

E X O R C I S M O F A P L A C E

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Twice in my ministry I have been asked to help people who were troubled by some kind of "presence" or feeling in their house. In one case it was a matter of a persistent sound associated with a strange atmosphere; in the other, noises were accompanied by moving of objects and a "cold spot". It is not the intention here to give case histories of these particular instances but a few observations will indicate the writer's general approach.

1. An atmosphere, good or bad, and felt to a greater or lesser degree, is common in a house. Cases where such an atmosphere is positively disturbing may be more common than we suppose.
2. It is unwise to assume that such disturbance is the work of evil spirits. It would be irresponsible to suggest to the occupants of a house that we were involved in a contest with the powers of darkness.
3. The fact of the matter is that we do not know what causes such disturbance. It may be that human emotions such as love and hate felt and expressed over a period of time leave some kind of residue in a place - an aura which can be picked up by later occupants (often children ?). If this is so then perhaps some day we will be able to quantify the forces which interact in this way.
4. When asked for help in such circumstances the Church should be prepared to act in a confident and reassuring way. There need be no feeling that this is an unnatural or questionable sphere of ministry. The bringing of peace to a place follows as naturally the preaching of the Kingdom as does a ministry of healing. Natural even if requested only twice in sixteen years.
5. Time must be taken to hear the people describe their experience in depth.
6. They will be told that rather than a battle with evil, the Church will offer a ministry of blessing and filling with the peace of Christ.
7. The minister will not act alone. He will be accompanied by others from the Church.
8. Some set form and order for the occasion is necessary. It provides the minister with a formula which will free him from subjectivism and help

and help him should he feel insecure in an unusual circumstance. It will also help the occupants of the house who are likely to be very keen that something be done and be seen to be done. In the following order, the command and the blessing said in each room are taken from "Exorcism" (Ed. Petitpierre. See bibliography).

9. Two cases do not constitute great experience nor do they provide an overwhelming dossier of evidence. Twice folk asked me for help and I gave it as I thought best. In both cases the disturbance stopped and the Occupants were at peace in their home. In the second instance a whole family was received into membership of the Church.

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F O R M O F E X O R C I S M O F A P L A C E

To be read together as preparation before setting out:

MARK 6: 6 - 13 JOHN 14 : 12 - 14

THERE BEING GATHERED IN THE PRINCIPAL ROOM OF THE HOUSE THE OCCUPANTS OF THE HOUSE, AT LEAST TWO CHURCH MEMBERS AND THE MINISTER, THE MINISTER SHALL SAY

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and
the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us pray.

Father God, we gather as the Church of Jesus Christ. Fulfil your promise to us that where two or three are gathered in Jesus' name, the risen Lord is in the midst.

We praise you Father, the Almighty creator who has made all things good, loving all that you have made.

We praise you, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, come to show us the Father; to suffer, die and rise again that evil might be conquered and creation set free.

We praise you, Holy Spirit of God, bringing to us the love and peace of the Father and the power of Christ's victory.

Let us make our confession.

We confess to God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, in the sight of the whole company of heaven, that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, through our own fault; wherefore we pray God to have mercy upon us.

LORD HAVE MERCY, CHRIST HAVE MERCY, LORD HAVE MERCY.

Almighty God have mercy upon you, forgive you your sins and deliver you from all evil, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness and bring you to everlasting life through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. AMEN.

THEN SHALL THE MINISTER READ FROM SCRIPTURE, INCLUDING A GOSPEL, IN SOME SUCH FASHION AS THE FOLLOWING:

The Apostle Paul says.....(Phil 2: 5 - 11)

Jesus says.....(John 14: 25 - 29)

Thanks be to God.

THEN SHALL THE MINISTER SAY

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we acknowledge our own powerlessness yet we rejoice that in Christ we can do all things by his strength.

Be strong to act as we claim our Lord's authority over all things and hold out our hands to take his promised gift of peace.

Come, Creator Spirit; protect and surround us with your power, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our Father who art in heaven
Hallowed be thy name
Thy kingdom come
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses as we
forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, the power
and the glory, for ever and ever. AMEN.

THE COMPANY SHALL MOVE TO EACH ROOM IN TURN. IN EACH, THE MINISTER SHALL DELIVER THE FOLLOWING FORMULA:

God, the Son of God, who by death destroyed death and overcame him who had the power of death, beat down Satan quickly.

+ MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS +

Deliver this room from all evil spirits; all vain imaginations, projections and phantasms and all deceits of the evil one; and bid them harm no one but depart to the place appointed them, there to remain for ever.

THE ROOM IS BLESSED

The blessing of God Almighty, + the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be upon this place and upon all here present now and always.AMEN.

ON RETURNING TO THE MAIN ROOM, THOSE LIVING IN THE HOUSE SHOULD BE BLESSED.

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"Exorcism. The findings of a commission convened by the Bishop of Exeter." Edited by Dom Robert Petitpierre OSB (SPCK,1972)

[illegible]

by

[Minister of Kirkmichael linked with Straiton(St Cuthbert's)]

Grant, O God, that as we honour the saints in prayer, pride and praise,
we may further struggle in our day to fight the battle of the Lord
 within ourselves,
 within the Church
 and within a world estranged from Him who walked alone before us,
even Jesus Christ our Saviour. AMEN.

Grant, O Father of mercies, that where human love has failed,
divine compassion restores and heals;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.