

UEM Africa Region

Think Tank on Magic, Witchcraft, Demon Beliefs and Deliverance

Pastoral Guidelines

for a Deliverance Ministry in UEM Churches



1. Preparation

1.1 Preparation of the minister

1. Who can perform the deliverance ministry?

Clergy and lay Christians who have been acknowledged, trained, appointed and committed to this ministry are qualified to perform deliverance ministry. They should live a sanctified and prayerful life and have a strong commitment to God. To be ready for this ministry, such persons should trust in God, acknowledge the existence of demons or evil powers, and be capable of demonstrating faith and confidence that they are empowered and commissioned by God to liberate possessed and oppressed people in the name and blood of Jesus Christ.

2. Is deliverance ministry a gift, a calling, or a task?

For ordained ministers and lay people, it is a task (Mark 16:17; John 21:15ff); it is also a call from God for people to be committed to this important ministry (Mark 6:7). Though we believe in the priesthood of all believers, deliverance ministry as a professionalized intervention calls for specially trained and gifted people. The gift can be spontaneous, and/or experience based. It is a calling because it has been commissioned by God (Matthew 4:18-20)

3. What kind of actual experience is needed before one engages in deliverance ministry?

Basic theoretical training on deliverance and counseling, listening abilities, ability to analyse cause-effect relationships, discernment.

4. What kind of exposure should someone have before he or she engages in deliverance ministry?

The person should have been able to observe at least three deliverance sessions, being guided by mentor who is a pastor. Through these sessions, s/he will be exposed to the sufferings, tribulations and disparities of people to whom the ministry is to be extended. As a direct or indirect victim of evil attacks, we may commit ourselves to deliverance ministry.

5. What training is needed for those who plan to engage in the deliverance ministry?

They are to be trained to read and understand the Holy Scriptures, and to preach a contextual sermon based on it. They need to have a relationship to the Holy Spirit, and they need to be taught about repentance, prayer, fasting, the use of spiritual gifts, faith (Mk. 11:23-24), basic knowledge in counselling, psychiatric disorders, psychotherapy and spiritual warfare.

6. What kind of personal preparation is needed before one engages in a deliverance?

Spiritual preparation: A life of prayer, fasting, Bible reading, and proclamation of the word of God. We insist on a sanctified life because one may be called to conduct deliverance ministry without any time for preparation. Psychological preparation: Not to be afraid of demons

7. What attitudes are needed in someone who ministers deliverance?

First of all, an trustworthiness and an attitude of discretion are needed. Secondly, hospitality and the openness and availability to serve others are important. Furthermore, one should be a person of faith and assurance, free from fear, and confident in the Lord. To safely conduct the ministry, it is important to be humble and working for God's glory, and to allow God to be sovereign in the deliverance. Finally, one should keep an empathic distance to the client, have no judgemental attitude, and listen carefully.

8. Does fasting make us more powerful? How long should we fast?

Fasting is recommended for a healthy spiritual life. It can be done on a weekly basis. In case of special deliverance, more days of fasting can be recommended. Nevertheless, the success of deliverance comes from God and the sincere commitment of the minister (Mark 9:29; Matthew 17:21).

9. Does a minister of deliverance need a counselor?

Yes, because s/he is regularly exposed to stressful cases, and s/he can suffer from compassion fatigue and he may need some relief to let go the pain.

As far as association and institutions need chaplains, deliverance ministry needs supervision that prevents and heals the vulnerability and wounds of ministers involved in deliverance sessions. On top of the supervision, the support of family members frees the ministers from contagious trauma.

1.2 Preparation of the person to be prayed for

10. Gathering information about the problem

The person in need of deliverance should be prepared for the session. Through listening, the minister gives him/her opportunity to express him/herself. The minister should have time to listen and give the client enough time to express his/her suffering.

Preparation continues with the minister leading the client to Christ and putting emphasis on faith in Jesus who is the source of deliverance. Hope for deliverance should be oriented to Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The minister will draw the attention of the client to how God loves him/her. A good preparation of the client facilitates the success of the deliverance ministry.

In some cases, the minister may not have time to ask any questions from the client because the demons are already manifesting. Then prayer should immediately commence.

In some cases, the demons can be told to let the client come back to consciousness. Then you can go through the normal process of preparation.

11. Name the problem / Break the silence

The client should be assisted to identify the problem by creating a conducive environment for self expression. S/he has to be made aware that all information will be kept confidential. The client person should not be put under pressure.

