

# DEALING WITH EVIL

## INTRODUCTION

It is a reality which we must acknowledge today that there is indeed evil in the world- evil different kinds and magnitudes, perpetrated by different agents. Evil is often described as simply the opposite of good. We will discuss in three terms: physical, natural and moral. This work examines the effect if these various types of evil on the existence, and to what extent we can deal with them.

We can also describe evil according to source which gives us self-inflicted, foundational, demonic, societal, or purely natural. The focus of this work will be on dealing with foundational, specifically demonic evils.

## WHAT IS EVIL?

Evil has been described as the sum of the opposition to desires and needs of individuals which gives rise to human sufferings. Thus evil, the viewpoint of human welfare, is what ought not to exist nevertheless, there is no aspect of human life in which its presence is not felt.

## ORIGIN OF EVIL

The bible tells us that the evil and suffering came into the world as a result of sin. Besides the punishment pronounced upon Adam and Eve, mankind lost control over creation to the devil, and came under the attack and manipulation of the devil in his bid to steal, kill and destroy. We see immediately the manifestation of evil when Cain murdered his brother Abel.

Christian philosophy has attributed moral and physical evil to the action of created free will. Man has himself brought about the evil from which he suffers by transgressing the law of God (St Augustine, city of God XII). The evil from which man suffers is, however, the condition of good, for the sake of which is permitted. Thus, "God judged it better to bring good out of the evil than to suffer no evil to exist" (St Augustine enchiridion xxvii).

## NATURE OF EVIL

We can identify three kinds of evil physical, moral, and natural.

Physical evils are all that cause harm to man by thwarting his natural desires, or by preventing the full development of his power, either in the order directly, or through the various social conditions under which mankind naturally exists. Physical evils include sickness and some forms of disease, accident, death, poverty, and oppression. Others are mental suffering, such as anxiety, disappointment and remorse, as well as the limitation of intelligence which prevents human beings from attaining to the full comprehension of their environment.

Moral evils are the deviation of the human will from what is right, and the action which result from that deviation. In other word, moral evils result from human ill will.

Natural evil is the limitation by one another of various component parts of the natural world, and the is manifested in purely natural disasters.

Evil can also be categorized according to its genesis or source; and this regard, evil may be viewed as self-inflicted, foundation, demonic, societal, or purely natural.

## **SELF-INFLICTED EVIL**

Evil is self-inflicted when the victim is suffering the consequences of what he did or failed to do. Disobedience to God's law is inevitably followed by a harvest of evil. Disobedience manifest itself in sins and wrongs, which usually are acts of commission or omission. It always come with evil consequences. Considerable sections of the contain curse and threats of horrifying punishment for various acts of disobediences to God. Equally prominent are account of how God effected those curses and punished his people when they disobeyed. There are a host of personal sins, to many to enumerate here, that people commit and reap dreadful consequences. We cannot fail to mention the case of exposing oneself to demonic influence, attacks oppression or even possession through seeking favours or assistance from agents of the devil. no can obtain any gift from the devil and not pay a heavy and dreadful price for it.

Among self- inflicted evils also those that result from error of judgment, wrong decision negligence, lack of planning, carelessness especially about one health and safety impatience and lack of endurance in making success, lack of foresight, and so forth. We reap whatever we sow (Gal 6:7-8) and the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23).

## **EVIL FROM FAULTY FOUNDATIONS**

The spiritual foundation of a person is primarily the family setting, which includes his lineage and ancestral roots. The spiritual disposition of one's lineage and roots has tremendous consequences for one's bound to suffer greatly in life for no fault of his.

Faulty foundation includes generations of ancestors that practiced idolatry, household or community dedicated to idols, inherited covenants, curses and yokes. All kind of tragedies follow individuals with faulty foundations.

## **EVIL FROM THE SOCIETY**

The society, acting through national government, organizations, and agencies, is directly responsible for much of the evil in the world. It encourages the pollution or destruction of the environment, wasting or depletion of natural resource, and unfair distribution of the earth's resources. Consequently, it creates the condition for poverty, exploitation of weaker nation, precipitating wars and genocide, corruption and mismanagement, sexual immorality, greed and individualism, collapse of moral values, drugs and alcoholism, failed institutions, family breakdown, destruction of marriage, abortion and culture of death cyber-crimes, violent crimes, terrorism, social tension, and so forth.

It must be emphasized that it is actually individuals that make up the society. The sins and wrongdoings of individuals add up to the magnitude of the evil in society. It is individual who plot evil against you. It is individual who carry out the crimes that have become the daily experience of mankind in the world today.

