

# Occultism: The House of Satan - Part 1

by Don Basham

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*Don Basham's sermon warns against the dangers of occult practices and emphasizes their incompatibility with the Christian faith.*

**Duration:** 29:32

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 18:9-19, Matthew 6:33, Mark 13:21-23, Acts 16:16-18

**Topics:** "Occultism"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker describes a meeting where evidential material was presented and questions were answered about heaven. Many people believed and confessed their deeds, and those who practiced occult arts brought their books together and burned them. The speaker suggests that this is an accurate picture of the state of Christianity in America and around the world, as Satan has infiltrated the ranks of God's people with demonic influences. The sermon also references biblical passages, such as Mark 13, where Jesus warns against false prophets and the signs and wonders they perform to deceive people.

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## Transcript

I want to begin by sharing an experience with you which happened to me a number of years ago. Ever since I can remember, I've been interested in the supernatural. I think some of us are born that way, and so I began to drag my wife around to all kinds of various strange little spiritualist church meetings, all kinds of little occult get-togethers where the fortune-tellers operated, where the mediums operated, and where people operated in the powers of darkness.

Now, I did not understand fully then that these were dark powers that were operating. Nevertheless, I became fascinated much more than my wife, and because she was obedient, she went along with me. But we made the acquaintance of a house group.

Now, I'll tell you, it was different from the house groups that we have today. This was a house group, was a house meeting of a spiritualist church, although the people professed to be Christians. And the leader of the group was a woman who was a spiritualist medium.

She was a trance medium. That is, she would go into a trance and then a spirit would take over from the other side, from the occult side or the spiritual world, and speak through her, utilizing her lips and voice to tell fortunes and to answer questions and this sort of thing. A strange and fascinating kind of experience, and it was valid in the sense that it was real.

This woman was not a charlatan. She operated in a brightly-lighted room, and she'd put a blindfold over her eyes. She would sit down behind a table, put a blindfold across her eyes, and encourage us to sing a Christian hymn or two.

We'd usually sing something like, I Come to the Garden Alone, and I would even play the piano for the hymn singing. And while we were doing this, she would go into a trance. She would lay her head on her arms, leaning forward against the table, and then after the singing was over, she would raise up her head and this voice would begin to speak through her, which purported to be the spirit of her dead sister, her sister who had died in childhood.

And then this sister, this spirit that at least was impersonating her sister, would greet us, and many times we would have written questions and put them on little slips of paper, or put them in a basket and set them before Dorothy, the woman who was the medium. And we saw all kinds of evidential things happen in those meetings. We attended them regularly for some weeks, and I became increasingly fascinated with what I saw because this woman, under the influence of this familiar spirit that was operating through her, could simply reach out and touch one of these folded sheets of paper and read the question off of it, tell who the question was from, read it, and then would proceed to answer it.

For example, if I would ask some question, put a piece of question on a piece of paper that would be folded and put in that basket, and she would turn the basket upside down and sort of shuffle around the papers on the table, and then she'd reach out and touch one. And then she would say, ah, I see this is from our young student minister, and this is what he's asking. And she would read that question through her fingertips, and then she would proceed to try and answer the question.

Well, I'll tell you, this kind of evidential material is fascinating. We saw many things happen that made me absolutely convinced that what was going on was supernatural. Yet at the same time, I was enough aware of scriptural truth to know that what I was doing was dangerous, or at least I suspected it was.

And yet I was so fascinated with the reality of this that I tried desperately to reconcile the psychic phenomena that I was experiencing with the reality of the Christian faith. I have to confess to you, I did that for a number of years in my own thinking. And some of you today are trying to do that.

You know about a number of the things that are taking place across this land in terms of spiritualism and fortune-telling and Ouija boards and Gene Dixon and Edgar Cayce and all of these other interesting supernatural philosophies, and some of you are desperately trying to reconcile the reality of these things with the reality of the Christian faith. And I hope you'll be convinced by the time we finish this afternoon that the two realms are mutually exclusive. They have nothing to do with one another any more than light has to do with darkness, or darkness has to do with light.

So I would pray to God, I'd say, God I feel a little uneasy about this, but this is so fascinating, and we keep going back to it, you see. And then, to my amazement, I discovered through the words or the messages that were coming through from this other side, through this woman, through this medium and through the spirit that was operating through her, that I had a particular kind of spirit guide. I found out we all had spirit guides, according to this demonic, spiritualistic kind of theology, that we all have invisible helpers from the other side, spirits of departed relatives and spirits of departed friends and so forth.

