

Setting the Captives Free (AHM Blog 0002)

I have below a prophetic letter that was originally sent in March of 2009 that is still relevant. It was a plea for justice for those abused and rejected and despised in the Church – due to what was really false doctrine, initially resorted to in order to avoid “messes” in the Church. It was false doctrine that Assemblies of God (A/G) leaders knew was false but instead of changing it, instructed missionaries to work around it. It was the clear declaration that “Christians” cannot be “demon possessed.” The choice of words was unfortunate, but it went back to an unfortunate, and inaccurate, choice of words more than 400 years ago when the King James Version of the Bible was translated. It would have been more accurate to say that the person possessed a demon, or had a demon, than to say they were possessed by a demon. The problem is that the words they used made people think that if a person had a demon, it would be in total control of them – which Hollywood, and Satan, loves people to believe. Then Satan can have his demons work in secret and never get recognized (or “discerned” as Church people like to say). This also makes people use the worst-case scenario as the threshold for characterizing having a demon – instead of the average case mentioned many more times in scripture where their impact was limited and occasional. The result of this wrong doctrine was people not getting ministered to in the Church who desperately needed ministry, and some rejected and essentially banned from the Church, to whom Christ’s instruction in scripture told them to minister.

There is also a love story buried in this story – of Christ for the wounded and rejected, even from his Church. He defends and delivers those whom he loves, and he loves all mankind. But the Church has failed to carry out his instruction to set the captives free – in more than the A/G. There is another love story here, and it is an allegory of Christ’s love for his end-times bride, the bride he wants to win and deliver from the clutches of Satan – those who do not know him and are even unknowingly in bondage to Satan’s minions – demons. I am now married to the girl in this story, Amber, scripturally and with God’s blessing. And our love is an allegory of Christ’s love for the lost, the abused, the defiled, and those stained in the eyes of others, and in their own eyes. I wrote this letter in a professional tone, but I was not a pastor or a counselor and no one involved saw the ministry that took place in that way. At my ministry, everyone was encouraged to minister to everyone else, and many did – like in the early Church.

I taught on Matthew 18 at the headquarters of the A/G. It was eventually made policy. It is where Christ speaks of how to handle offenses against you, in a progression of steps, starting with going privately to the person who has wronged you (or you have wronged, per another passage). Then, if that does not work, you are to involve another. Then you tell it to the assembly/Church – which, when Christ first used the term, commonly meant the adults of your city. The final step is to let the person be publicly rejected by all (consistent with Paul’s teaching in First Corinthians 5). In this letter I also ask the Church, through its leaders, for help and justice after going through the initial step many times, and the second step multiple times. And the sin is one First Corinthians 5 says to cast a person out of the church for, and the next chapter declares they cannot be considered a believer, and “saved,” while continuing in this sin – slander. This too was an allegory – of Christ’s long patience with the blatant and persistent sin of his current bride, the Church of today. Judgment is coming – as it is on the person in this allegory, my former bride whom these former leaders denied me justice over. God cares about justice – beware.

To its credit, the Assemblies of God did eventually rewrite its position paper (under a new title) – but it never, to my knowledge, said that the old position paper was wrong, or publicly correct its unfortunate wrong teaching. The claim of infallibility seems to be residually implicit in every denomination. Ever admitting our denomination is wrong seems impossible for us all, in every denomination. So that leaves God to have to deal with it through judgment – and judgment is coming.

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March 14, 2009

To: General Superintendent George O. Wood
Southern Missouri District Superintendent Bill R. Baker

RE: Permission to Set the Captives Free?

Dear Brothers in Christ,

I write to ask your permission to conduct ministry God has led me to, or receive correction and proper boundaries from you if I have a wrong perspective. If however, you find you, upon investigation, agree with what I feel I have been shown, I would ask that you consider refocusing the Assemblies of God position paper to encourage setting captives free wherever we find them. By setting captives free, I mean delivering people from the harm imposed by the demonic whether they are in, on, or around them and whether or not others think they may or may not be Christians. You see, I find that people can seldom tell if a person they see in church is really a Christian, because people often fall away from God but go to church anyway to maintain appearances. Ted Haggard, the former head of the National Association of Evangelicals, might be a ready example of that. In truth, only God alone really knows who is a Christian because He alone sees in secret and knows the heart, and He alone judges if a heart that is mired in sin has reached the point of losing salvation.

