

THE BIBLE'S VIEW OF SPIRITISTIC PRACTICES

Note to the speaker:

Keep the Scriptural viewpoint of this subject before the audience, recognizing that it is Bible truth that attracts honesthearted ones to Jehovah. Please do not elaborate on specific spiritistic practices. Also, use only experiences that have been published in the Society's literature

THE PRACTICE OF SPIRITISM IS WIDESPREAD (3 min.)

Spiritism involves getting in touch with unseen spirits

Practice of spiritism takes on many different forms

Includes divination, astrology, hypnotism, witchcraft, voodooism, Ouija boards, palmistry, fortune-telling, séances and other forms of supposed communication with the dead (*sp* 21; *sh* 91; *pe* 95-6)

Many believe that a spirit part of humans survives death and can communicate with the living (*sp* 2-3; *rs* 384)

Worldwide there is growing interest in spiritism

Book *Occult Shock and Psychic Forces* comments: "A wide variety of commentators seem to feel we are in a time of unprecedented occult revival" (*w87* 9/1 3)

Politicians, religious leaders, and other prominent people often dabble in spiritism

Condoned and practiced by many in Christendom (*w87* 9/1 3-4)

What is the origin of spiritism? Is it good or harmful? What is the Bible's view of spiritistic practices?

LOOKING BEHIND COMMUNICATION WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD (12 min.)

Bible reveals communication with invisible realm not new

The first man and woman communicated with Creator (Ge 3:8-13)

They did not talk to dead humans but to God who had offered prospect of everlasting life in Paradise (Ge 2:15-17)

Noah was given instructions concerning the Flood (Ge 6:13-22)

Abraham received communication that led to blessings (Ge 12:1-4)

However, not all contact with the spirit world has been beneficial

An evil spirit used serpent to mislead Adam and Eve (Ge 3:1-5)

Rebellious angels in Noah's day misled humans and promoted violence and sexual immorality (Ge 6:1, 2, 11; Jude 6)

In Jesus' day, a man under power of an unclean spirit was miserable and afflicted himself physically (Mr 5:2, 5)

Many involved with spirit world today suffer horrible consequences

Physical and mental torment are common; sexual immorality and even murder not unusual among practitioners of spiritism (*sp* 12, 22)

Spiritistic practices in world around us are not from God

Bible shows that Satan and demons are unseen promoters of spiritism

Satan is the misleading "original serpent" of Eden (Re 12:9)

Acts 16:16-19 reveals "demon of divination," showing demonic backing of "the art of prediction"

Their intent is always to turn people away from Jehovah (De 13:1-5)

Satan lied about never dying; when Adam and Eve died, he promoted the lie that man has immortal soul

Concept of immortal soul and communication with dead can be traced back to ancient Babylon (*sh* 41, 52-3)

Down through centuries Satan's lie has been embellished

Result has been that instead of seeking Creator, many attempt to communicate with dead and practice magical arts (*sh* 77-8)

BIBLE CONDEMNS ALL FORMS OF SPIRITISM (6 min.)

From first to last, Bible writers were inspired by God to condemn spiritistic practices strongly (De 18:10-12; Re 21:8)

Paul states clearly that practitioners of spiritism will not inherit God's Kingdom (Ga 5:19-21)

Why is Bible so adamant on this matter?

Because those involved in spiritism come under influence of demons, who are God's enemies

Spiritism promotes the lie that humans really do not die but have a spirit part that keeps on living

Jehovah, a God of truth, opposes lies (Ps 31:5; Pr 6:16-19)

Told the truth that the dead are unconscious and cannot communicate with the living (Ec 9:5, 10)

Any claimed communication with dead either is a hoax or is in reality communication with wicked spirit forces

Must be careful not to be misled; Satan is subtle and clever (2Co 11:14)

HOW TO KEEP FREE FROM HARMFUL INFLUENCE OF SPIRITISM (20 min.)

To keep free, subject yourself to the true God, Jehovah (Jas 4:7a)

Learn to do his will and keep it foremost

Completely refuse to share in spiritistic customs or practices

Put on the complete suit of armor from God (Eph 6:11-13)

Pray to Jehovah; literally call on his name if under attack by demons (Pr 18:10)

God's name is not a magic charm

We are protected when, by breaking completely free from spiritism and putting full trust in Jehovah, we come to be recognized by him (1Pe 3:12)

Evidence of his help seen in growing numbers of Witnesses who have broken free of spiritism (See *Index* 1986-90, under "Spiritism," subheading "experiences")

Jehovah more powerful than Satan

Serve Jehovah and he will protect you from the demons (*sp* 24)

Must also oppose the Devil (Jas 4:7b)

Cut off any association with known spiritists (1Co 10:21)

Do not bring articles from them into your home (De 7:25)

Follow example of Ephesians who burned their books about magic (Ac 19:19, 20)

Rid yourself of all amulets, charms, "protective" strings, fetishes, books on magic, and anything else connected with spiritism

Never read material that promotes spiritism, such as a horoscope, just to see what it says (Jer 10:2)

Do not watch television or films of hypnotism, séances, and other forms of spiritism

Never let curiosity lead you astray

Reject practice of some who look for signs or omens (De 18:10; Isa 8:19)

Do not expect to receive direct, personal communication from God as did Adam, Noah, or Abraham

God no longer contacts humans by means of dreams, visions, or voices from spirit world

Jehovah has revealed his will through Jesus, and we have a written record of it in the Bible (Heb 1:1, 2)

Now have complete Bible, and it is by this means that God guides and instructs us, making us "completely equipped for every good work" (2Ti 3:17)

Avoid presumptuous efforts to communicate with spirit world; rely on God's Word and organization (Mt 24:45-47)

If in spite of your efforts to stay free, demons test you, as they did Jesus, this is not necessarily indication of God's disapproval

Must persevere and not give up

Demons will not win if we firmly oppose them and stick to Jehovah (Mt 4:10, 11)

SERVE JEHOVAH AND REAP RICH REWARDS (4 min.)

Harmful effects of spiritistic practices identify Satan and demons as unseen forces behind spiritism

They enjoy hurting and deceiving mankind

It is Jehovah who truly loves us

He has made provisions for future blessing, including end to Satan's rule (Ge 3:15; *sp* 22-3)

Sent Jesus to Earth to save mankind (Joh 3:16)

Jesus cured people, expelled demons, and raised dead, providing basis for us to believe in blessings of new world (2Pe 3:13; Re 21:4)

Jehovah never misleads people (Nu 23:19)

He is the source only of good (Jas 1:17)

So shun practices associated with spiritism

Serve Jehovah by applying Bible truth

Have confidence in God's spirit and the power of the truth to safeguard and protect you from spiritism (Joh 8:32)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)