

Connect Group notes 19.5.25

Don continued our series on Sunday – *Living in a Spiritual World*.

He spoke about demonic influence in his message, and the importance of having a healthy balanced understanding and belief of the different ways demons impact and oppress us, particularly as followers of Jesus.

Don talked about ‘demonisation’ as opposed to ‘possession’, and that as Christ followers we can be impacted in different ways and intensities.

He used the example of a spectrum - 1 being perhaps a thought inserted into our minds by the demonic - to 10 - what we would understand as someone who is completely overtaken by demonic forces.

Don spoke to us about the different ways we can allow the demonic access to us, especially through our minds. We can also be impacted by things like trauma, envy or ongoing wilful disobedience.

Scripture describe demons as being deceivers, hinderers, enslavers, tormenters, compellers, agitators, and oppressors. When we see aspects of these things in our lives it is always helpful to ask the Holy Spirit to open our eyes as to whether there are spiritual forces at work in our situation.

Pray and ask God to show us!

Discussion Points

1. Do Christians need deliverance? Don spoke to this and reminded us that everything Jesus does is to *deliver* us. See 2 Corinthians 1:10.
 - What are the areas in our lives we might notice demonic suggestion or influence? Share either generally or personally as comfortable.

- Are there things that we may not have perceived as being impacted by the demonic before?
- How has our understanding of demonic influence perhaps altered during this sermon series?
- Discernment is key! How can we possibly learn to discern the difference between the natural and the demonic? Or where the demonic is riding on something natural and taking it further than it should go? (Hint: Prayer)

2. Don talked about our lives as a city. The gates of ancient cities were the place the elders sat and where they monitored who could enter the city. Our minds are the gates to the city of our life.

- Where are we possibly allowing demonic influence in our lives via our mind?
- Ephesians 4:27 says that “do not give place to the devil” (room to work, an opportunity, a chance). Some of the ways we experience, or allow this, is through ...
 - allowing anger to reign in us (Eph 4:27)*
 - unforgiveness (2Cor 2:9-11)*
 - envy and jealousy (James 3:13)*
 - sexual immorality (1 Cor 5:5)*
 - rebellion (Prov 17:11)*
 - idolatry (Col 3:5)*
 - occult involvement (Deut 18:9-13)*
 - generational lines of sin and trauma not of our doing and sometimes we may not know why...*
 Choose one, or all of these, and discuss your thoughts about how each aspect might allow for a demonic foothold.

3. Don talked about pathways to freedom from demonic influence through...

- Truth (John 8:32)
- Love (1 John 4:18, Gal 6:1-2)
- Learning to walk in the spirit, use the gift of tongues (1 Cor 14:2)
- Praise and worship (Isaiah 61:3)
- Spiritual disciplines
- Reading the Word of God (Eph 5:26)

Power encounters in prayer (Mark 5:8)

- As above choose all, or one, to discuss how each leads us in a pathway to freedom from demonic oppression. Ask people to share any experiences of this as comfortable.

~ We have authority in Jesus' finished work on the cross and through his Spirit.

~ Pray that the Holy Spirit would seal us after our discussions during this series.

PRAY and Apply

- **Encourage members of your group to ask the Lord (either make time for some quiet in your group time, or in their own times) if there is an area in their lives where they have allowed a foothold, or left a door open to demonic oppression.**
- **Pray for each other, or individually about this, asking the Lord to give clarity and to bring freedom.**