 106:36-38. I don't encourage people to become fanatics or extreme; but when something is worshipped, when people dedicate it to the devil in some fashion, when they look to it for wisdom and direction for life, or for good luck, it draws demonic power.

A pastor named Eddie Smith told how he and his wife were invited to the home of a Christian family who said their preschool sons were troubled because they kept seeing a "ghost" in the house. As they looked through the rooms they noticed a Native American painting - a beautiful example of Southwestern Indian art. It seemed harmless enough, but when they turned it over they saw a label that explained that the artist was a shaman, an occultist priest, who came from a long line of shamans, and that he assigned a spirit-being to each of his paintings. Sure enough, when the painting was removed, without the knowledge of the small boys, the "ghost," a demonic spirit, vanished. The family wisely destroyed the painting. They did not give it away or throw it away where someone might find it and become contaminated by it.

This is worthy of note: if you find something that is demonically contaminated, you should treat it as you would toxic chemicals. Destroy it, burn it, or bury it so that it cannot be found.

How about items that are questionable? Things that you suspect might be a problem? I suggest that you get your family together, pray, and ask the Holy Spirit to show you how He feels about the item. Perhaps you will get a clear leading through words or impressions from the Lord, a specific warning, an uneasy feeling, or a sense of peace. If you cannot come to any conclusion, tell the Lord that you are going to set the matter aside, unless and until He shows you in some other way His desire in the matter, and be at peace.

Another important matter is demonic habitation. Ephesians 4:25-27 teaches about anger and says, "*Do not let the sun go down on your wrath nor give place to the devil.*" The Greek word for "place" in this verse is "*topos*" and means a literal place, locality, or piece of land. God is warning us that if we allow

anger and wrath to stay in our heart, we are providing an open door for the enemy to move in and occupy that "land." By the same token, the devil will take advantage of open doors to occupy literal places or pieces of land. This occurs when demons are assigned to or for some reason inhabit a certain location such as a home. This is often a result of the willful sin of the people who have lived there which gives the enemy legal ties. (The spiritual pollution of a home might be connected to the pollution of the ground on which the house is located. This subject is developed in Chuck Pierce's book, Ridding Your Home of Spiritual Darkness.¹¹)

It is important that people pray for God's wisdom before they buy or rent a home. When they travel and stay in strange hotel or motel rooms they should always pray for spiritual cleansing over that place. As a pastor I was involved over the years in a number of situations where people were tormented or bothered by "resident spirits," and it developed that the people who previously lived in those places had been involved in witchcraft, in heavy use of drugs, in immorality, prostitution, or violence. Doors had been opened for spirits to dwell in those places. I also heard of a family who built a very large home on an isolated piece of land and were constantly bothered by spirits there. They later learned they had built their home over an Indian burial ground. In order to cleanse a house or land, you should first try to learn what sins have been committed there (through research, prayer, spiritual discernment), then (1) pray for forgiveness on behalf of whoever committed the sin, (2) command any demonic forces to leave in Jesus' name, (3) invite the Holy Spirit into that place, (4) dedicate it for God's use, and (5) anoint the place with oil.

I remember an occasion several years ago when my friend Fred Feller and I stayed in the same room in a certain city in Mexico. The next morning we found that both of us had been disturbed by very unclean dreams. Obviously something immoral had been going on in that room which had invited unclean spirits into that place. We cleansed the room that night by anointing it with oil and praying for the protection of the Holy Spirit and had no more such problems.