## **EVIL FROM DEMONIC FORCES**

Satan is the arch-enemy of the children of God. Having lost the kingdom of God, he has turned his back forever planning evil. Satan, also referred to in the bible as the dragon, the old serpent, and the devil, is said to be roaming about like a lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8).

With all the principalities, powers ruler of darkness and all other evil forces in his service, Satan can manipulate various, socio- economic and political factors in order to control the world and make life miserable for man on earth. These are kingdoms and territories with a hierarchy of demons in charge. There are covens, occult groups, strongholds, fortresses and evil alters. These are the forces against which we have to wrestle.

The forces of darkness operate in many ways and trap people by various means. These could be grouped into broad categories, including manipulation, temptations and trails, occultism, spiritualism, magic, witchcraft and traditional religious beliefs and practices. It is a well-known fact that forces of darkness are responsible for a lot of calamities and tragedies that have become our daily experience. Still more serious but unknown to many people is the extent of their control of people by manipulating their

Propensities; lust, anger, greed, vanity, worldliness;

Emotions and vices; fear, envy, pride, bitterness, resentment, unforgiveness;

Thoughts;

Use of tongue

Fashion and vanity

Religion; explosion of religion and sects, false religion heresies, and irreligion.

## **THEY ALSO TRAP PEOPLE IN**

Lawlessness and violence

Sexual perversion and immorality; fornication, adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, oral sex, masturbation, pornography, nudism, indecent play, immodest or seductive dressing, and other sex related indecent actions.

Rejection of womanhood, marriage, and motherhood.

Contraception and abortion.

Addiction to tobacco, drugs and alcohol, and other addictive things.

Enticements and promise of success, status, popularity, wealth, power, security, healing, children and other material advantages.

Promotion of obscene and perversion-inducing music and dance.

## **THERE ARE LEVELS OF DEMONIC ATTACK**

The first one is demonic opposition, which is to be attacked from all sides by ordinary temptations and trials. This is commonly faced by those who live holy lives.

The second level is demonic oppression, in which an illness be it spiritual relating to one's faith emotional relating to the mind or emotions, or physical relating to one's health and body become a weakness causing an individual to sin frequently. Very often, this becomes an entry point for the devil to occupy part of that person's faculty. This is most apparent in addition to alcohol, drugs, gambling, masturbation, and so on.

The third level is demonic possession. At this level, the human body and its faculties are taken over by the evil spirit. The extreme dimension is that the person's body soul and spirit are taken over by the devil cases of this are rare.

## **METAPHYSICAL ORDER**

Purely natural disasters are part of life. Every now and then, an area in the world is hit by devastating flood, rain storm, hurricane, cyclone, mudslide and landslide, earthquake, volcanic eruption, heat wave, and other tragedies over which man does not seem to have any control. Against such we can only pray ask God to show mercy to us. Good governance could be helpful in mitigating the effects of such disaster.

## **DEALING WITH EVIL**

Our attitude to evil and how we deal with it depends to a large extent on the source or the root cause of it. We should try to go by the sources of evil that we have identified and see what kind of approach we can adopt.

## **DEALING WITH SELF- INFLICTED EVIL**

The most disastrous evil is that which is rooted in self, because of its serious implication for eternal life. Not many people seem to be fully conscious of the fact since most people put in more efforts in fighting against the devil and external evil. The bible tell us that heart/mind is desperately wicked (Jer 17:9) from the heart/mind come evil intentions and kind of atrocities. (Mt 15: 19-20).

The remedy for the evil in oneself is repentance and conversion. Our lord Jesus Christ warns, unless you repent, you will perish. (Lk 13:3) repentance should not aim at turning away from the big or mortal sins, which St Paul says should not even be mentioned among believer, but also from the little inconspicuous sins that clings so easily.

The heart/mind must be renewed by the a renewed by a spiritual revolution (Eph 4;23). Repentance and conversion should be followed and sustained by the outpouring of the holy spirit, leading to

transformation and a new life of freedom from the reign of sin and death. The fruits of the holy spirit (love, joy peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control) become the compass and support for this new life and a safeguard against both physical and moral evil.

For demonic influence, attacks, oppression or possession, deliverance prayer is necessary. Jesus Christ has given us the authority and power to cast out devil (Mk 16:17) and to trample upon the power of evil (Lk . 10: 19) while the individual may pray to free himself from demonic influence, he will certainly need the prayer ministrations of competent people for serious demonic problems.