Please indulge me in speaking through examples known to me, for God has used them to speak to me. My father was an evangelist, a pastor, a bible college teacher, and finally a missionary. While I was in his home he was teaching at Trinity Bible College, an A/G college. One night he got called to the men's dorm and ended up casting demons out of a bible college student whom I knew and could still name. This young man was pursuing a call in bible college but one night indulged in alcohol and sex and it took five people to hold him down as demons were cast out of him. His apparent one-night fall cost him being demonized right away. So, for me, it is hard to say how much sin causes one to fall away and how much will allow you to be turned over to the demonic consequences of sin. After his repentance and deliverance, I believed he continued pursuing the call on his life, greatly warned of the consequences of sin.

The first good training I received in spiritual warfare and deliverance was when I went through missionary training, Pre-Field Orientation, with the Assemblies of God. This was after being approved as a missionary candidate in 1987. Ron Iwasko, then the personnel director of our Division of Foreign Missions, and Ben Tipton, missionary evangelist in Africa, conducted the training. They emphasized that the A/G position paper focusing on the issue of "Can a Christian be Demon Possessed?" had perhaps focused us on a rabbit trail. They said we should rather just deal with the enemy when presented with him, and not be concerned with whether the person was a Christian or not. Since that time I have held on to their advice and found it sound.

However, I do not want to find myself at odds with my Fellowship's leadership. So, I am submitting my approach to review and asking for confirmation or correction.

What I have done is avoid the debate of whether or not a Christian can have a demon by not focusing on whether a demon may be in, on, or around a person. I simply tell demons to "Go" from them and let somebody else worry about if the demon was in or outside the person. When dealing with oppression or affliction or bondage, most people naturally conclude any demon was outside the person anyway. I therefore avoid any terminology that would imply the demon might be inside a person, so I avoid in particular saying, "cast out."

This approach is also paired with taking the view that I am not the judge of which church attendee is a Christian; God alone is.

Additionally, I try to take a very conservative approach as to what constitutes evidence that the demonic is at work in a way that requires significant deliverance, especially if that deliverance might be interpreted by any observer as casting out a demon. Particularly, I would prefer to see evidence of a physical manifestation clearly indicating demons are acting upon the person. Usually, those manifestations would include the body writhing, extreme facial contortion or grimacing, thrashing of the head or limbs, eyes rolling back in the head, and growling or hissing or a voice not their own speaking through the person. These would normally be experienced either before any deliverance begins, such as when a person in a service hears the worship begin and begins to act strangely in ways beyond their control. Or this can be experienced when someone operating in the gifts of the Spirit, or God's anointing, challenges a demon by saying something like, "In the name of Jesus, I take authority over . . ." the demon or binds Satan.

This would be consistent with what I heard from the famous South American evangelist, Carlos Annacondia, who spoke at a conference sponsored by our A/G Seminary. He takes authority over Satan out loud from the microphone at the beginning of his meetings and people commonly fall to the ground writhing and exhibiting other manifestations. The people manifesting are then carried out to their tent of deliverance for ministry. I read the book, *Free in Christ*, written by his deliverance minister, Pablo Bottari, who has probably ministered deliverance to more people than anyone else alive today, with millions passing through their tent of deliverance in campaigns all over South America.

But therein lies a problem. Bottari binds the demons but does not cast them out right away. He makes them clear the person's consciousness and then first leads the people to Christ and THEN drives out the demons. He found through much experience that this works faster and better because he gets the cooperation of the people in renouncing specific sins that cause the demons to linger. The only trouble is this bends our theology quite a bit.

