

Non-Christian /Occult Spiritual Activities

by Karl D. Lehman, MD/additional information prayers from MacNutt's School of Healing Prayer 1
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We have been created with hunger/longing for spiritual experience and connection, and this is rightfully fulfilled through relationship with the Lord. People who do not have a living relationship with the Lord will search desperately for anything that will satisfy their spiritual hunger. This is painfully evident in the post modern emptiness and longing that so many are experiencing today. The enemy is rushing to satisfy these people as he tailors New Age and other connection/fulfillment occult activities to appeal to this hunger and longing. These occult activities are designed to divert us from a relationship with the Lord into the spiritual dead end of non-Christian/occult spiritual counterfeits.

Most (all?) of us also desire power and control – we want to be able to protect ourselves from harm and to get the things we want. Power/control occult activities appeal to these desires. The person involved in the power/control occult activities, rather than studying God's creation and cooperating with God's will, is attempting to manipulate and control spiritual knowledge and power for his own purposes. When Christians speak of the power of the Holy Spirit, and even doing ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit, it is never from the perspective of controlling the Spirit. We do not control God, even for "good reasons." God asks us to cooperate with Him in the work of His kingdom, and gives us free will regarding this choice. The Christian working in cooperation with God will never need to resort to any involvement in magic, sorcery, or occult practices to accomplish God's will.

My own experience can illustrate how easily the enemy tempts us with the seductive pull of occult knowledge, power, and experiences. I felt chronically unsafe in my childhood neighborhood. The Lord graciously protected me from getting involved in occult practices, but I longed for and fantasized about special powers that would enhance my abilities to defend myself and to defeat my enemies. The Lord is notoriously uncooperative with those who try to use Him as a magical power tool or weapon. I discovered this early in my childhood, much to my disappointment. Part of me wanted to know the Lord and to do His will, but another part (the one that felt unsafe on the playground every day) was much more drawn to heroes with practical, usable special powers. This included the good magicians in Tolkien's Middle Earth trilogy and also the Jedi Knights in Star Wars. I longed for magical spells that I could know and control. I longed for a "Force" that I could channel and use. This is exactly the kind of special knowledge and power that the enemy offers us in the world of the occult, but I never even realized that I was longing for occult spiritual knowledge, power, and experiences until I was working on this essay. Even though I have never dabbled in magic or any other occult practices, it is significant to note that I experienced manifestations¹ of spiritual conflict when I prayed to confess and renounce my longstanding desire for magical/spiritual forces that I could control and use.

It is important to watch for wounds, lies, and possibly also for internal dissociated parts underneath the person's non-Christian/occult involvement. Anything less than complete internal unity in going through these prayers indicates there is something underneath that needs to be addressed. My experience certainly illustrates this. My desire for special powers came directly from my underlying wounds and lies (not being safe,

¹ Spontaneous, involuntary physical phenomena that occur consistently when we encounter demonic infection and/or opposition in my healing work. Usually sudden, compulsive yawning, coughing and gagging.

I can't trust anybody else – including God – to protect me, and also wounds and lies about not being special or important enough to get the love/connection that I needed). I wanted special powers so that I could be safe, loved, and connected. This is very similar to my experience with wanting special anointing so that I could heal people without having to depend on a God Who I feared would disappoint me. Just as with that situation,² I perceive that I will need to deal with the underlying wounds, lies, and internal dissociated parts in order to be truly free from demonic infection and any other negative spiritual consequences attached to my desire for special powers.

It is important to remember that the Biblical concept of sin includes anything that “misses the mark” of God's best plan. The wrong things we do in innocence and ignorance can still hurt us. All occult involvement brings spiritual confusion, and is therefore sin. Also, looking to any spiritual resource other than God violates the first commandment and is idolatry. The good news is that God's way of healing us through confession and forgiveness works for unintentional sin just as effectively as for willfully defiant sin. So we must confess and receive forgiveness for our occult involvements whether they were done in willful disobedience or in innocence and ignorance.