And oftentimes you'll find that, if you get involved in this, that those friends that are helping you will turn out to be famous people. I mean, that's what's said, that they're the spirits of famous departed people who are

trying to work back through the people in this life to contact the earth plain. This is all a part of Satan's attempt to ensnare you, egotistically, in the fact that you're going to be some mighty great person because the spirit of George Washington wants to work through you.

Well, this is one of the things that happened to me. I found out that, according to this to this weird theology, that there was a spirit guide whom they claimed a famous man who'd been seeking for years to have some clear channel through whom he could work, and he'd chosen me. And this was Dr. Samuel Johnson, the great English man of letters, the writer and philosopher, and oh, I was immensely flattered by the fact that this man, supposedly the spirit of this man, was wanting to use me.

And yet all the time I had these little alarm bells going off inside saying, watch out, Basham, you know this isn't scriptural. But I'll tell you, it was fascinating, and it flattered the ego. And I found out as this so-called spirit spoke through the medium, relating Dr. Johnson's message to me, he said, Dr. Johnson wanted to use me like this spirit was using her sister.

He wanted me to become a medium. He wanted me to begin to practice meditation and all this sort of thing. Again, I was flattered, but scared stiff, fortunately.

And so I went home and prayed about it, and I said, Lord, I want you to show me if this isn't you. And I knew deep down I was on dangerous territory, but I said, I want a sign from you. If this isn't from you and if it's dangerous, then we don't want to have anything to do with it, but we're asking you for a fleece.

Well, a couple of weeks later when we went to the meeting, and again these things were taking place, evidential material was being presented and questions were being answered, and the descriptions of heaven were being given about how it's a wonderful place, and everybody's all filled with sweetness and light, and there is no darkness over there. There is no such thing as hell or evil spirits, that everybody's just progressing from plane to plane. And it all sounds wonderful, you see, but it isn't scriptural.

But anyway, we were in one of those kind of sessions when all at once the medium, who still had the blindfold over her eyes and this voice was speaking through her, the medium suddenly began to experience some physical distress. She began to writhe and to twist on the chair, and she began to groan and moan, and suddenly she began to choke. And all at once this so-called spirit that was speaking through her said, there's interference from this side, I have to leave now, I'll come back in half an hour.

And suddenly the woman slumped forward and put her head on the table, and she came out of the trance choking. She got up and went into the kitchen, got a drink of water, cleared her throat, came back feeling some physical distress, and we were a little upset about what happened. But sure enough, thirty minutes later we agreed to have her go back into a trance.

We sang another hymn and she put the blindfold back on again, and this spirit spoke through her, this time in a whiny, complaining voice. And this is what it said. It said the interference on the other side, that it was being compelled to tell us this, the interference from the other side was from an evil spirit, the spirit of an evil man who had been in the parents of this woman and of her dead sister.

This evil spirit had been in the parent and the father who hated the children, and now this spirit was trying to interfere with what was going on. It broke into the meeting and was trying to take the life of the medium by inserting its fingers into her windpipe and choking her to death. And then the medium began to cry and to wail, and she collapsed on the table again, and that was the end of the trance.

It was also the end of our attendance at the seances, because God had given us the sign we sought. We realized how dangerous this sort of thing was, that for all of the talk of heaven and sweetness in life, here was an attempted murder taking place as a result of this kind of experience. And so that sort of thing shocked me into an awareness that there is a certain impassable gulf between the psychic and the spiritual.

And it wasn't until years later that I became aware of how clearly the scriptures teach against this. And finally, eventually, when I got into the deliverance ministry that I'm in now, I'd been in it for some months, when we got into a situation where a person identified a demon of spiritualism, and that racking thing got a hold of me, and I had it, you see. It rose up in me, and I had to be delivered as well.

I had to be delivered from a demon that I had picked up by going to those seances. Now, what I'm saying essentially is this, that everything in that whole psychic realm, psychic phenomena of every description--Ouija boards, hypnotism, spiritualism, seances, fortune-telling, palm reading, reincarnation--any kind of thing that offers you supernatural help or understanding while it ignores Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, while it ignores the blood of Christ or the cross, has tremendous elements of the demonic in it. And it wasn't until I got into this ministry of deliverance that this began to be apparent to me.