And I have a confession to make, I tried this method once. I had been teaching on spiritual warfare in an adult Sunday school class at a large A/G church in Springfield for months when the pastor stopped me on the way in and said he had received a call from a woman saying she was demon possessed and wanted help. He asked me if I would handle it. I agreed and they brought the woman into my class but did not indicate she was the one who had called. Later I went on into the service and was called out because the woman had come into the service and evidently

manifested when worship began. I came into a room with this young woman on a bench and two men who have pastored in the A/G and the wife of the children's pastor were already there. The wife of the children's pastor had been a nurse on a psychiatric ward and had seen the demonic before. They were pleading the blood, but not taking authority over the demons, and the woman was writhing and her jaw was locked and her eyes rolled back in her head. With their deference to me to lead I used Bottari's method and commanded the demons to loose her mind and mouth and brought her to confessing Christ and asking to be free. Then in an hour and a half we cast out five demons, with severe manifestations each time – writhing and contorting, facial contortion and grimacing, gagging, vomiting clear fluids, and coughing. The head pastor was there to observe much of this.

As it turned out, this young woman had been in church as a little girl but had been a Satanist for fifteen years and had also been a stripper. She knew where to go for help when she wanted to be free, but the demons reacted to the worship and caused her to manifest. Before that, the demons in her did not cause enough problem for her to not be able to sit through a Sunday school class on spiritual warfare. This young woman experienced considerable peace after the deliverance and was accepted into Teen Challenge right away. I felt to warn the director, whom I knew, that it seemed the girl was in need of more deliverance but he asked if the girl had accepted Christ and when told yes, immediately said, "Then the demons are gone," and walked away. This girl had problems and eventually ran away from Teen Challenge. My question is, if the demons were obviously there before we led her to Christ, and severely manifested after we led her to Christ, how do we reconcile that to our published positions? Would this woman have gotten the help she needed if our position had been stated more toward helping her? How do we reconcile the outworking of our position against the most used and effective deliverance methods by those doing the most toward setting the captives free in our time – such as Bottari?

Please allow me to share a little of my own journey leading up to the experience above. I went to the revival in Brownsville in November of 1996, having been particularly sent by the Lord. While there, God caused me to know He wanted to do something unspecified and that I was to linger in the sanctuary. A man I believe was a deacon or leader over ushers there came up to me and told me the church had a deliverance ministry. He said that even pastors had been helped that had a bondage in their lives, and that sometimes it was from something they had done innocently as a child. As he said this last phrase, God gave me an eyes-open vision of a scene from a back lot in a small town in Kansas where my father pastored when I was about 12, and I saw two long wires in my hands. I recognized the scene immediately. A man in my church had put two wires in my hands and told me I could find water with them, and had me walk around and I felt a pull when I walked over the water main. I thought it was scientific in the way it worked, like perhaps magnetism. But later I learned that practice is called "water witching," or using a divining rod, or dousing, and that it is an occult practice – divination. Though I tried hard to seek God and flowed in the gifts of the Spirit, I recognized also the voice of the enemy trying to interfere. God showed me this was why – I had invited the enemy to give me information from him by this practice. I repented and renounced this and not only was the demonic harassment dealt with, I was also healed of a serious food allergy that came on me one night when I had severe nightmares.

This and the severe warfare I experienced in coming to the revival caused me to be interested in reading on spiritual warfare and deliverance. But God gave me a burden to study it intensely also and lead me to book after book and showed me where I could get confirmation of what He was telling me about the subject. After five years of reading book after book God had me teach others on spiritual warfare. In the books I saw that there was a debate on what demons could do to Christians. Finally I asked God for the truth of the matter just as I was feeling drawn to go to an international conference on spiritual warfare and deliverance. God said, "Go and find out" so I went to the conference.

At the conference I found a former A/G pastor who had left the denomination because he could not reconcile matters of deliverance ministry with our positions. I found a woman who took her daughter to churches who refused to or could not help her, and some of them were, I believe, ours. Finally she found help elsewhere. Her daughter attended youth group at church but clearly manifested demonically when those who were prepared to help her began ministry on her. These were just chance conversations, but I could see God was setting them up. Then I was in the worship of the conference and saw a woman, probably in her early thirties, on the second row lift her hands to try to worship God, and she then ended up slumped on the floor. And I could tell this was not the work of the Spirit of God. During a break I was in a coffee shop in the building and someone came and asked me to come and intercede as they did deliverance on someone, and it was the woman I had seen trying to worship God. I saw them praying over her while she lay exhausted on the steps of the platform and demons spoke through her, and said in a weak and whiney voice, "Leave us alone" Then all the sudden she sat up erect and very properly with an air of authority worthy of a woman executive of a large organization, and said very emphatically in a different voice, "Im in charge here!" It was very evident multiple personalities were speaking through this woman to the people helping deliver her.