We have compiled the list below from a number of books, seminars, handouts,³ presentations, and also our own experience.⁴ We want to be humble as we present this list of possible non-Christian/occult activities. There is still much in the world that is not understood, and there is not consensus in Christian ministry circles regarding the danger of many of these activities. For example, some feel that much of alternative medicine and phenomena like ESP” and telepathy come out of science that is simply not yet understood, while others feel that they are inherently occult and dangerous. It might provide helpful perspective to think about what would have happened if you had demonstrated a light bulb, a transistor radio, and a microwave oven to the Puritans in New England several years ago. My guess is that you would buy yourself a quick trip to the stake and a bonfire. Pope Urban VIII threatening Galileo with torture and excommunication if he did not renounce Copernicus' dangerous and heretical theory that the earth orbits around the sun, is a “true story” example of misguided Christian caution attacking something that turned out to be legitimate science.

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See “Deceiving Spirits and Counterfeit Manifestations: How Wounds, Lies, Internal Parts, Repression, and Denial Can Give Them a Place,” on the Articles/F.A.Q.s page of www.kclehman.com

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Most ministry teams involved in prayer for emotional healing and/or deliverance have discovered the importance of confessing and renouncing any non-Christian/occult spiritual activities. See, for example, Francis MacNutt, *Deliverance From Evil Spirits*, (1995), pp. 203-222, Neil T. Anderson, *Helping Others Find Freedom in Christ* (1995), chapter 7: Exposing the Lies,” pp. 139-156, and Peter Horobin, *Healing Through Deliverance, Vol. 2*, (1995), pp. 74, 100-105, 220-223, 271-308.

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Some lists presented as “occult activities” are actually lists of activities and/or experiences that can open a person to demonization. For example, any pattern of addictive behavior, areas of persistent sin, being the victim of sexual abuse, and being the victim of violence are all activities and/or experiences that can open a person to demonic infection, but they are not non-Christian/occult spiritual experiences. We think it is helpful to address non-Christian/occult spiritual activities separately and specifically, especially since non-Christian/occult spiritual activities need to be explicitly confessed and renounced as sin.

Our current perspective is that some of these practices are inherently non-Christian/occult spiritual activities, and that others are not necessarily dangerous, but can be if the practitioner is operating out of a non-Christian/occult spirituality or the desire for spiritual experience/power/knowledge apart from the Lord. It is especially important to avoid fear, judgment, and false accusation towards phenomena, activities, and techniques that are actually spiritually neutral. It is also important to avoid denial and deception regarding whether a given activity is truly sinful and dangerous. You can use the “Prayer for Activities That May Be Problematic” for any activities that you don’t have clear conviction about.

A particularly cost effective way to use this tool is to make a copy for clients. As a homework assignment, have them pray through the list, asking the Holy Spirit to recall to their minds every activity that needs to be confessed as sin and renounced, and then write down everything that comes to their minds. They can then pray with the therapist/ministry team, including the listed items at the points indicated in the sample prayer (or pray as you feel lead, addressing specifically the items on their lists).

Non-Christian/Occult Activities: Check List

Sample prayer for guidance during use of checklist: "Lord Jesus, please reveal to me any involvement I have had, knowingly or unknowingly, with any non-Christian/occult religion, activity, power, or source of guidance. Please protect me from fear and erroneous judgement. Protect me also from denial and deception."

Have you ever, just for fun, out of curiosity, or in earnest:

Occult Games, Activities

Attended a seance or spiritualist meeting?

Participated in fortune telling (tea leaves, palm reading, crystal ball, tarot cards, etc.)?

Participated in astrology (read or followed horoscopes, or had a chart made for yourself)?

Studied or been involved in Kabbalah?

Played with the Ouija board, magic eight ball, tarot cards, crystal ball, table tipping/lifting, automatic writing, levitation (lifting bodies), speaking in a trance, visionary dreams?

Had a reincarnation reading (about what you were in some previous existence)?

Consulted a medium, numerologist, handwriting analyst?

Invited or interacted with ghosts?

Possessed occult objects?

Read or possessed occult literature? (Book of Shadows, Secrets of the Psalms, Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses, The Urantia Book, books about any of the occult activities mentioned above.)

Psychic experiences, metaphysics:

Practiced mind control over anyone?

Sought psychic experiences?