12. Teaching about repentance and forgiveness

To bring the client to repent, we should start to talk to him/her about God's love and pardon. (Isaiah 43:25). If God forgives us for his own sake, how can we not repent to let our wrong-doings go and benefit from his grace? The grace of the Lord prepares a good future for people (Jeremiah 29: 11). Encourage the client to decide for change in his/her behaviour. The grace of God is not only to clean our past, but to empower us to be free from the bondage of sin (Psalm 103:11-12). Therefore, the client should believe strongly that s/he means a lot to God and s/he has been redeemed, and is not condemned anymore.

13. When should we send the client to a doctor/ psychologist?

When we make a diagnosis that the case is not demonic, we refer the person to a doctor or psychologist.

14. How can a diagnosis be made whether a problem is caused by demons or not?

We do not confine our prayers to demon cases. We pray for anybody who comes to us or is brought to us.

We may know whether problem is demonic or not through engaging in pastoral dialogue, and through observing the symptoms of the client.

If doctors cannot diagnose a problem, it does not necessarily mean that there is a demonic cause. Sometimes, a problem turns out to be related to demons during our prayers.

Even medical cases can proceed well if people are prayed for.

15. How to deal with the people of whom you know that they also go to see a witchdoctor or a Muslim cleric?

We start by an appreciation of their needs. We question the efficiency of traditional healers or Muslim clerics. We will tell him that healing comes from God (The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) and not from any other spiritual force. The Holy Spirit is the main Spirit force that can set someone free.

16. Do Christians need deliverance?

Christians need deliverance because they can be possessed, traumatised, and oppressed. (1 Cor 3:1-4; 5:1-2; John 13, 10).

17. If Muslims come for deliverance, do we pray for them without asking them to become Christians first?

Yes. We will pray for them like Christians.

18. What if a woman comes for prayers, and her husband objects?

Some say: We will meet the husband for an educative approach and ask the woman to be patient and understanding.

Others say: This is a matter of religious freedom of the woman. This cannot be negotiated with the husband. The wisdom of the minister is needed in any case.

2. The actual deliverance service

19. What are the steps of a deliverance liturgy?

We see three different settings:

- Deliverance during the Sunday service
- Deliverance ministry for groups
- Deliverance ministry for an individual

Deliverance ministry during the Sunday Service:

- I. The liturgy has to be followed, and any deliverance ministry can be done within the order of the service
- II. Deliverance ministry can especially be done after the announcements, in connection with intercession prayer, or at the end of the service.
- III. When to do it and how to improvise without disturbing the regular liturgical practices should depend on the context.
- IV. In the event that demons shout during the regular Sunday service, it is advised for ushers to take a possessed person to the pastor's office to be attended to as not to distract the service.

A liturgy for a group deliverance service:

Opening Prayer
 Praises and Worship
 Teaching /Counseling
 Glorification
 Confession/Repentance
 Intercession Prayer
 Deliverance prayer
 Aftercare/Counseling

A liturgy for an individual deliverance service:

An inviting atmosphere and a welcoming reception of the client
 Opening Prayer
 Listening to the problem
 Naming /identifying the problem
 Teaching/Counseling
 Confession /Repentance/(Renunciation if necessary.)
 Praising
 Prayer
 Casting out demons (if it is the case)
 Counseling and aftercare

Generally, in this question we can only give examples of the order, but the actual liturgy will depend on the situation.

20. What should be the style of our deliverance service? Should we touch people or not? Should we use symbols or not?

It can be done in either way (cf. Math 20:29, Mark 16:17 and Acts 16:18). Anointing with oil can be a symbol (cf. James 5:14, Mark 6:13). We can use symbols, but the power is only in the name of Jesus. Remember cultural sensitivities relating to gender, particularly when it comes to touching or holding. Involve nurses or doctors if necessary.

A demon can be rebuked without shouting or becoming hysterical.

Refer also to the point on symbols in the document on pastoral and theological foundations.

21. What do we do if someone blames another person to have bewitched him/herself, or if a demon says it was sent by someone? Do we send fire like some Pentecostals do?

We should teach the affected that they must not revenge (cf. Romans 12:17-21, Luke 9:51-56).

Encourage them to come to reconciliation.

It also needs the wisdom of the minister.

22. What do we do with information given to us by demons?

We should not pay much attention to what is said by the devil/demons because we need to stick to the word of God and listen to what the Holy Spirit is telling us. Demons are liars (cf. John 8:44) and can transform themselves into light (2Cor 11:14-15). But the final decision whether or not to listen should be left to the wisdom of the minister who will address each case in its own setting.

23. What if a demon refuses to come out even after many hours of prayer?

Pray without ceasing. (cf. Luke 18:1, 1Thes 5:17)

You need to continue counseling and teaching.

You can break the session.