Still I was not convinced. I later asked if I could interview this woman and it was arranged. She told the story of having been a little girl of nine years of age and going to a "church" alone and being taken into the basement after the service and subjected to satanic rituals. Apparently an occult group used a church as a cover for their activities and this girl coming in by herself fell into their hands. In any case, this woman talked at length to me of trying for years to find freedom and still having demons black her out at times, even when driving, yet God preserving her. She showed every evidence I could find from talking to her of being a sincere Christian. I had read that satanic ritual abuse led to some of the most difficult deliverance cases, and that sometimes the trauma was so bad people did get a genuine psychological disorder originally called multiple personality disorder, and now called dissociative disorder, as the mind's way of blocking out terrible memories.

It was right after the experiences of the conference that I walked into the church and was asked to cast demons out of the satanist that wanted help. Still, I reserved judgement about these matters because I did not want to find myself at odds with the published positions of the movement. But I still wanted to do what I had been told in my missions training and help people when I saw evidence of the enemy attacking them. So, for years I have taken the position of not worrying about where a demon is or if a person is really a Christian as a way to stay out of trouble and still help people.

But God does not seem to want me to keep avoiding evidence I seem to see in front of me. Please help me. Please give me mercy, but hear my recent experience and my questions. God brought someone into my prayer center in Springfield who is the sweetest gentlest Christian young lady you could ever want to meet or have attend your church. She has such a heart to help others and to seek the Lord diligently. She is the daughter of a Baptist associate pastor and a graduate of one of their universities. She came with friends into the coffee-shop type atmosphere of my ministry and God had me talk to her and I felt a definite anointing to say what I did. Then a pastor of a nearby church I knew was Spirit led came in and talked to her and said almost the same things God had me say to her. I told her God wanted to use her to speak from Him to others and that He wanted to bring her through a healing process that would involve something like surgery or cutting her open and cleaning her out inside. He came in after I was done and told her almost the same thing. She recognized God was speaking through those events and became a regular attendee.

Soon she was willing for us to pray for her to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit and she did receive it and began to speak and pray in tongues regularly. God had spoken to her much previously but took her to new levels and used her to minister to others. She received visions and dreams that proved to be from the Lord.

However, she also experienced terrible attack of the enemy. She would be attacked with choking and gagging on her bed at night. She saw apparitions in her room. Nausea and vomiting came against her when she tried to minister or obey God in something major. We had seen people get attacked when we began to help them, and help them follow a call on their lives, so we were prepared to help her. However, we had not seen much that matched this intensity or consistency. This was beyond the usual intimidation and harassment of the enemy. I should mention that my ministry is a place for watchmen and prayer warriors, for people walking in the gifts of the Spirit and for those wanting to do serious warfare prayer for pastors, churches, and the city. We expect demonic opposition but this was more than others had experienced.

Soon I found God was leading me to tell demons to "go" from her. I assumed they were just following her around harassing her. We saw good results in helping her but eventually I found situations where we would pray against a spirit God led me to take authority over, and she would begin to writhe and contort and gag and not be able to breathe hardly at all. I would put my hand on her neck and command the demon to loose her mouth and her breath and go and she would cough and then be able to breathe normally again. But this kept going on at intervals. Several others witnessed this. It was beginning to be hard to believe these demons were simply outside her body attacking her. At times she would instantly fall asleep and her head would sag on her shoulders as a demon was addressed. Other times her eyes would roll back in her head.

This was over a period of some eighteen months. Each time a demon manifested we hoped or assumed it would be the last. I examined every area of her life and past with her looking for anything that needed to be repented of or renounced to free her from oppression or bondage. There were things the Lord led us to address but nothing seemed to explain the level of attack she was under. Nothing seemed beyond what many people in our churches might have done, except that she had an abusive boyfriend for years and had been raped once by him.

