

Explanatory Notes:**THE FINGER OF GOD****(How to Get Rid of Evil Spirits)**

Theme: Only Jesus has the power to defend people from the power of demons.

Bible Verses: Luke 11:14-26, CEV

Introduction:

People have invented many ways to defend themselves from the power of evil spirits.

- Some people wear special bracelets and other jewelry.
- Some wear red material in their clothing.
- Some put statues of lions or dragons outside their homes to scare demons away.
- Some people chant special combinations of words in order to try to drive demons away.

Producers: You will need to decide if this message is an important one for your listeners, and whether the examples in the introduction are helpful for your listeners.

Sooner or later people discover that these methods can never free them from attacks by evil spirits. The evil spirits will just continue to bother them. But the Bible records that there was someone who could free people from the influence of evil spirits just by speaking. His name was Jesus.

1. A True Story About Jesus

Even Jesus' enemies recognized his power over evil spirits. They could not understand how he was able to do it. So they accused him of casting out demons by the prince of demons. Listen as I read to you this true story about Jesus from the Bible:

Jesus forced a demon out of a man who could not talk. And after the demon had gone out, the man started speaking, and the crowds were amazed. But some people said, "He forces out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons!"

Others wanted to put Jesus to the test. So they asked him to show them a sign from God. Jesus knew what

they were thinking, and he said:

A kingdom where people fight each other will end up in ruin. And a family that fights will break up. If Satan fights against himself, how can his kingdom last? Yet you say that I force out demons by the power of Beelzebub. If I use his power to force out demons, whose power do your own followers use to force them out? They are the ones who will judge you. But if I use God's power to force out demons, it proves that God's kingdom has already come to you.*

When a strong man arms himself and guards his home, everything he owns is safe. But if a stronger man comes and defeats him, he will carry off the weapons in which the strong man trusted. Then he will divide with others what he has taken.

If you are not on my side, you are against me. If you don't gather in the crop with me, you scatter it.

When an evil spirit leaves a person, it travels through the desert, looking for a place to rest. But when it doesn't find a place, it says, "I will go back to the home I left." When it gets there and finds the place clean and fixed up, it goes off and finds seven other evil spirits even worse than itself. They all come and make their home there, and that person ends up in worse shape than before.

Luke 11:14-26, CEV

***God's power:** The original Greek reads, "If I drive out demons by the finger of God." This is the reason for our choice of words for the title of the message.

2. What Do Jesus' Words Mean?

Jesus explains to his adversaries that he could not possibly cast out Satan by the power of Satan. That would not make sense—why would Satan fight against himself? And if Jesus casts demons out by Satan's power, then by what power do Jesus' opponents claim to cast out demons? How do they know they are not also casting demons out with Satan's power? "No," Jesus says, "I cast demons out by the finger (power) of God."

A. Jesus can overpower Satan because he is stronger than Satan. Satan may try to defend the things he has gained power over, but Jesus is stronger. He will overpower Satan and carry off all of Satan's

possessions. What are Satan's possessions? They are the people whom Satan has trapped in slavery to sin. Jesus came to free people from the devil. Jesus "disarmed the devil" (Hebrews 2:14) and rescues people from his power. He does this because he has God's power.

B. Jesus then says, "*If you are not on my side, you are against me. If you don't gather in the crop with me, you scatter it*" (Verse 23). In other words, **everyone must decide whether they follow Satan or Jesus.** Satan and Jesus are two rival kings. They both want to rule the world. We must choose which king to follow. We can't remain undecided. Either we are on Christ's side or we are against him.

C. **Either Jesus will live in our heart or demons will.** Jesus concludes with a story about an evil spirit who leaves a person, but then returns with more powerful demons. They make the person's life even worse than before. This is what happens to people if they remove evil spirits but do not ask Jesus into their hearts. Our heart (our soul, the invisible part of us) is like a house. Either Jesus will live in our heart or demons will.

If we remove an evil spirit from our life but we do not ask Jesus to live in our heart, we leave our hearts unoccupied. We clean and sweep our hearts but we don't fill it. The demon will see that our heart is empty, and he will return with more demonic friends. He will bring stronger friends with him because he doesn't want us to remove him like the first time.

D. If we remove an evil spirit from our hearts, **we should ask Jesus to come into our hearts and live there.** Jesus will make his home in our hearts, then no demon will ever be able to move into our hearts again. We will be free!

Conclusion:

If you are listening to this message right now and are suffering because of an evil spirit, I have good news for you. Jesus is stronger than any demon. He is the strong man who came to take away the power which demons use against you. He wants to free you from the powers of evil.

Will you turn to Jesus? Will you let him rescue you from darkness? Let me pray for you now.

[Please conclude with an appropriate prayer for the deliverance of your demon-possessed listeners and for their salvation]