Now, I want to read a passage of scripture for you this afternoon which illustrates how this problem of interest in the psychic phenomena has plagued the Church through the centuries. It was present in the New Testament Church, and this scripture will indicate how, when the deliverance ministry appeared on the scene, this psychic business was revealed for what it was, and people repented and got out from under all that they had been in. This is in the nineteenth chapter of Acts.

If you have your Bibles, you turn with me. It begins with the tenth verse and continues down through the twentieth verse. This is Paul in Ephesus, and a revival breaks out under his preaching.

We'll begin with the tenth verse. And this continued by the space of two years, so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul, so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons.

And the diseases departed from them, and evil spirits went out of them. Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Theba, a Jew and chief of the priests, which did so.

And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus. And fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

Now get this, and many that believed came and confessed and showed their deeds. And many of them also which used curious arts brought all their books together and burned them before all men. And they counted the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

And so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." Now I would submit to you this afternoon that that is a very accurate picture of the state of much of Christianity in America today, and for that matter around the rest of the world. For Satan has systematically infiltrated the ranks of God's people with demonic

influences and evil spirits, and cunningly attracting people away into all of these kinds of occult practices and sciences, so that much of Christianity today is in bondage to the forces of the enemy. I agree with Brother Derek Prince, who shares his conviction that the greatest threat to America today is not communism, it's witchcraft.

And I tend to agree with him wholeheartedly. And we see, those of us who have gotten into this deliverance ministry and helping set people free from occult subjection and oppression and the torment of evil spirits, are continually amazed and astounded at how many times it becomes revealed that the torment began because people innocently began to investigate psychic phenomena. And the thing we need to be aware of, as we have never been aware before, is that this whole realm of supernatural experience that we call the psychic, or we call the occult, or mysticism, this whole realm of psychical or occult experience is demonic, and it is utterly and thoroughly and repeatedly and continually condemned by the teachings and scriptures.

God is unremitting, God is unrelenting in his attitude toward all of these things, which we have a very tolerant attitude toward. And I want to take some time and read scriptures, a number of scriptures, for you this afternoon. I have about fifty or sixty here.

Of course, because we're doing this on tape and because of time, I'm only going to read eight or ten, but I give them to you. But I'm just telling you that there are literally dozens of them all through the scriptures, and the total list that I have is by no means exhaustive. But you will find how God is unremitting in his utter condemnation of everything of a supernatural nature that does not come directly from him or through the Lord Jesus Christ.

And many of these practices that fascinate us, psychic practices, witchcraft and spiritualism and astrology and horoscopes and all of this, which we find as a part of our culture today and we tolerate. In fact, even show a morbid fascination for, are an abomination in the eyes of Almighty God. So I want to share with you a few of those scriptures now.

It begins back in the book of Exodus, the twenty-second chapter and the eighteenth verse. God says very bluntly, Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live. The punishment for one practicing witchcraft in the Old Testament was death.

And yet look how we tolerate it today. Books on all of the bookstands about it, and we put the famous witches on television programs and seek their advice and their counsel. And yet God in his attitude about it says, You will not suffer a witch to live.

There's another one in Leviticus, the twentieth chapter, verse six. And that soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits and after wizards to play the harlot after them, I will set even my face against that soul and will cut him off from among his people. Again, in the Old Testament, the punishment for one who sought after this kind of experience was banishment from the presence of God and from the people of God.

And notice what God calls it, one who seeks after familiar spirits and after wizards to play the harlot after them. This, in the eyes of God, is spiritual adultery. We've shared this before, but it's worth sharing again, that in the mind of God, regardless of what your attitude has been before, the Scriptures make it plain that in the mind of God it is just as evil and just as disobedient and just as deadly, in that sense, in the sight of God for a Christian or for a believer to practice any of these things.

Witchcraft or astrology or horoscopes or fortune-telling or any of these other fascinating things, it is just as evil in the sight of God for a Christian to do that as it is for a Christian to get involved in an adulterous affair with his neighbor's wife or husband. There is absolutely no difference in the eyes of God in one or the other, and while there are millions of Christians who are earnest and upright in their moral living insofar as their own personal lives are concerned and who would be indignant at the thought or aghast at the thought of getting involved in immorality, because it's so clearly forbidden in the Scriptures, and yet there are literally millions of Christians who feel that way about immorality, who feel perfectly free to buy the books of horoscopes and astrology, feel perfectly free to go to a seance, feel perfectly free to have their fortune told, and let me tell you, in the eyes of God, you're just as guilty as you are as if you've committed adultery. There is no difference in the sight of God.