I just assumed the level of psychological abuse she had suffered from the boyfriend, or also being molested once by a neighbor as a little girl might be responsible. I thought that perhaps she did not have the normal psychological defenses others had. God led her through what many would call inner healing in this time, and God had me and others help. She was being transformed by the healing power of God and the work of God was very evident in her life. Shame was coming off her life and she was getting more free. But intervals of obvious demonic manifestation continued when I would take authority over a spirit as God led me. And there were just too many to make sense. But I did not go looking for answers or suggest any.

God repeatedly asked her if she was willing to go to a new level of healing. God warned her with each level there would be pain she would have to deal with. I saw as God brought up various levels of emotions she had suppressed from known memories, and found release and healing and deliverance. It seemed the demons would leave after the emotions that had been suppressed were processed at a conscious level, and any forgiveness expressed. But she was not a person to hold grudges or unforgiveness at a conscious level.

Finally God very seriously warned her of more she had not processed, and that it would be very intense. When she consented, she had a dream of some horrible things being done to her and a rape by multiple people. She mentioned it to me expecting me to dismiss it. I somehow felt she should not necessarily assume it was a nightmare, but beyond that God told me "let it set" so I avoided saying much more. I did not in any way suggest anything had been done to her or that suppressed memories might be coming up. Just prior to this I had felt led to read a book by a counselor that trains Christian counselors internationally to help the victims of childhood incest and severe sexual abuse (*From Shame to Peace: Counseling and Caring for the Sexually Abused* by Teo Van der Weele). I knew to not suggest anything or jump to conclusions about the accuracy of any suppressed memories that might be coming up. I knew if these were memories God was bringing up, they would likely be piecemeal and that pieces of memories from multiple events might look like one event, and to concentrate on healing her, not accusing someone.

But this young woman had a tremendous prayer life and talked with God conversationally at times and she asked God why He was not telling her this did NOT happen to her. Well, God brought things to the surface over a few days that caused this young lady to cling to someone wailing and half screaming from the pain it was bringing to the surface. The memories, and what God was showing her, showed her that a person she knew had brought her to an occult group meeting in the woods near her house. She had been bound and raped and rituals were done over her while they put a blood soaked ball in her mouth and taped her mouth shut. And things happened on multiple occasions. . . . And God connected the dots with known memories such that her story was confirmed, including pain and missed periods and a miscarriage she could not understand as a young girl who was not, in her memory, ever sexually active. But she believed these things also because God gave her supernatural peace in the midst of these memories coming up, after the pain of the experience was released in tears.

In my reading I have come to terms with the psychological truth that people do sometimes suppress memories. It is a survival technique of the human mind, much like the body going into shock after an accident so the person does not die. And, in my extensive reading on deliverance,

I had learned that occult groups do things to deliberately demonize their victims. They know that violence and rape work well. They know that human souls join through sex as the bible teaches and therefore the demons in them can easily enter one they traumatize and rape. Deliverance ministries commonly have people break "soul ties" with those they have had sex with to break the joining of souls and the demonic inroads that comes as a result. I have on video an excellent scriptural teaching about the deliverance implications of sexual ties (by Peter Horrobin of Ellel Ministries). And in her case this would be sex with people that had deliberately invited demons into themselves and who were deliberately trying to move them into her and doing incantations to accomplish that.

But I did not suggest or go hunting for this answer. It was the last thing I would have expected. This person is one of the sweetest Christians I have ever met. Her father is a pastor and former missionary. But they came back to the states before these things happened.

So, now that I have probably stretched credibility considerably in telling these stories, please help me. How do I process this theologically? I believe these memories are real. I believe God ministered to her intensely while He brought these memories up and that the result is peace and healing and deliverance for this young lady. I brought this young lady to a leader. He said he and his wife have dealt with several cases of severe abuse, and some were such that they think that they could only be satanic. And they had seen cases of repressed memories coming up just this way, with God's leading. They have said they believe this young lady.