## **DEALING WITH FAULTY FOUNDATION**

Faulty foundation can be repaired through;

### **INDIVIDUAL DELIVERANCE AND HEALING**

An individual can submit himself for a deliverance and healing ministrations for himself and his family roots. The purpose is to break covenants curses, yokes, and the consequent calamities coming down from the past generations.

### **FAMILY DELIVERANCE AND HEALING**

The entire family takes part in the deliverances and healing ministrations of the family roots. At least the key ministrations will free must accept that is a problem and agree to have the ministrations. The ministrations will free the family from inherited covenant, curses and yokes.

### **COMMUNITY DELIVERANCE AND HEALING**

Ministrations can be organized for an entire community. It may be more difficult to organize because of the need for extensive consultation and difficulty in securing consensus. Nevertheless, it is necessary in a culture that has no depth of Christianity.

## **DEALING WITH THE WORLD AND ENVIRONMENT**

A fundamental approach to dealing with evil in society is to refuse to be part of it. How can someone complain or fight against the evil in society when is contributing to it or benefiting from the iniquities out there. Can somebody who benefits from corruption, for instance, fight against it, the bible warns us, do not be conformed to the standards of this world (Rom 12: 2).

As already pointed out, the society is made up of individuals whose atrocities add up to the overwhelming evils in the society. Whatever actions that can be directed at individual convert them from the path of iniquity must be taken seriously. Such actions include; evangelization, Christian education, civic education, counseling, social rehabilitation, youth programs, and so forth.

Another approach is better and more effective policing and strict enforcement of the law. The inclination to commit crime is minimized where policing is effective and no one can get away with breaking the law.

Good governance and access to basic means of livelihood also tend to reduce crime rate.

Social action and pressure groups can play a vital role in combating evil in society. They include justice and peace initiatives, pro-life efforts, parent-teacher associations, landlord and residents association, writing as a columnist in the newspaper, and voting honest and righteous people into positions of authority. Christians are expected more than ever before to stand up for justice. God strongly condemns oppression and injustice (Is. 58:6-11).

Successful parenting and successful youth: If every Christian home can bring up Godly children, the evil in society every will be reduced perhaps by more than half. Here we are talking of successful parenting producing successful youth.

**Prayer:** We should not under-rate the extent to which the forces of darkness are influencing society. We are told that the God of this world has blinded the unbelievers (2 Cor.4:4) and that the world is in fact under the control of the devil (1 Jn. 5:19).

## **DEALING WITH THE FORCES OF DARKNESS**

A major thrust of evangelization today should be to free people, institutions, places and territories of demonic control and manipulation. The people of God are well equipped for this mission. They have been set over kingdoms and nations with authority to pluck up and pull down, to destroy and overthrow, and to build and plant (Jer. 1:10); to trample upon scorpions and serpents and the whole power of the enemy (Ps.91:13; Lk. 10:19).

They are to put on the full armour of God (Eph. 6:11) and use weapons that are not carnal but having divine power to destroy strongholds, destroy arguments and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God (2 Cor.10:4).

Deliverance ministration and, in some case, exorcism are required for individuals, to rescue them from the kingdom of darkness as well as for institutions, places and territories.

## **THE TRIALS OF THE JUST MAN**

Evil is a reality in our human existence and it is inevitable. Jesus Christ acknowledged that there will always be evil in the world. He called his generation a wicked one (Lk.11:29); warned us that, in the world we will have trials (Jn. 16:33) and not to fear those who can only kill the body but cannot kill the soul (Mt10:28). St James even exhorts us to consider it nothing but joy when we face trials, since it is a test of our faith which produces endurance, which in turn makes us mature and complete (Jas.1:2-4).

St Peter equally makes this point in telling us to count to count a blessing if we have to suffer for what is right (1 Pet. 3:14). St Paul was content with weakness, insult, hardships, persecution, and calamities for the sake of Christ. He found strength in weakness (2 Cor. 12:10). In Romans, he says, 'we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us' (Rom.5:3-5).

What they are all saying is that we should not expect evils to disappear from our human existence; but rather, we are to accept the fact that trials and tribulation normally bring the best out of the children of God who bring the right attitudes into them. Besides, every one of us probably has at least

one testimony of how God used a problem to save us from a much greater disaster. That is why the Bible assures us that all things work together for good to them love God (Rom.5:3-5).

This should moderate our attitude to those who create problems for us. The instruction of our Lord Jesus is that we should not even resist evil (obviously by violent means). He says, "Love you enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on one cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt" (Lk. 6:27-29).