Had a spirit guide?

Participated in psychic games, activities (ESP, telepathy, mental suggestion, hypnotism, self-hypnosis, clairvoyance, clairsentience, healing magnetism)?

Received or participated in psychic healing or psychic surgery?

Received or participated in non-Christian faith healing?

Practiced soul travel, Astral travel, Astral projection?

Read, been interested in psychic writings (Edgar Cayce, Jean Dixon, Nostradamus, etc)?

Read or posses books about psychic phenomena?

Alternative Medicine:

Received or participated in acupuncture, acupressure, aromatherapy, Bach flower remedies, colour therapy, crystal therapy, faith healer (non-Christian), guided imagery, homoeopathy, hypnotherapy, iridology, kinesiology, magnetic healing, new age medicine, past lives therapy, pyramid healing, radiesthesia, rebirthing, reflexology, zone therapy?

Fantasy/Science Fiction:

Have you been deeply immersed in books and/or movies involving magical powers/forces?

Do you desire and/or fantasize about having magical and/or spiritual powers that you can channel/control (for example, channeling and using the "Force" as the Jedi in Star Wars)?

Magic, White or Black:

Attended, participated in wiccan (white witch) activities, church?

Attended, participated in witchcraft or voodoo activities?

Cast a magic spell?

Sent a curse against somebody, spoken a curse against somebody?

Participated in chain letters where there was a curse against those who did not participate?

Used a charm of any kind for protection?
Participated in, entered into blood pacts?
Sought healing through magic spells or charms, through Christian Science or a spiritualist?
Practiced water witching, “dowsing” rod, and pendulum to find water/where to dig a well?
Read or possessed books about magic, spells, witchcraft?
Played Dungeons and Dragons or any other game (including videos) that used spells and magic as part of the game?
Ever wished someone else was dead? Wished you were dead?
Ever attempted to take your own life? Ever attempted to take someone else’s life?

Satanic:

Made a pact with Satan or been involved nor witness satan worship?
Listened to hard rock or acid rock music with satanic influence (KISS, etc)?
Possessed any satanic symbols, objects?
Invited, participated with sexual spirits (incubi and succubi)?
Watched, read, been interested in occult horror stories/movies (Exorcist, Rosemary’s Baby, Bridey Murphy, The Omen, Helter-Skelter, Amityville Horror among others)?
Read or possessed books about satanism?

Cult, False Religions:

Possessed any pagan religious objects?
Visited a heathen temple?
Had a spirit guide?
Participated in non-Christian or cult religious activities? Yoga, Sen Buddhism, Hare Krishna, Bahaism, Rosicrucianism, Science of the Mind, Science of Creative Intelligence, Hinduism, Transcendental Meditation, Eckankar, Roy Masters, Silva Mind Control, Father Divine, Theosophical Society, Islam, Black Muslim, Christian Science, Unity, Scientology, The Way International, Unification Church, Church of the Living Word, Mormonism, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Children of God, Swedenboganism, H.W. Armstrong (Worldwide Church of God), Unitarianism, Freemasonry, New Age, Fetishism (practices using objects of worship/idols)?

Sins of the Flesh: (these sins are open doors to demonic infestation)

Ever exposed yourself to pornography in magazines, TV or stage shows, books, topless bars or X-rated movies?
Ever had a problem with habitual masturbation?
Seen shows about sexual deviation, homosexuality, or lesbianism?
Been involved in group sex or bestiality?
Ever had sexual relations with someone other than your spouse? If possible, recall them by name (first name or initial)
Had an abortion? Have you fathered a child that was aborted? Been involved in an abortion in any way – viewed, viewed one, assisted in one, performed one, encouraged a friend to have one, had a botched abortion, etc.?

Mind Altering Drugs: Have you ever used mind altering drugs as a spiritual activity?⁵

Humanism: Have you accepted the fallacy that humankind is self-sufficient and does not need God?

Other: Are you aware of anything else that you should confess and renounce?