Chuck Pierce tells a powerful story about a family who moved into a house, and every night thereafter their 3 year old son woke them up sobbing in bed. Through much prayer and talking with neighbors they learned that the child of the previous family had been removed by social services because the family had beat and abused him. After much prayer, they commanded the evil spirits to leave. A great presence of peace descended on the house and the night terrors that had plagued their little son never recurred.¹²

What do you do if the problem is not yours? Getting rid of objects or possessions that the Lord shows you are defiling your home is relatively easy if the items are yours, but what if they belong to an unsaved or unsympathetic spouse, parent, or roommate? You have no right to destroy or remove someone else's property, so what can you do? I recommend that you gather as many facts as possible beforehand, spend time in advance praying and listening to God for His words and direction, and

approach the person in love, gentleness, and respect. If the person still refuses to listen to you, ask the Lord to intervene on your behalf with the person and also to provide protection for you. Remember that Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego served God while in a pagan country in Babylon and were not able to remove all the idols and pagan religion around them, and yet they led holy separated lives.

I suggest that parents start considering things that might defile their home while their children are still young. With preschool age children, it wouldn't be necessary to ask permission to remove certain items and it could be a good opportunity to teach them what is pleasing to the Lord and what is not. But when children start getting older it can be very difficult. I recommend that you appeal to your children in love and that you do a lot of praying and ask God for wisdom before you start exercising any heavy-handed authority that goes against their wishes.

Some things that you need to consider as your children start growing up:

1. Are you going to allow your children to listen to all kinds of music?
2. Are you going to allow them to tape rock posters to their walls?
3. Are you going to allow them to use tobacco or drugs?
4. Are you going to allow them to look at pornography or to have premarital sex?
5. Are you going to allow them to set up a satanic altar?

You might think the answers to these questions are obvious, but Christian parents wrestle with their older children over each of these things. As we know, teenagers go through a phase of establishing their independence. They come to a time when they need to make their own rules. Because most teens are heavily influenced by the culture and their friends, they may enter into a time of rebellion. This can be a difficult time for parents to know what to do, especially if the parents are not in agreement about these issues. Blended families are especially vulnerable to such disagreements. Children in blended families apparently have the innate ability to "divide and conquer."

Remember that 1 Samuel 15:23 says that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft." When children are submitted to the Godly control of their parents, they are spiritually covered, which means that they are spiritually protected to a greater degree from attacks of the enemy. Witchcraft is a way of getting out from under the authority of God, appealing to a different power which is the power of the devil, and opening people to all sorts of demonic attacks. Rebellion gets people out from under spiritual authority and spiritual protection just like witchcraft. Remember that when King Saul rebelled against God eventually a demonic spirit inhabited him¹³, and in time he turned to the witch of Endor for spiritual guidance¹⁴, which was a direct act of witchcraft. The reason kids so readily turn to drugs and alcohol when they rebel against their parents is because it is the same spirit. The spirit of drugs is the spirit of witchcraft. They have the same root.

Note: In cleansing our homes, we also need to get rid of any articles connecting/binding us to soulish

relationships of the past: letters, pictures, rings, keepsakes, etc. See chapter on Ungodly Soul Ties.

A Time of Reflection:

Lord, some of the ideas taught in this chapter are completely new to me. Is this really Truth from your word? Is it divine wisdom? Or is it fanaticism and foolishness? I know that your Truth is incomprehensible to the natural mind. I want to be open and teachable. But I don't want to be gullible and taken in by every wind of doctrine. I especially don't want to lead my family and my church into error. But I do have an obligation to cover and protect them. Please, Lord, guide me into your Truth, and when I am convinced that something is Truth, let me not be deterred by the fear of man. Amen.

Endnotes

- (1) Exodus 20:4-5
- (2) Judges 2:11-18
- (3) Judges 14:25-26
- (4) Matthew 5:24
- (5) 1 Thessalonians 1:9
- (6) Acts 19:19
- (7) Matthew 20:21
- (8) Charisma, November, 1999
- (9) 1 Corinthians 10:19-21, Psalms 106:36-38
- (10) Ephesians 4:25-27
- (11) Chuck Pierce, Ridding Your Home of Spiritual Darkness, Pp. 33-34, 37
- (12)
- (13) Ibid., Church Pierce, Pp. 33-34
- (14) 1 Samuel 16:14
- (15) 1 Samuel 28

