

An Affluent Executive

Acts 19:18-20

Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed what they had done. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

This story happened in the United States, so we know these demonic activities and spiritual oppressions happen here as well. I was pastoring in New Jersey in a middle class American town. It was an upper middle class neighborhood with people living in a nice community. My neighboring pastor called me one day to ask me to visit a man of his church who believed his house was haunted. He said, "Dick, I need you to come over. You've been in Brazil, you know about witchcraft and haunted houses and all that stuff. I've got a guy in my church who thinks his house is haunted." He went on to tell me that the man's son had been sick. They had been to every doctor and nothing could make the boy better. He also said they had been hearing noises and seeing things in the house, like someone walking around at night. The man was terrified that it was a ghost. So, this pastor wanted me to come over to convince his parishioner that his house wasn't haunted. I paused for a moment for effect. Then I said, "Well, Dennis, I'll come over, but I'm not going to convince him that his house isn't haunted, because HIS HOUSE IS HAUNTED!"

I went on to explain that if they were seeing things in the dark and hearing noises of people walking through the house at night it is always because somebody had dabbled in the occult. They have been involved with witchcraft in some shape or form.

Dennis assured me this was an upper middle class guy. He had a great job. He was highly educated. He was an executive in a big firm. He was a former Catholic. He was a new Christian. There was no way that he dabbled in the occult. I responded, "I'm just telling you what I know. Let me come over and talk with him."

That evening Dennis and I went over to his lovely home. We sat down and started to chat. I asked him to tell me a little about himself and his background. He told me about his son having tremors and night fears and was seeing things in the dark and hearing bumps in the night like footprints in the house. I just waited for him to finish the story.

“Let me ask you a question,” I said, “Have you or anyone in your family dabbled in the occult?” Then I explained what that meant. I identified things like horoscopes, Ouija boards, tarot cards, palm readers, fortune tellers, ESP, psychics and psychic healers and such. I went through a whole litany of things that are spiritual and occult and that God says are an abomination. I explained that they are gateways to demonic activity, and haunted houses are just a symptom of demonic activity.

You could see his face turn red with embarrassment as I spoke. Then the blood drained out of his face. I looked at Dennis and just raised my eyebrows. Even his wife noticed his discomfort and guilt and asked him what it was.

Then he told me his story. He explained, “My son has been sick for months. We have tried everything medically speaking and nothing worked. We've gone to church and they prayed for him and nothing happened. So, I saw this lady advertised in the newspaper. She's called the “*Mother of Saints*.” He continued to explain that he decided since nothing worked he was going to call her and see if there was anything she could do. She was based in Texas. He called and asked for her help. She told him there were some things she could do, but there was also something he would have to do in return. She began to send him amulets and items that were supposed to protect his house and family. They were pictures, chains, incantations, cloths, even crosses. He was to put them in strategic places around the house and bury some of them in the backyard. Still with all this his son was not getting better.

Finally, she said the curse on them must be strong. She wanted him to buy a Rolex watch. She specified the make and model number. She wanted him to buy one that cost more than \$5,000. She instructed him not to tell his wife or anyone else but keep it a secret. Once he bought the watch he was to send it to her by FedEx. She promised to take the watch and say certain prayers over it. Then she would turn back the hand of the clock and his son would be healed.

The man felt like a fool. He pleaded, “I didn't know it was wrong. She is a Catholic lady. She said prayers in Jesus' name. She used crosses and quoted the Bible. His wife looked at him when he admitted he bought a \$5,000 watch and yelled, “You did what? Are you out of your mind?” and they started to argue.

Dennis, the pastor, didn't know about any of this. He sat there dumbfounded. He whispered to me, “I can't believe this. This is a guy in my church dabbling in the occult and getting really deeply into it.”

I interrupted their heated argument. I said, “You know there is a solution. You need to repent and ask God's forgiveness. You did it in ignorance. You didn't

know that was wrong, but God says it's wrong. I opened the Scripture, showed him where it says it's wrong. I had him read it out loud from Deuteronomy 7:25-26. I told him he needed to take these things that belong to Satan and burn them so no one else could be entangled in them. After that we were going to walk through every room and claim the victory of Christ over his son, his family, and his house. They were broken and willing.

They walked around the rooms and started collecting things from Satan's kingdom. They had three bags full of all the paraphernalia from this lady. Then he said, pastor, there are things buried in the backyard. I don't know if I can ever find them. I assured him that it was good enough to burn what he could find. Later the Lord would show him where to find those other hidden things and he could burn them.

We spent that evening burning all those things and claiming the victory of Christ over his family. Then we walked through every room of the house claiming Psalm 91 and the protection of the Lord upon that household.

I got a call two weeks later and he said his son had been healed. His son was well for the first time in years. There were no more bumps in the night. There were no footsteps walking through the house and nobody was seeing any ghosts anymore. His house had been set free.

How were they set free? By the word of God and prayer! It's an amazing story. I hope that makes you feel the willies too because there are a lot of Christians who are carelessly dabbling in cultic things. They don't realize that the word of God gives us power over all the work of the enemy. If we repent and surrender those things to the Lord and obey His word, He will put a stop to the enemy's actions.

The rest of the story is that this man was so distraught and upset by being deceived that he got in touch with the FBI through a friend in Texas and made a formal complaint against the lady. The police had already accumulated other complaints against her so they raided her home and found hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of merchandise and cash she had deceived people into sending her. She was arrested and jailed. He received the Rolex watch in return. The Lord returned all that the devil had stolen!