I find it very difficult to say this sweet young lady has not been a Christian. I find it very difficult to say these were not demons and demonic manifestations consistent with a demonic presence in or on a person. Honestly, I would be hard pressed to say it did not look pretty conclusively like the demons were inside her body. But I avoid that conclusion to stay within the published A/G position paper. The problem is, this young lady has a call on her life attested to by many and God has convinced her that her testimony is to be used to set many free and show them that God can heal ANY wound and deliver the captives. She is now writing her story. I would hate to see her crushed by being told she is deceived and that she should not tell anyone her story. Using her story to help others helps her see God's love and providence in what He allowed to happen to her. I ask you to get to know her and hear her story from her. I believe you will be stretched and tested as I have been. I obeyed the leading of the Spirit to set her free at the risk of my credentials. I believe she is worth it and that she could help many come to freedom if we allow her.

I wrote to this point and God told me to let it set. The next morning He told me I know one more case. Now I feel I must include a case very close to me – my wife who recently left me and divorced me. You see, I was a captive along with her, and I guess I still am. I wrote a spiritual autobiography and gave it to her to try to get her to see the truth of how God had tried to reach her through many, many, people and messages. I tried to follow the call of God with her and found it constantly delayed, or blocked, or a U-turn forced by her, after we had both agreed on the path God wanted us on, and were preparing for ministry, or stepping into it.

But eventually a demonic involvement became evident to me. Even Pastor John Kilpatrick prayed over me at the Brownsville revival, "Get the demons off his bed." You see there was

much conflict in that season over lies – slander – she could admit maybe once to me but refused to ever make right to others. (Eventually God told me she could not tell others – meaning she was not capable in her bondage.) And most interactions took place talking on the bed. And eventually I felt I was lying down with demons present. In my sermon at A/G Headquarters years ago I confessed my anger and spoke of my gracious family. It was not mine to confess her sin, only my own and I did it publicly. I could not mention the heartbreak her slander had caused that eventually turned to anger until I could totally push any thought of hurt or even defending myself out of my heart.

The demonic became most evident when she was upset, and I recognized a pattern of cold anger combined with depressive, wounded emotions. On one occasion she was intending to go to the church picnic, and I knew she would have a ready audience to slander me, as she had many times in the past. Somehow, from the Lord I got discernment and courage to stand in her way and say in a loud voice right to her face at close range, "Satan, I bind you in Jesus name!" The anger and wounded emotions instantly cleared from her and she calmly sat back down and never knew that I had said anything. God knew it was a demon in control at that moment and gave me the courage to speak at that moment. And at least I was spared her slander on that occasion.

But that did not stop the problem and I saw her slander me in church after church for 12 years. In one church there was a man from Nigeria who did deliverance and when he prayed for me he saw the warfare I was going through and the reason for it – lies and deception coming out of my wife's mouth and a demon using her as a puppet. I thought, "Finally someone sees!" But that was not the end of it. No, it progressed until she seemingly agreed with me in stepping into full time ministry, and then moved out and destroyed my reputation with half-truths and deceptions and outright lies. The demonic held more and more sway as time went on and she lied outright to me flagrantly and deceived the counselors with outright lies when I tried to put the marriage back together. Finally, our sons – both preparing for ministry in A/G institutions – confronted her in their own way. One met with her for five hours and confronted her for her lies and deceptions. The other decided on his own that what she was doing was slander, and that First Corinthians chapter 5 contained the proper response of the church – ceasing to consider her one of the Body of Christ, and communicating it by having no fellowship with her. Indeed that chapter does name slander as a sin that causes the Church to be required to put them out of the body, and not even eat with them, to communicate to them that they are no longer in the Body.

So, now I am a captive to the demons in my former wife unless you act to deliver me. I ask for justice from the highest judges in the Assemblies of God. Please acknowledge the responsibility of the Church to judge and deliver the oppressed and put out those who persist in practicing the specific list of sins in First Corinthians 5. Grant me permission to remarry because she has met the requirement to be considered an unbeliever by the Church, in the clear commands of Scripture, and has departed and filed divorce against my will and gained it. I will say that I protested the divorce for months and thought to delay as long as possible. But then God spoke to me to settle and I went to my presbyter and he surprised me and said to settle as did two trusted board members in my ministry, one of them my eldest son nearing completion of an M Div. The consensus was she would not change her mind and the family had suffered long enough.