Now, if this sounds stern, check it out in the word of God. I'll tell you, it made me begin to quake in my boots when I saw this in Scripture. It wasn't until after I got delivered from that demon of spiritualism that I began to submit myself to a study of the Scriptures about God's attitude toward the psyche.

Why? Because I'd dabbled in it. I'd been fascinated by it. I liked to have my intellect stimulated by the things that would happen, you see.

It's all very fascinating, and it's all very real. Don't you think for a minute that it's a fraud. Don't you dare to believe for a minute if one of your kids is playing with a Ouija board and he comes home or he comes into the room where you are and says, the Ouija board told me thus and so.

Don't you think it's a lie. It'll be true. The Ouija board can tell you when your grandmother died, even if you don't remember the date.

Ouija board's one of the most popular toys selling in America today, and people think it's harmless. It isn't. It's a deadly instrument in the hands of Satan, and yet there'll be millions of Christians buy them for their kids for Christmas presents.

You watch and see. Well, we're reading scriptures. Deuteronomy chapter 13, verses 1 to 5. If there arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and give thee a sign or wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass whereof he spoken to thee, saying, Let us go after other gods which thou hast not known, and let us serve them, thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet or dreamer of dreams.

For the Lord your God testeth you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul. You shall walk after the Lord your God and fear him, keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and cleave unto him. So that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God.

Now, how do they do that? Simply by offering you supernatural information and help while they ignore the true revelation of God in Jesus Christ. People say to me, Well, what's the matter with going to a fortune teller if he warns me of things that I should avoid, and I find out that what he said was true? Because you're seeking help from the wrong source, and by his interesting information that he passes on to you, you'll begin to become dependent upon it instead of upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and so you will be distracted away from the things of God. And it's for this very reason that the people who do those things are under the judgment of Almighty God.

Deuteronomy 18, verses 9-19. Promise of God, or the instructions of God concerning the children of Israel. When thou art come into the land which the Lord your God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through fire, or use divination, or an enchanter, or an observer of times, that's the astrology, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter of mediums, or a wizard, or a necromancer, one who communes with the dead. For all that do these things are an abomination to the Lord. Did you hear that? If you have ever sought supernatural help, as I did, supernatural experience or information, as I did, from some other source than God, in the mind of God when I was doing that, and in the mind of God when you are doing it, you are considered an abominable thing in the sight of Almighty God.

For all these who do these things are considered abominations in the sight of God. First Chronicles, chapter 10, verses 13-14. This happens to talk about what happened to Saul, King Saul in the Old Testament, who, because he disobeyed God, God withdrew his spirit from him, and he had repented of ever having made him king over Israel.

But Saul had become used to having supernatural help, so when he couldn't hear from God directly, or through the prophets, or through Samuel anymore, where did he go? He went to the witch at Endor. He sought supernatural help from the wrong realm, and because of it, God condemned him to death. This is what this scripture says, So Saul died for his transgression, which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of a medium to inquire of her, and inquired not of the Lord.

Therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom into David, the son of Jesse. And how did it happen? It happened that Saul, going to the witch at Endor, picked up a suicide demon, and then when he was wounded in battle, that suicide demon forced him to fall on his own sword to take his own life. And I'll tell you, I've dealt with people time and again who were troubled by suicidal tendencies, and in counseling with them, I found it happened time and again that the depression which first preceded the spiritual tendency toward suicide, the demonic tendency toward suicide, the depression which first came, came many, many a time right after they started playing with the horoscopes or going to a fortune teller or seeking help from a medium.

I was in New Zealand a few months ago and talking to a young minister who was a chaplain in a hospital in New Zealand, and he had talked to and witnessed two-in-one a woman who was in there for an attempt to commit suicide. She'd slashed her wrist, and he gained her confidence through the days of counseling and witnessed to her about Jesus Christ, led her to the Lord, and then proceeded to try to minister deliverance to her. And he asked her if she'd ever been involved in any of this kind of thing, because he knew enough about deliverance to know the dangers.

