

Not only that, but that great Victory and Sacrifice is expressed through the deliverance and healing ministries - Matthew says so!

(iii) Deliverance is a "Top" Gift

Many people who are searching for some scriptural weapon to use against a deliverance ministry are quick to refer to Jesus' rejection of certain leaders whom He never knew, in spite of their apparently mighty ministries performed in His Name (Matt. 7:19-23).

Even a quick look at Jesus' teaching in this passage will reveal that:

a) The Lord is NOT referring to CHRISTIAN ministries. They may use His Name but HE HAS NEVER KNOWN THEM. He is plainly referring to unregenerate men and women who have never given their lives to Him. No soundly converted Christian need be troubled by this passage.

b) The Lord is emphasising it is by our FRUIT and not our MINISTRIES that a CHRISTIAN LEADER should be assessed. He is saying that even if one sees precious and mighty gifts being used - the top gifts - such as prophecy, deliverance and miracles being exercised, this does not guarantee or necessarily mean that such a leader is one of the Lord's people. The only criteria are the FRUIT of Christ's character flowing from the new creature and new heart in the leader.

(iv) Deliverance is a Demonstration of God's Cleansing Power and the Kingdom of God

There is a very important incident in the Bible where the healing (literal - therapy) of a blind and dumb demoniac (demonised man - Matt. 12:22) triggers a severe clash with religious leaders especially sent down from Jerusalem to cut this young (and dangerous) Rabbi, Jesus, down to size (Mark 3:22).

I thank God for this incident and Jesus' response to his accusers. It produces some of the richest teaching about spiritual warfare in the whole of the Bible (Matt. 12), and we will certainly be looking at this again within the Christian Deliverance series of books¹. However one statement of the Lord's stands out above all the others. Jesus said,

1. Book 3 "Walking in Victory" Chap.8,2(ii).