If that grounds is not sufficient, then I hold that there is an additional ground. You maintain that a Christian cannot be demon possessed, or have a demon. The inadvertent but inescapable resulting assertion of that is that, if I can cause a demon to manifest in her, you have to conclude that she is not a Christian. Therefore I should be free to remarry because she would be an unbeliever that has departed, per First Corinthians 7, and I would not be bound and could remarry. With your permission and hers I believe I could provide conclusive proof of her having one or more demons in her. Just establish what manifestations you will accept as proof. But that would not be love for her. No, she cannot be free until the deeply suppressed wound in her comes to the surface and is healed – and then the ministry should not focus on the demons but on her, and bring her to freedom and healing privately. But God might expose the demons to judge her responsibility in her persistently chosen pattern of sin.

I am sorry if my tone seems overly persistent. But it took persistence to survive under the onslaught of the demonic this long. It took persistence to continue to love in spite of slander and get my boys raised and following the call of God on their lives. It took persistence to honor her and be silent this long except for failed attempts to get help. Help me. Deliver me, PLEASE. Have mercy on me. My book and an account of my correspondence with her and those who have naively supported her is in my district executive presbyter's possession if you want more information on which to judge.

If you will indulge me, please allow me to give a watchman's warning. An onslaught of demonic slander is coming on ministers. If you do not put up a wall of protection, the one scripture provides, you will likely lose many, many good ministers. I would urge you to consider putting in the bylaws the scriptural principles from Deuteronomy 19:15-20, Matthew 18:15 and following (where Christ quotes Deuteronomy 19), and I Timothy 5:19. These establish that no accusations should be heard against anyone except out of the mouth of at least two witnesses (per accusation asserted); that the accused should be present when the accusations are brought and given a chance to answer and rebut the accuser; and that the Church should put out of the body those that bring false accusation – slander – so that there is punishment that persists even if one changes churches (I Cor 5). This will give protection for leaders and deterrent and motivation to come to repentance to those who would slander.

And please understand that Satan will likely use very hurting, deeply wounded people to do the accusing. These are his best instruments because their pain makes their testimony very unpopular to question. Therefore leaders refuse to risk doubting their testimony and quickly decide to fail to follow the scriptural principles above in order to "protect" them as it appears is so obviously needed. If we are not willing to follow the scripture even in the face of scorn for hurting or failing to protect those obviously hurting, this battle is already lost and slander will prevail. Believe me, I know this battle first hand and that no one in the A/G was willing to follow the scripture in the face of a wounded witness or a need to "protect." But people choose their reactions to interactions with others and Satan encourages offense and seeing evil intent when none was in the heart of the one offending us. And Satan gets people to judge not just conduct versus scripture (as we are told to do) but the motives of people's hearts (which is reserved to God alone). And once a person's heart has been judged to be evil, people will see evil in all they do, and their pain and offense is greatly multiplied. Thus wounded people are

easily manipulated by demons to give horrendous false accusations, and they are believed because they believe the accusations themselves and are obviously hurting.

If you don't believe me, consider that this is exactly how the gay agenda has been advanced successfully in the media and the church becomes the evil in society persecuting and discriminating against obviously hurting people who just need love. And the antiwar movement has been advanced the same way such that the tide of evil rises in the political choices made. Hurt gets paraded by Satan to advance his agenda.

Returning to the topic of setting captives free, may I respectfully request that the leadership consider setting aside or rewriting the A/G position paper on Christians and demons? Could you see if we could not make more room for setting captives free, even if we are not sure where the demons are (in, on or around) and even if we are not sure if the person is a Christian or not? Could we enable people to do more to help those we see attacked by the enemy without fear of losing their credentials? Can I help people like this and keep my credentials? Please, for their sakes. The occult is all around us and on regular TV shows now. People are falling into bondage all around us, especially youth. They experiment with the occult and still go to church. Ministers need to be able to respond to the need for deliverance without feeling they would lose their credentials and their livelihood.