You bind/lock the demons by prayer so that the ones inside will not go out and the ones from outside cannot come in.

You can also consult fellow ministers for help.

However, there might be circumstances in deliverance ministry where you find ancestral /family relating spirits. There, you must teach and counsel the client about the negative consequences of traditional ritual practices.

For example, you explain the difference between using animal sacrifices and God's ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ (cf. Hebrew 9:13-14).

24. Where do we send the demons?

To the Abyss (Luke 8:31).

25. How do we deal with a person who publicly confesses that he or she is a witch?

You deliver her/him and ask her/him for renunciation and submission of the witchcraft paraphernalia publicly (Acts 19:18-19).

26. What if people accuse each other of witchcraft and refuse to be reconciled?

Listen to them and try to confirm whether the accusations are true or not.

Whether the accusations are true or false, counsel the clients not to fear and to find protection under the mighty hand of God (1Pet 5:6), and to reconcile with each other. This needs time. Go

slowly; use the word of God and prayer. Teach people that they are ambassadors of reconciliation, and the Holy Spirit will do the rest.

Sometimes there is a need to involve secular authorities to protect people from attack.

In some cases, church discipline may be applied if people don't want to follow the way of the church.

Sometimes, reconciliation is not happening as we hoped it would.

27. How can we know whether witchcraft accusations are true?

This is often impossible to discern.

When the accused person confesses, then we can know.

There can be some empirical evidence, such as a person found hanging on someone else's roof, or someone being caught with the arm of a baby.

28. What if demons shout during deliverance and disturb people outside?

Command the demons to shut up and come out (cf. Mk.9:25).

Take the client to the church office.

The wisdom of the minister will decide.

29. What do you do if someone dies during the prayer?

History and context of the death will tell. If the church/minister forbade the client to go to the hospital, it is a problem. Deliverance needs to be done in conformity with the church order.

Counseling is needed for the relatives.

30. What if demons accuse or attack the minister?

Make sure that the setting for deliverance prayer is not public, because this will affect other church members.

It is also important for the minister to have a partner/counselor who is a pastor.

31. What if a pastor is demon-possessed?

The same applies as above (no. 30).

4. Aftercare

32. What shall we do for the client after the deliverance ministry?

After deliverance, a follow up of the client is needed. We suggest to do the following:

- I. If necessary, to take care of the basic needs of the client – like food and drinks – since some people who are delivered may be thirsty, hungry and tired after the deliverance ministry (cf. Luke 8:55).
- II. To provide pastoral care to people who came for the deliverance ministry due to fear of witchcraft so that they may get rid of their fear.
- III. To encourage the client to join prayer groups and attend Sunday services, prayer sessions and fellowships, if possible, in his/her respective church.
- IV. To communicate with the spiritual leader of the client in order for that spiritual leader to continue taking care of the delivered person.
- V. To encourage the delivered person to lead a life of prayer.
- VI. As a minister or prayer group to continue to pray for the client.

- VII. Since, after deliverance, some clients tend to continue seeking help from the minister who has prayed for them and for that matter become even dependent on the minister, the minister ought to teach and help the clients to be independent. It is necessary to encourage the client to take responsibility for his/her own life.
- VIII. The minister can give his/her contacts such as telephone numbers to the client, so that the client can contact the minister, when he/she wants to do so.
- IX. Every member of the group ought to keep the private matters of the clients confidential, even those which are publicly confessed.
- X. Where necessary, inform the family of the client so that they may help to take care of the client.

33. How to deal with the families and the village of someone who confessed (publicly) to be a witch?

- I. Normally, when a person confesses publicly that s/he is a witch, s/he repents. His/her repentance should therefore be taken seriously.
- II. Public confession of witchcraft may lead to shame and other kinds of psychological problems to close relatives of the confessor such as children and parents. The minister and prayer group should be aware of such situations and help to care pastorally for those who are affected.
- III. Dealing with witchcraft cases, interventions may be needed at private and public levels and it may take a long time to get rid of the damages (aftermath) caused by the confession. We therefore need to:
 - Pray for the client and conduct a series of counseling for him/her.
 - Accompany the client to work with feelings like shame and denial that may come after his/her repentance (we should not leave the client alone).
 - Encourage the client to take steps to reconcile with his/her family or community that might be affected by his/her confession.

On family and community level we need to:

 - Visit the family and accompany them to work with the feelings of shame etc.
 - Inform the family about his/her confession and deliverance and advise the family members not to keep on reminding the confessor about his/her past since s/he is now a new creature and the past has gone (2 Cor. 5:17).
 - Encourage social contacts and integration.
 - Where necessary, the minister should inform social authorities for the protection of the client.
- IV. There are cases where the counselors/ministers need more information and advice from other experienced ministers on how to deal with the matter. They should not hesitate to find them.

