

EXPOSING

Witchcraft

in the

Church



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Author of Training for Reigning

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Foreword

by Paul Crouch,
Trinity Broadcasting Network

WITCHCRAFT IN THE CHURCH? HORRORS! Impossible! “How could it be?” you ask. As I read Rick Godwin’s new book, I began to see the insidious and subtle new ways that Satan uses even Spirit-filled Christians to destroy us and the church of Jesus Christ! Radical? Yes—but true! Some of those weird and far-out disturbances in our churches and in our private lives are really Satan’s covert and almost imperceptible tactics that render many churches and lives powerless, ultimately destroying them.

What does cause those infamous church splits anyway? Can the Jezebel spirit actually occupy a pew? How do we identify these spirits in time and then deal with them?

Ah, dear reader, we are at war and some precious saints are stumbling around aimlessly in shell shock instead of loading up their spiritual guns with Holy Ghost bullets and putting the enemy to flight!

This book is loaded with a whole new arsenal of spiritual and practical weapons that can change your life, your church, your home, and your marriage. The victory was won at calvary, but the war for possession of the kingdom rages on. Satan has been legally defeated, but he remains as an illegal squatter on much of what is ours by right. This book has new marching orders for us all. Let’s load up in Jesus’ name and dispossess the evil one’s illegal entry into our God-given victory!

—PAUL F. CROUCH, PRESIDENT
TRINITY BROADCASTING NETWORK

Preface

IN 1981, WHILE I WAS ON THE STAFF OF EVANGELIST James Robison, Pastor Jim Hylton of Lake Country Baptist Church conducted a staff Bible study for us on curses and the enemy obscuring the cross. Soon after that I heard Peter Lord give further insight into the subject. I had never heard such a concept before. It radically changed my life and empowered me to walk in an authority and dimension of Christ that I had not previously known.

Later, I heard Derek Prince teach on this subject. This continued to enlarge my understanding. I was sharing this truth with all my Baptist friends, and they also were being radically changed and impacted by it.

So this book is an expansion of all the truths sown into me by many different people and from my own discoveries as I've journeyed through life. My hope is that it will profoundly affect your life (as it did mine) and dramatically improve your effectiveness as a believer and your walk with Christ.

—*RICK GODWIN, PASTOR*
EAGLE'S NEST CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Introduction

- IN THE SOUTH, A PASTOR IS MURDERED BY A deranged member of a satanic cult. People in the community are startled by such an overt attack by someone so opposed to Christianity. Yet the news media brushed off the murder as a violent assault by a mentally disturbed if not misguided, individual.
- A once-thriving church in the Midwest slowly loses the momentum it once had, and people wonder why. After closer examination, a story emerges about a dynamic, young lady who led the women's ministry of the church. The ministry flourished, and the woman developed quite an effective prophetic ministry with a sizable share of devotees. Marriages were restored and people found their lives transformed by the power of Holy Spirit. In time, the woman began to question why the ministry was not given more exposure to the congregation.

Soon, gossip spread around the church: The young lady had “identified” spirits of control and jealousy in the senior pastor that needed to be dealt with. When the pastor challenged the lady, she pointed to his challenge as proof of his problem. Gossip, backbiting, and mistrust ran rampant throughout the congregation. People began to second-guess decisions made by the pastor and his elder board. The disagreement ended in a stalemate, and the woman left the church to start a women's ministry at another church. She left behind a congregation in the throes of division and cynicism.

- On the west coast a young, charismatic, Spirit-filled man was hired by a growing church to strengthen its evangelism and young-adult ministries. For the first few years, everything this associate pastor touched turned to gold—people were won to Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, and the young adults became a vital part of the ministry of the church. Many people told the associate pastor that he would make a great senior pastor. Listening to the accolades of those who admired him, he began to question openly the direction in which the senior pastor was leading the church.

When the senior pastor was forced to make the difficult decision not to pursue a building expansion project, the associate pastor informed the congregation that God brought him to that church to lead the people where the senior pastor would not and could not take them. He demanded that the senior pastor retire so that he could lead the church onward. When the demand was refused by the senior pastor, the associate resigned to start a new church, taking with him many of those whose affections he had already won. After the dust settled, a once-flourishing

church had evolved into two congregations—both battered, bruised, and depleted of spiritual strength and vision.

