

## Can Christians be influenced by evil spirits? Absolutely!!

It is commonly thought, today, that Satan and his evil spirits cannot influence Christians. This is a common misconception that results from bad preaching and teaching. Rather than rely upon our own opinions about the matter, we'll look to the Bible to see what God has to say.

1. **Satan can fill the heart of a Christian.** In Acts 5:1-5, Ananias and Sapphira pretended to be more spiritual than they really were. They deceived the church into believing that they had contributed the full amount of the sale of a possession. They lied to the Holy Ghost!! And it was Satan who filled their hearts to do it!! Fake spirituality is one of the key marks of a demon possessed Christian.
2. **Satan can corrupt the mind of a Christian.** In 2 Cor. 11:3, Paul told the Corinthians that Satan could corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ, in the same way that he beguiled Eve through his subtility. Beguile means "to lead or draw by deception." So, although Christians are led by the Spirit (Rom. 8:14), they can also be led by the devil. Subtle means "elusive, devious, wily" and "hard to distinguish." So, most Christians who are deceived by the devil don't even know it.
3. **Satan can take a Christian captive at his will.** In 2 Tim. 2:26, Paul explained to Timothy that the devil could capture and ensnare Christians as he pleased. Of course, Christians have a defense. You are supposed to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," (2 Tim. 2:15). The problem is that few Christians "study," they are not "workmen," they don't have a clue how to "rightly divide" the Bible and they have traded God's "truth" for a modern perversion. They are ensnared by the devil.
4. **Satan can speak audibly through preachers.** In Matt. 16:23, Jesus rebuked Peter for trying to talk him out of going to the cross. Jesus said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Peter's problem was that he savored the things of men and not the things of God. To savor means "to be agreeable." Many preachers today are agreeable with worldly practices in their churches. They attribute their success to God when, in fact, the devil is promoting their ministries. Truthfully, many so-called "preachers" are not even saved, they are the devil's men (2 Cor. 11:14-15).
5. **Satan can condemn preachers.** In 1 Tim. 3:6, Paul warned Timothy against "pride" in the pulpit, to keep preachers from

falling "into the condemnation of the devil." The devil's condemnation is oftentimes manifested in preaching that goes completely off track. The preacher leaves the gospel and begins preaching the Sermon on the Mount, world peace, heresies, sensuality – "Can you feel it", or some off shoot doctrines like tongues and healing. While God still heals, healing was never the central theme of his message. Jesus healed to get the Jews to believe his words (Jn. 5:36-47; 1 Cor. 1:22-23).

6. **Satan can ensnare preachers.** In 1 Tim. 3:7, Paul warned Timothy that preachers must maintain a "good report" publicly to keep from falling "into reproach and the snare of the devil." Many preachers today have made a mockery of this warning with their money and sex scandals, and the devil is all over them. Just look what the devil was waiting to do to Peter (Lk. 22:31).
7. **Satan can be used to destroy a Christian's flesh.** In 1 Cor. 5:5, Paul turned the fornicator over to "Satan for the destruction of the flesh." Satan didn't get his soul, which was God's. But he did have permission to work the guy's body over. Fortunately for this saint, he got right with God before the devil killed him (2 Cor. 2:1-10). Certainly, not all of the illnesses and problems with Christians' bodies are the direct result of satanic attack. But, many times a Christian can trace the problem in his life to sin.
8. **Satan can get an advantage over unforgiving Christians.** In 2 Cor. 2:11, Paul warned the Corinthians to forgive the man in 1 Cor 5, to keep from giving Satan an advantage over them. In Eph 4:30-32, Christians are instructed to forgive because God forgave us. If not, the Holy Spirit gets grieved and the devil gets the advantage. An unforgiving spirit is one of the marks of a demon possessed Christian.
9. **God gives Christians spiritual armor to withstand attacks from the devil.** In Eph. 6:10-18, you can find the "whole armour of God." Notice that four parts of this armor are directly tied to the words of God: the shield of faith (Rom 10:17), the girdle of truth (Jn. 17:17), the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17) and the gospel shoes (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Christians have no idea how scholars and book stores have weakened their armor with the proliferation of modern Bibles on the market today. This corrupting of scripture (2 Cor. 2:17) is the direct result of satanic work within the ranks of professing Christians.

"Can Christians be influenced by evil spirits?" is hardly the question. The question should be, "To what extent has the devil already infiltrated the lives and

pulpits of American Christians?" Gullible Christians have been led to believe that they are not under satanic influence, because they and their preachers are professing the name of Jesus Christ over everything they are involved in. Let me remind you that some of the first worshippers of Jesus Christ and some of the most vocal witnesses for Jesus were not Christians or disciples, at all. They were devils!! Read carefully Acts 16:16-18; Mk. 5:1-6; Mk. 1:34; Lk. 4:33-34; Jn. 6:70; Matt. 7:21-23.