And she said, yes, about a year and a half ago, I started going to the fortune teller to get help. And then the minister asked her very gently, Sister, when did the depression and the suicidal tendencies first appear in your life? And she thought for a minute, and then her mouth fell open. She said, why, right after I started going to the medium, and after I started going to the fortune teller.

And the minister was able to counsel with her that there was where she'd picked up her spirit of suicide, and she was delivered. But what exposed her to it? Psychic phenomena, seeking help from the wrong source. Isaiah chapter 47, verses 9 through 14, God pronouncing judgment upon the children of Israel for

their disobedience, and what that judgment is going to be and why it's come upon them.

But these two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day, the loss of children and widowhood. They shall come upon thee in their perfection. Now, this is the reason for the judgment of God upon the children of Israel.

They shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness, thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee.

What wisdom and what knowledge that they picked up from supernatural psychic sources, and what did it do to the children of Israel? Put them into a spirit of perversion. And then God goes on to taunt through the prophet Isaiah, to taunt the children of Israel and to show them how they will not be able to escape this. He says, Stand thou with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, in which thou hast labored from thy youth.

If so be thou shall be able to profit, if so thou mayest prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee.

Behold, they shall be like stubble, the fire shall burn them, and they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame. So once again, God is unremitting in his judgment against these things and against people who practice them, and also states the inability of any person who's delving in this, really, to stave off the judgment of God. There are many in the New Testament, too.

We'll only mention one or two. Mark 13, Jesus warning against the very kind of things that are happening in our day, in the end times. This is a part of his description of things that are going to be happening in the last days.

Mark 13, verses 21-23, And then, if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ, or, Lo, he is there, believe him not. For false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and shall show signs and wonders to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take heed, behold, I have foretold you all these things.

And so Jesus, out of his own mouth, prophesied the day in which we live, in which there would be such a great abundance of this kind of phenomena taking place. All right, another example of God's dominion over this thing is found in the 16th chapter of Acts, verses 16 and 18, the story of Paul casting the spirit of divination out of a slave girl. And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, Luke says, a certain maid possessed with the spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying.

The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are servants of the Most High God, who show unto us the way of salvation. And this she did many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her.

And he came out the same hour. All right, you know what this woman had? A fortune-telling spirit, the spirit of divination. It's the same spirit that the Washington seeress Gene Dixon operates by, the spirit of divination.

And people all over the country admire that woman for her predictive ability. Now understand, I'm going to talk about her for a couple of minutes now, and I want this understood clearly. I do not criticize that woman

for her character or for her conscious religious beliefs.

That's not my place to judge. All I'm saying is that the spirit that operates out of her in terms of revelation is not the Holy Spirit, for a number of reasons. One is, those of you who have read the book *A Gift of Prophecy* about her ministry will recall that this ability that she has was discovered when her mother took her to a gypsy fortune-teller and had her palm read as a child.

And the gypsy fortune-teller said she'd be a great fortune-teller and gave her a crystal ball to operate through, and Gene Dixon can see things in that crystal ball, in the one she's had in the years that followed. And yet Mrs. Dixon believes that the power she's operating by is the Holy Spirit, that it is a gift of the Holy Spirit. That's why the book is called *A Gift of Prophecy*.

That's a travesty upon the spiritual gifts in the New Testament, to consider that kind of gift. It is not. Spiritual gifts that are talked about in the New Testament, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are gifts given to those whose lives have been submitted to Jesus Christ and who've entered into the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and they're gifts that have nothing to do with one's natural ability.

You are not born with them, neither are they revealed by gypsy fortune-tellers who read palms, and neither is it required that you have a crystal ball to make it work, and neither is it required to consult the astrological charts and to cast horoscopes in order to make the abilities work, something which Gene Dixon does. Now, again, let me make it plain. I'm not criticizing her character.

I'm criticizing the source of her information. This book, *A Gift of Prophecy*, although she claims this is a gift of the Holy Spirit, one of the major offices of the Holy Spirit in a Christian's life is to glorify and exalt the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said about his coming, "He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it unto you." And those of you who have received the baptism know how much more precious real Christ has come in your life as a result of the revelation of the Holy Spirit through the baptism.

And yet, although Mrs. Dixon claims that this is a gift of the Holy Spirit, in this book of hers, *A Gift of Prophecy*, written by Ruth Montgomery, this startling fact remains true, that in that book, from one end to the other, you will not find the name of Jesus once.

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