- A charismatic church developed a reputation as a graveyard for pastors. One pastor determined not to be another casualty. In his first board meeting, he discovered an elder who wanted to wield complete control of the church ministry. Believing that God had a plan that transcended the ideas of this shortsighted elder, the pastor made a stand. People were amazed at the pastor's courage, but they ran for cover, knowing that the eventual showdown could end in a congregational free-for-all. The majority of the congregation sided with the pastor but were afraid of the power-hungry elder. Slowly the congregation dwindled in size, as those in support of the pastor grew tired of the constant push and pull. Eventually, the only people left were those in support of the elder. The pastor resigned in defeat.
- A middle-aged, divorced woman found herself unable to make a commitment to a local church. Instead, she visited any church that offered something to anesthetize her wounds. Still hurting over the rejection she faced when her husband left her, she questioned whether her husband's affair and the demise of her marriage were the result of something she had done wrong. She had given up all hope that God would or could ever use her. She read her Bible and prayed every day in hopes that she could be good enough for God to love her.
- An older man experienced a wonderful life-transforming touch from God and gave his life to Christ. He moved in a flurry of activity, and people wondered where he found his energy. Although no one could question the extent of his involvement, there seemed to be a wall that separated the real man from the man that everyone saw. He never revealed the tremendous guilt he felt for the life he had lived before he knew Christ. Every day he repented to God for what he had done in the past, yet he never felt that his confessions were quite good enough. Sadly, he never let go of the past and failed to move on with his life because of the guilt and self-condemnation he heaped upon himself. He died a sad, unhappy man who never experienced the abundant life he so desperately sought.

As you read the vignettes above, you may have been reminded of similar stories you know about which have occurred in other churches. Perhaps your church is in the middle of such a struggle. Or you may be experiencing one of these struggles yourself.

Did you know that there is a common thread interwoven into each one of these stories? How can a church split be in any way similar to a person dealing with issues of guilt? What does manipulation have to do with a low self-image? Although these examples may seem to range from one end of the spectrum to the other, each one represents the presence of witchcraft.

Witchcraft? Doesn't witchcraft have to do with spells, incantations, crystals, and the New Age movement? Yes, but witchcraft includes so much more than what the naked eye can see or the human mind can envision.

In this book you will discover Satan's strategy for defeating the church through witchcraft. The tools of his trade may include overt or subtle means, but each tool is intended to bring defeat not only to the church as a whole but to every believer.

Scripture tells us that Satan is not only a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, but that he is also the father of lies, and the serpent that deceived Adam and Eve (see 1 Pet. 5:8; John 8:44; Gen. 3:13). Satan is a subtle manipulator, intent on rendering the church lifeless, powerless, and impotent.

Because he knows his eventual demise includes eternity in the lake of fire, he will do whatever it takes to prolong his influence in the world and on the church. Thousands, even millions of Christians go through life each day missing out on what God desires for them because they do not realize the subtle influence of witchcraft in their lives.

Countless books have been written regarding overt forms of witchcraft. Anything I would have to share about that would be treading over old territory. However, little has been written about Satan's covert operations in the church—the kind of behavior that may appear misguided but is as rooted in perversion as the most heinous of sins.

As you read this book you will discover:

- the subtle, and not so subtle, influences of witchcraft on the church, even upon many charismatic churches.
- the relationship between guilt, condemnation, and witchcraft.
- how to spot witchcraft.
- what the living and active Word of God has to say in response to witchcraft's influence.
- how to appropriate the victory of the cross over the influences of witchcraft.

In my study of God's Word, I have discovered that the cross is the only basis of God's provision for every need of the entire human race—period.

In Revelation 2, John admonished the church in Ephesus to remember from where they had fallen and to repent. As believers who walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, we should never forget what God has brought us out of and what He has accomplished through the blood of Jesus. All too often we forget the importance and the power resident in the blood of Jesus. The purpose of this book is to help you identify the influences of witchcraft in your life and to learn how to appropriate the power of the cross to overcome these influences.

May God bless you as you read, and may He give you eyes to see and ears to hear what the "Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 2:7, NKJV).

Part I

BEWITCHED, BE-WONDERED, AND BEWILDERED

One

THE ESSENCE OF WITCHCRAFT

WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO READ AFFECTS EVERY person you know, including you. Chances are you have dealt with it knowingly or unknowingly. When most people see the word *witchcraft*, they automatically expect to see its more obvious manifestations. Witchcraft can take on the appearance of overt manifestations, but it also can take on a much more subtle, more discreet demeanor.

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