

January 8, 2012

“Then it, (the unclean spirit) goes, and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first” (Matthew 12: 45)*

The man, who swept the room, put everything in order and got rid of the unclean spirit, now has eight evil spirits within himself.

What then, is a person to do? Are we to give up, let the sin accumulate and take over our minds and spirits completely? No, for there is hope, *“where sin increased, grace (God’s unmerited favor toward us) abounded all the more” (Romans 5:20*)* God’s grace covers a multitude of sin!



We are encouraged, *“to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge that you may be filled up with all the fullness of God’.* (Ephesians 3:19*) We can be filled with the fullness of God! Through His love, no more dirty spare rooms. No more

vacuum for nature to abhor!

When God begins to clean our minds, let’s let Him be our permanent answer. Let’s let God replace all the repulsive things in our minds with the fullness of God! He alone knows just what we need to fill the empty room in our mind.

When we ask with sincere heart to clean our minds and spirit, God will help us!

Comments by Harry Bain

* (New American Standard Bible; i.e., NASB)*



Empty Room

“Finds it unoccupied, swept and put in order” (Matthew 12:44)*

The man stopped, letting the dust settle as he cleaned the spare room. He promised his wife that he would clean out the junk accumulated since the last time he took on the chore. Over the years, the family stored items intending to take care of them later, but they never got around to cleaning.

While sweeping the unpainted floor, swirls of dust filled the air as his broom disturbed them. He loaded the boxes on his truck to take to a collection center. As the man moved outside to get a breath of fresh air, his mind turned to the story Jesus told of a similar event.

The account begins with an unclean spirit who went out of a man. We are not told anything about the man or the kind of spirit involved. All we know is that the Holy Spirit was doing some house cleaning, and the unclean spirit was no longer welcome in that place!



*“Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places, seeking rest and does not find it” (Matthew 12: 43 *).*

The dislocated spirit went looking for a new place to live. The spirit looked at many places to live, but they were dry and without water. A new resting place for the spirit was not to be found.

Apparently, the unclean spirit had found fertile soil within the man, before it was evicted. Its former home must have had the welcome mat out to allow that kind of spirit to come in and find water to grow and flourish.



Isn't it strange how junk accumulates in our spare room, the one where we keep the door shut when any visitors are around? Oh sure, we intend to get around to clean it out, but life goes on, and we forget our commitment to clean the room.

Similarly, our minds have a way of harboring and nourishing thoughts that we might not be proud to disclose and explain to others. We might picture our minds as a house containing rooms.

Over here is the living room where visitors are welcome to use the fine furniture we spent so much time selecting. We spent many hours picking out just the right color for the walls to match the fabric in the sofa. The end tables are part of the set that exactly matches the coffee table. Of course, the love seat completes the set.

Just off to the right is our kitchen. We think back and remember how we saved money to buy the sparkling new counter-top. We made sure it was the latest pattern and matched the cabinets. Oh, yes, the cabinets! How long we discussed them! The appliances gleam as the new area lighting reflects on their smooth surface.

Just behind the kitchen is a closed door. We know that behind the door lurk the many items we keep hiding from view when friends or neighbors come to call.

The items in the spare room seem so out of place with the fine furniture we are proud to show any caller. Behind the door is the chair with the loose leg we intended to mend after Uncle Louie almost fell at the family reunion. Perhaps we hide the awful looking throw pillows that Aunt Susie sent last year. Over in the corner is an old stroller that we haven't used for years but never quite got around to put out for the charity truck. Hidden within the spare room are all the things we do not want the visitors to see.



This is the kind of room the man was sweeping as we opened our story. As he thought about the now homeless spirit, he remembered the scripture, "*Then it (the unclean spirit) says, 'I will return to my house from which I came', and when he comes, he finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order*" (Matthew 12: 44*).

There is a danger in clean empty rooms in our mind! Aristotle said, "Nature abhors a vacuum." It is said that nature requires every space to be filled with something, even if that something is colorless, odorless or formless to the eye. That description fits the deadly substance of carbon monoxide!

When God begins to clean up the sin within us, perhaps the idea of a do-it-yourself project comes to mind. Our best efforts to clean up the sin accumulated over the years may not work as we hoped. The attempts to get rid of dirty thoughts, bad attitudes and lustful desires on our own are doomed to failure, because the efforts only create a vacuum in our minds.

We can have a clean empty space in our mind that something is seeking to fill. That something is usually the evil all his demons trying to get entry into our spirits through our minds. God help us to be on the alert and aware of the age-old battle that rages for the mind of mankind!

As soon as we get rid of one of our bad habits, other, perhaps worse ones, move in!