Drug use can be a non-Christian/occult spiritual activity when mind altering drugs are used with the desire “to reach something,” the intent to welcome, facilitate, or create a religious, psychic, or “mind expanding” experience. This kind of non-Christian/occult activity in the context of drug use is especially concerning, since mind altering drugs can make the mind midically/biologically more vulnerable to demonic deception and infestation. Hallucinogens (LSD, mushrooms, PCP, Peyote, mescaline) seem to be especially dangerous with respect to removing the mind’s normal protection.

Occult Renouncement and Prayer of Forgiveness

Finding Healing: Most of us have been touched by the occult and need to be cleansed and set free. Go carefully through the list of Non-Christian/Occult Involvement and mark the ones that apply. In prayer ministry, ministers will deal with these one by one. If you are not preparing for prayer ministry, find some understanding Christian and confess these things to God before him, so he can minister God's healing. (James 5:16: "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.")

You may use something like the following:

PERSON: Lord, I confess that I have . . . (name them all). I see these now as sins and ask Your forgiveness by the blood of Your Cross.

PRAYER MINISTER: In the name of Jesus, this is forgiven as if it had never been.

PERSON: Thank you, Lord, for this forgiveness. I renounce you, Satan, and everything you have had in me. I command you in Jesus' name to depart from me and trouble me no more.

PRAYER MINISTER: I take the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and cut you free from every bondage to the occult world. I close the door between you and that world and seal it with the blood of Jesus and bar it with His Cross. Walk carefully in your healing, asking the Lord's protection, staying close to His Word and His people.

Prayer to Break Any Curse on Your Life

(especially if the curse has been a result of occult involvement)

Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that You are the Son of God and the only way to God, and that You died on the Cross for my sins and rose again from the dead.

I give up all my rebellion and all my sin, and I submit myself to You as my Lord. I confess all my sins before You and ask for Your forgiveness – especially for any sins that exposed me to a curse. Release me also from the consequences of my ancestors' sins.

By a decision of my will, I forgive all who have harmed me or wronged me – just as I want God to forgive me. In particular, I forgive . . .

I renounce all contact with anything occult or satanic. If I have any "contact objects," I commit myself to destroy them. I cancel all Satan's claims against me.

Lord Jesus, I believe that on the Cross You took on Yourself every curse that could ever come upon me. So I ask You now to release me from every curse over my life – In Your name, Lord Jesus Christ! By faith, I now receive my release and thank You for it.

From Blessing or Curse – You Can Choose by Derek Prince

A Binding Prayer for Protection

The following prayer specifically addresses the categories of spirits used by satan worshipers themselves when they call upon evil spirits or demons. The Bible refers to these spirits as someone who was ver heavily involved in witchcraft and the occult before finding healing through Christ. In using these terms, we directly counteract the evil that is sent against us. In no way do we want to take a legalistic view that implies one must pray with these particular categories in order for the prayer to work. Rather, this prayer is an example of how one can pray, and it seems to produce the desired effect: to bind the evil spirits and to protect one from them. However, if you come up with another similar prayer which yo believe is better for you, feel free to pray in the way that is most comfortable to you. The purpose is more important than the words themselves.

In the name of Jesus Christ, by the power of His Cross and blood, we bind the spirits, powers and forces of the earth, the underground, the air, the water, the fire, and the netherworld and the satanic forces of nature.

We rebuke any curses, hexes or spells sent against us and send them directly to Jesus for Him to deal with as He will. Lord, we ask You to bless our enemies by sending Your Holy Spirit to lead them to repentance.

We bind all interplay, interaction and communication of evil spirits. We claim the protection of the shed blood of Jesus Christ over _____ . Thank You for Your protection, Lord. Amen.

Colossians 2:6-10: *As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just s you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority.*

Colossians 2:18-20: *Do not let anyone disqualify you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, dwelling on visions, puffed up without cause by a human way of thinking, and not holding fast to the head, from whom the whole body, nourished and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows with a growth that is from God. If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the universe, why do you live as if you still belonged to the world?*

Galatians 4:1-9: *My point is this: heirs, as long as they are minors, are no better than slaves, though they are the owners of all the property; but they remain under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; while we were minors, we were enslaved to the elemental spirits of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God. Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to beings that by nature are not gods. Now, however, that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits? How can you want to be enslaved to them again?*