34. How to deal with someone who gets delivered, but comes back the next day with the same problem again?

Experience shows that there are people who, after being delivered from demons, are attacked again and again (Cf. Luke 11:24-26). Likewise, healing, sometimes, does not take place instantly. It may take a long time and sometimes, it may not take place at all. The minister should not be discouraged with that situation. In other words, healing can be gradual and God intervenes in his own time according to his will.

- After deliverance has been performed it is important for the delivered person to be committed in his/her faith in Jesus.

- Our responsibility as ministers is to pray again and again for the clients (1Thes. 5:17-18; cf. also the repeated interventions of Jesus for the blind, Mk. 8:22-26).
- To encourage all involved people to persevere in prayers.
- To engage other people to help in doing the intervention (Cf. Mk. 6:7). This includes also giving rooms to other ministers (where necessary from other churches) to help in carrying out the deliverance ministry (Luke 9:49-50).

5. Special questions

35. What if the symptom disappears from the client, but befalls the pastor?

The deliverance ministry may be accompanied by danger and bad consequences to the minister like catching the disease from the client.

- I. As ministers, we should be ready to take the cross in helping others.
- II. God's grace is always with us, even when sufferings befall us (Cf. 2 Cor. 4:7-12; 12: 7-10: "When I am weak, I am strong!")
- III. Catching the client's disease may help the pastor to know the extent of the client's problem, hence not to underestimate the challenge and the need of the client.
- IV. Going two by two (Mk. 6:7) may help even in this situation. A partner in ministry or a prayer group can help and support the affected minister by praying for and encouraging him.
- V. The minister should be aware of his/her abilities. Remember if one goes in a war, he/she should be aware of the strength of his/her enemy (cf. Luke 14:31).

36. What if somebody is helped neither by medical care nor by different prayer groups? How do we explain that?

- I. We should be aware that there are diseases which may not be cured.
- II. If medical science cannot help people, it is not because they don't believe or because they have sinned.
- III. Healing is the will of God. We have to wait for the answer from God.
- IV. Death can happen even during prayer time, and as ministers, we should know our limitations and that we have no any power against death. Death may also be an answer for the suffering people.
- V. Even at Gethsemane Jesus prayed so that death can be done away from him, but God did otherwise.
- VI. Our responsibility is to continue with praying and providing social support and pastoral care.

37. Can we refer our clients to other pastors for deliverance, if we feel unable to help them?

- I. Sometimes healing does not take place as we wish. This may depend on the fact that the minister has no healing gift. Thus, it is important to recognize and make use of the presence and dynamics of various gifts of the body of Christ (Cf. 1 Kor. 12:4-11, especially verse 9b about healing).
- II. Therefore, the minister should be ready to refer the client to another minister for more prayers and interventions - knowing that, according to the various gifts, our ministries differ.
- III. We need a multi-dimensional approach in deliverance ministry. Therefore, ministers should be ready to refer clients to other people who can help, for instance medical practitioners and herbalists. Herbalists as such are not witchdoctors.
- IV. Referring a client to other ministers does not mean a failure of competence of a minister. Nor does it mean that the minister is weak in faith. We should avoid working alone, remembering that Jesus sent his disciples two by two (Mk. 6:7). Fellowship and unity are our strength.

38. Can all demon-possessed people be healed?

- I. In the eyes of God, “Yes”, but our experience as human ministers says “No”!
- II. God can heal even the diseases which in our eyes are incurable because for God everything is possible (Mk.10:27).
- III. It should be noted that the healing power is not at our disposal. Rather it is God’s power and work that perform healing miracles. That is why we should approach all cases with confident prayers believing that God’s power is unlimited and can bring healing.

39. How do we deal with incidences of people just falling down?

- I. Falling down of people happens because of different reasons like:
 - Dizziness
 - Sleeplessness for a long time
 - Tiredness
 - Long services
 - Lack of fresh air
 - Lack of food
 - Emotional problems - internal anger and unsolved problems etc.
 - People may also fall under the power of God.
- II. Falling is not necessarily caused by demons. And we should be careful not to demonize every case of falling. The question is how to deal with such cases: The intervention depends on the situation. We are advised:
 - To apply all first aid methods available to help those who fall down such as giving them some water, fresh air, bringing them outside etc.
 - To call a nurse or medical doctor if necessary.
 - To pray for them.
 - To engage the prayer group to support them.
 - In the case of falling under the power of God, to make sure that the person rests comfortably.

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