If I may suggest a basis for a theology of deliverance, I would suggest the following:

1. Deliverance is a process like sanctification is a process. We do not conquer sin instantly and we do not conquer its instigator instantly. Deliverance is closely tied to sanctification because demons are tied to sin. It is their ground or claim in the legal system of the spiritual realm. Satan "found nothing" in Christ. We unfortunately cannot claim that.
2. Confession of specific sins and occasions of sin is important to deliverance. It has been asserted that, with Finney and the simple sinner's prayer he instituted, the church shifted from thorough confession and repentance of categories and incidents of sins, and that in so doing we lost something important to conquering sin and demonic bondage associated with it. Maybe the Catholics had some truth in confessing sin that the reformation should not have abandoned but redirected to God from an unwarranted mediator.
3. Deliverance is dependant on inner healing in some extreme cases because deeply suppressed wounds and suppressed memories of traumas must be brought to light and the sinful emotions surrounding them processed and released before the demons claiming those sinful emotions as ground can be banished effectively and permanently.
4. Demonic involvement does not negate personal responsibility. I have seen a person with apparently more than a hundred demons live a mostly godly life. Most people that have demons in, on, or around them, have them because they chose willfully to sin repeatedly until the influence of the demons became so strong they began to have less capacity to resist. God still judges the willful sin that got a person in trouble, and they have to repent and apply their will to conquer sin, and they must also apply their authority in Christ to make the demons behind their sin stay away from them. Both steps are required for greater success in

conquering things like pornography, where demonic spirits of lust draw their captives toward their sin.

5. Most of all, a better translation of "demon possessed" is needed. It is more likely "possessed a demon" or "had a demon." The biggest barrier to understanding I have seen, is that people assume that if a person has a demon in them it is in total control and does "possess" the person. The Gadarene demoniac is not however, the typical model of having a demon – people in the Gospels with occasional trouble or a sickness is. The Gadarene demoniac may have had 6,000 demons or at least 2,000. A person with 100 can be seemingly normal, depending on the type of demons in them. And demons like to stay hidden to do their work most effectively so they do not put on a show very often, and most likely only when they sense they have been discerned and are about to be removed. In the gospels we see incidents of discernment and deliverance such as this.
6. Deliverance is not, for most, so instant as it was for Jesus. He was God in the flesh and the demons knew it and feared destruction and cried out, "Have you come to destroy us?" Now they know the authority we have delegated to us, and that it does not include annihilating them. And since the type of demon and prayer and fasting were identified as the trouble when the disciples were not effective in deliverance ministry, we should recognize we are less than the Apostles and we might need more time than they did to bring someone to complete freedom. Additionally, Christ could forgive sins – which would instantly remove the ground of the enemy the rest of us have to hunt for and ask questions or hear from God about.
7. Where a person has been involved in anything associated with any other spirit than God – anything occult or a false religion – they must not only confess the sin, but also renounce any words or acts of calling upon or worshiping these false "gods" or demons. The demons will claim a right to oppress and deceive if one has ever invited them in any way, and not leave until their invitation is revoked, and we take authority over them and tell them to go.
8. Casting out demons is part of the great commission. If simply leading someone to Christ caused the demons to flee him or her, there would be no reason to instruct us to do anything but to preach. Sinners with demons cast out and left sinners will end up worse, because Christ warned more and worse demons would come back with them, and we do not necessarily have to cast out their demons first to lead them to Christ.

Finally, for the sake of a captive, may I request quick assistance on this matter? You see, a district official has forbidden me to assist the young lady I spoke of above in any more incidents of deliverance, partly because they have been convinced deliverance should be instant like it was in most cases when Jesus did it. But something happened after I had the bulk of this letter written. This young lady went home to the funeral of her pastor, the one recently shot in the church shooting in Illinois. She called me late at night saying another demon was manifesting through her and growling through her as demons surrounded her in the dark in her bedroom. I have been forbidden to help her. Will you please help her? May I PLEASE bring her to you? It is not fair to her to wait long for this. You can meet her and hear her story for yourself and see

the demon manifest and decide this issue for yourself. Then you can decide for yourself whether to set the captives free or not. Her name is Amber.

Thank you for your consideration and your mercy.

Sincerely,

Rev. Andrew G. Hadden