

CHRISTIANS AND DEMON POSSESSION
ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST CHRISTIAN DEMONISM (a summary)

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I. Biblical

1. II Timothy 2:26

A. This does not mention demon possession; it is deduced

2. Luke 13:11–16

A. Daughter of Abraham — Jew, but not saved

B. Romans 11: 1ff — refers to physical seed

C. Pharisees said, “Our Father is Abraham,” and they were not saved

D. Rich man in torment said “Abraham is his Father”

3. Acts 5:3 “Why hath Satan filled thy heart”

A. Filled — *Pleroo* = fill, pervade with an influence, influence fully, possess fully

This word is used in John 16:6 “Full of sorrow”, Acts 2:28 “Filled with Joy”, and Romans 15:14 “Filled with knowledge”. When we are filled with sorrow, knowledge, or joy, it does not mean we are controlled by that emotion, but that we are influenced. I can be filled with happiness and still be in control. Also, if the word filled means absolute control, then how could a person be controlled by sorrow, joy, or knowledge and the Holy Spirit at the same time; and if it means control, and I’m controlled by joy, then I’ve sinned because I disobeyed Ephesians 5:18. It is logically inconsistent to say you have two supreme controllers.

B. Possession — *daimonizomai* = demon possessed

This is the term used throughout the gospels for demon possession. It means inhabited and controlled by a demon. They were controlled physically, verbally, emotionally, and spiritually.

This term appears 13 times in the gospels.

1. Demonized people were incapable of separating their own ideas from the demon, and they were controlled to the degree that the person’s identification merged to the point of being lost.
2. Neither Jesus nor the disciples talked to the possessed person but to the possessor. Peter placed responsibility on Ananias (Acts 5:3-5).
3. The word filled is never used in clear cases of demon possession. The word filled is not a synonym for control or possess

C. spirit or spirits, *pneuma*

1. When used of possession, it is clear the person is possessed; the passage speaks of casting out the spirit, and Christ or Apostles spoke to the spirit, not the person—a sign of being possessed (Mark 9:17-25).

2. Often, spirit has an adjective or a similar designation that clearly identifies it as a demon. The following designations can be found at least: (Gospels and Acts)
 - i. Unclean, twenty-five times
 - ii. Evil, three times
 - iii. Wicked, one time
 - iv. Divination, one time
 - v. Possessed with, one time
 3. None having a spirit demonstrate the possessed are believers or Christians
- D. There are only two persons in Scripture that are singled out as “the son of destruction,” which seems to indicate a special evilness, maybe even being embodied by Satan.
1. Judas and the Antichrist.
 - a. The phrase is translated as “the son of perdition¹” in John 17:12 and “the son of destruction” in 2 Thess 2:3.
 - b. Both are lost
- E. It does not say Satan filled Ananias, but that he filled his heart to lie
1. He is the father of lies and tempts all to lie (John 8:44).
 2. Jesus told Peter to get thee behind me Satan, but Peter was not indwelt by Satan (Matt. 16:23); Jesus knew who was behind Peter’s actions, as Peter did Ananias’s.
- F. Satan and God have the power to influence from without.
1. God
 - a. The Holy Spirit convicts the lost of sin, John 16:8
 - b. The Father and Son draw men to Jesus, John 6:44: 12:32
 - c. God controls everything, some from within and others from without.
 2. Satan
 - a. He influenced Adam and Eve from without (Gen 3).
 - b. He snatches the word from the heart (Matt. 13:19).
 - c. He’s the spirit that works in the children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2); all the lost people whom he works in are not possessed.
- G. Two ways to be influenced
1. By indwelling possession
 2. Obeying the dictates of a system, ruler or god
- We say he’s living or controlled by the world. We do not mean demon possession or that the world inhabits the person.
- H. Unclear passages are always to be interpreted in light of clear ones

¹ Hebrew idiom for one destined to perish

- I. The Bible does not give one clear example of a Christian being demon possessed; hence, to argue for Christian demonism is an argument from silence.
- J. Teaching of Christian demonism
 - 1. Minimizes Jesus' work on the cross
 - 2. Minimizes the influence of the sin nature
 - 3. Shifts responsibility to a demon rather than the Christian
 - 4. Minimizes the effectiveness of Jesus' prayer — Father keep them from the wicked one (John 17:15).
 - 5. The saved are the temple of the Holy Spirit. While we have a sin nature, all that we are has been taken care of at the cross, but Satan possessing a Christian defames that sacred temple with a hell-bound person.

II. Spiritual and Psychological

- 1. They say we are trichotomous and the Holy Spirit resides in the human spirit and the demon in the soul

Answer: The Bible never says the Holy Spirit just lives in one compartment, thus it's an argument with no basis.

Potential results:

- A. Mass exorcisms
- B. Christian Freudianism
- C. Child Abuse

IV. Experiential Argument

- 1. They say I've seen it; therefore, it must be true.

Two Options

- A. They are not actual Christians.
- B. They misdiagnosed the problem.