This message is re-echoed in Rom.12:14 and in 1 pet. 3:9. St Paul cautions us not to be overcome by evil but conquer evil with good (Rom. 12:21). St Peter admonishes those who are suffering according to the will of GOD to entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while they continue to do good (1 pet. 4:19).

## **THE OFFICIAL STAND OF THE CHURCH**

Throughout history, the church has carried out the mandate which Christ has entrusted to her, through the specific ministry of exorcism and the general ministry of deliverance. These ministries are a presumed dimension of our faith because the redemptive work of Jesus would not make sense without the reality of the devil. Throughout his ministry, Jesus himself often cast out demons. On 26<sup>th</sup> January 1999, congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments presented the New Rite for Exorcisms of the Roman Ritual, which is currently in use.

Although the church has a ministry of exorcism and deliverance, it is, however, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal that has increased the awareness of the existence and influence of satanic forces in our time. A Catholic Charismatic group usually has a healing ministry which also deals with cases of deliverance. Exorcism is required only for cases of demonic possession. Solemn exorcisms, according to the law of the Church, can be exercised only by an ordained priest, (or a higher prelate) and only by the authority of the local bishop. When a case is suspected to be one of demonic possession, the bishop appoints a holy priest to carry out the exorcism. The priest then goes into prayer and fasting to strengthen his faith while the case is properly investigated. Once the case is determined to be one of demonic possession, the rite of exorcism takes place. Evidently, the church is rising up to the challenge of combating the forces of the evil and the urgent need of freeing people from satanic attacks. The Telegraph of Tuesday 25 March, 2014 reported that dioceses across Italy, as well as in countries such as Spain, are increasing the number of priests schooled in administering the rite of exorcism, to rid people of possession by the devil. The step is a response to the rise in demonic cases as more people dabble into practices such as black magic, paganism, satanic rites, Ouija boards, often exploring the dark arts with the help of information readily found on the internet. The increase in the number of priests being trained to tackle the phenomenon is also an effort by the Church to side-line unauthorized, self-proclaimed exorcists, and its tacit recognition that belief in Satan, once regarded by Catholic progressives as an embarrassment, is still very much alive. The publication showed the picture of Pope Francis praying over a young person in May 2013 in what was reported as exorcism.

For deliverance ministrations, there is no special qualification other than being a mature Christian. However, to avoid abuses, it is highly recommended that deliverance ministrations be done or led by

mature and spirit-filled Christians. Deliverance is not a showman business. The following steps must be followed.

- Discernment and preparation before the actual prayer for deliverance;
- Careful observation of signs or symptoms and especially through the inner prompting of the Holy Spirit (since we are dealing with spiritual matters);
- To know accurately the areas of a person's life being controlled;
- To know the sources or root causes and entry points of a particular demonic influence;
- To know whether we are dealing with some sort of occult control or ancestral influence;
- To know if there are some connections with any questionable new religious movement(s);
- To know whether a person needs medical or psychiatric care rather than deliverance;
- To find out the root cause of emotional disturbances which often open a person to demonic disturbances and the need for inner healing.

For the actual ministration, the following (and sometimes all of them) are required:

- Repentance;
- Sacrament of reconciliation;
- Privacy and suitable environment for the ministration;
- The actual prayer of deliverance may be both imprecatory (binding and casting out) and intercessory, and with prayer of praise and of praying in tongues;
- Use of the sacramental;
- On-going discernment to know whether the person has been successfully delivered and to evaluate the reasons for any failure, in order to know how to proceed later on;
- Follow-up to help the one delivered to close the door of his soul to the enemy, and to open up to the Holy Spirit.

## **CONCLUSION**

The presence of evil in the world is an unquestionable reality. It is in our duty as Christians to be equipped to deal with all forms of evil as best as we can and to submit totally to the will of GOD and to his directives in the case of those evils beyond our reach or influence.

In dealing with evil in whatever form, whether moral or demonic, the first point of examination is our lives and Christians. As earlier stated, a life of sin or unrighteousness will lead to a sinful individual who will help in perpetuating an evil society. And also a sinful life will easily open the way for demonic oppression and possession. Therefore, in dealing with evil, we need to successfully eliminate the evil within ourselves; we need to 'remove the log in our eyes' to be able to adequately effect changes in our society, and to fight external demonic or satanic phenomena. This is done by a careful examination of everything we do, steps we take every day, every spoken word of ours, and eliminate every appearance of evil in our lives. By successfully doing this, the war against evil is won.