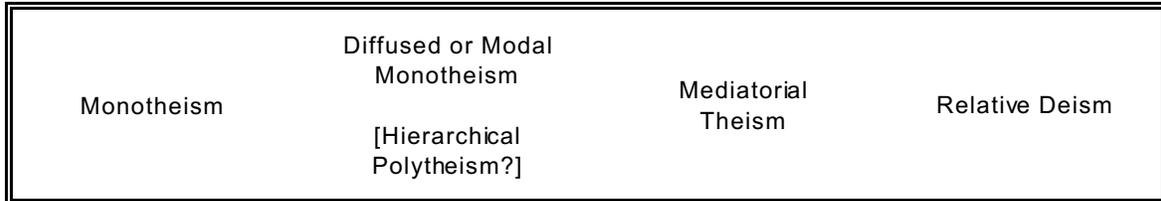


## Section Seven:

### Spiritual Conflict Issues in Selected Cultural Settings

**CASE STUDY: THE SPIRIT REALM IN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT**

1. Some preliminary matters
  - a. The myth of a single 'pan-African' culture:
  - b. The importance of belief systems:
2. The spirit realm: an organic analogy of powers
  - a. The spectrum of theistic views in ATRs (adapted in part from Shorter, African Christian Theology, pp. 98-108):



(God's role maximized;  
spirits' roles minimized)

(God's role minimized;  
spirits' roles maximized)

- b. Understandings of the spirit realm in Africa (adapted from Schneider, The Africans: An Ethnological Account, pp. 186-91):

	Western Sudanic and Tropical West African	Bantu	Nilotic
Suggested Aspects of a "Great Tradition" of the Spirit Realm	A pantheon of minor divinities (or modes of the high God?) who serve the high God and control elements of nature, locations, and aspects of human endeavor.	Ancestors tend to serve between God and man. Their role varies widely in significance (southern Bantu tending to give ancestors more prominence).	God is more 'spirit' and less anthropomorphic. He takes a more direct interest and role in human affairs.
Examples	Yoruba (Nigeria) Dogon (Burkina Faso) Tallensi (Ghana)	Shona (Zimbabwe) Zulu (South Africa) Kamba (Kenya)	Dinka (Sudan) Nuer (Sudan) Pokot (Kenya)

- c. Types of spirits
        - i. Divinities:

- ii. Nature spirits:
  - (1) Natural objects
  - (2) Natural phenomena
  - (3) Natural resources
- iii. Malicious or evil spirits:
- iv. "Doubles" or guardian spirits:
- v. Human spirits:
- d. Activities of spirits
  - i. Bringing physical problems
  - ii. Bringing social problems
  - iii. Appearing to the living
  - iv. Empowering objects
  - v. "Possessing" people or animals
- e. Witchcraft and sorcery (chart adapted from Fortes and Dieterlen, African Systems of Thought, pp. 23-4):

	Witchcraft	Sorcery
Source of Power	Special personality; abilities are baffling	Uses magic practices; abilities are understandable
Self-Awareness	May be unconscious	Conscious, deliberate
Frequency and Duration	Permanent addiction to anti-social actions	Temporary action driven by emotional trauma

- i. Witches:
  - (1) Becoming a Witch:
    - (a) Some thought that witches could inherit their powers, either genetically or by parental ritual.

- (b) Another way to acquire witchcraft power was to purposefully purchase it.
- (c) Some peoples believed that witchcraft could be given to someone by "infecting" them ritually either with or without their knowledge. its mouth. Finally, this could be done by a witch bewitching someone.
- (d) Finally, some felt that witchcraft powers could be obtained by means of a spirit taking possession of the person.

(2) What Do Witches Do?

- (a) First, they were thought to gather (though necessarily physically) for night meetings or witches' assemblies.
- (b) Witches were also said to "eat" people (either physically or spiritually), in order to gain power or to satisfy a craving for flesh.
- (c) "Spiritual" eating, in which the witches "ate" the soul of the bewitched, was more common.
- (d) Witches also used familiars.
- (e) Witches were felt to be able to harm people, animals, and plants with the evil eye.
- (f) Finally, witches could become invisible to normal eyes in order to perform their deeds.

ii. Sorcerers:

(1) Becoming a Sorcerer:

(2) Activities of Sorcerers:

- (a) Strong sorcerers were thought to be able to control the dead as slaves.
- (b) It was also believed by many that a sorcerer could also call down "unnatural" disasters, such as lightning.

(3) How Does a Sorcerer Do His Deeds?

- (a) In performing his acts of mischief, the sorcerer may use special curses with accompanying rituals.
- (b) Another method of sorcerers was that of mixing magic potions or medicines, which were thought to require human organs to be effective.

iii. Witchcraft and sorcery accusations and trials:

iv. Protection from the supernatural

Source	Function
Witchdoctors	Used spells, spirits, second vision, etc. to discern witchcraft and/or sorcery and expose it.
Diviners	Typically used the spirits to discover a ritual or taboo violation to discern the source of a problem.
Herbalists	Generally utilized traditional herbs, potions, etc. to protect (or cure) people.

- (1) **Witchdoctors** were the traditional equivalent of "spiritual police". They used spells, spirits, or "second vision" to discern who the witch was and expose them to the community. There were several methods by which a witchdoctor would detect the guilty witch and confirm his findings.
  - (a) First, an autopsy might be performed to look for an extra organ or appendage.
  - (b) Some witchdoctors, through the proper ritual, requested the spirits to expose the witch.
  - (c) There were also rituals that suspected witches would be required to pass to prove their innocence.
  - (d) Finally, a witch might be trapped by the appropriate magical means.
- (2) Diviners also provided protection from evil powers, including witches, sorcerers, and spirits.

(a) Some diviners consulted or confronted spirits directly and tried to convince them to leave the afflicted person or group alone.

(b) Some peoples held that diviners must be mediums themselves. Such mediums were trained for the job for as long as three years.

(3) The work of **herbalists** involved the mixing of various potions and powders to help people.

v. Punishment of witches and sorcerers:

3. The modern scene

a. Is witchcraft 'dying' off?

b. Effects in contemporary Africa:

4. Missiological analysis

a. Sociological functions:

Maintaining the world view by explaining the world and its events
Maintaining social order by:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Binding the people together</li> <li>2. Enabling the working out of social tensions</li> <li>3. Providing bonding entertainment</li> <li>4. Balancing power among various leadership elements</li> </ol>
Enabling social change

b. Ontological (or spiritual) analysis:

Satan's Strategy
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fear of and intimidation from the spirit realm</li> <li>2. Trust in false means of protection; a 'works' mentality</li> <li>3. Power and prestige through 'control' over spirits</li> <li>4. Attributing more to spirits than they deserve</li> <li>5. Misunderstanding of spirits--not seen as totally evil and opposed to God</li> <li>6. Confusion over honoring parents</li> </ol>

God's Strategy
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receptivity to the freedom Christ offers</li> <li>2. Sensitivity to the spirit realm</li> <li>3. The spiritual importance of all of life</li> <li>4. Intuitive cultural insight into the reality of the spirit realm</li> </ol>

5. Toward an appropriate response

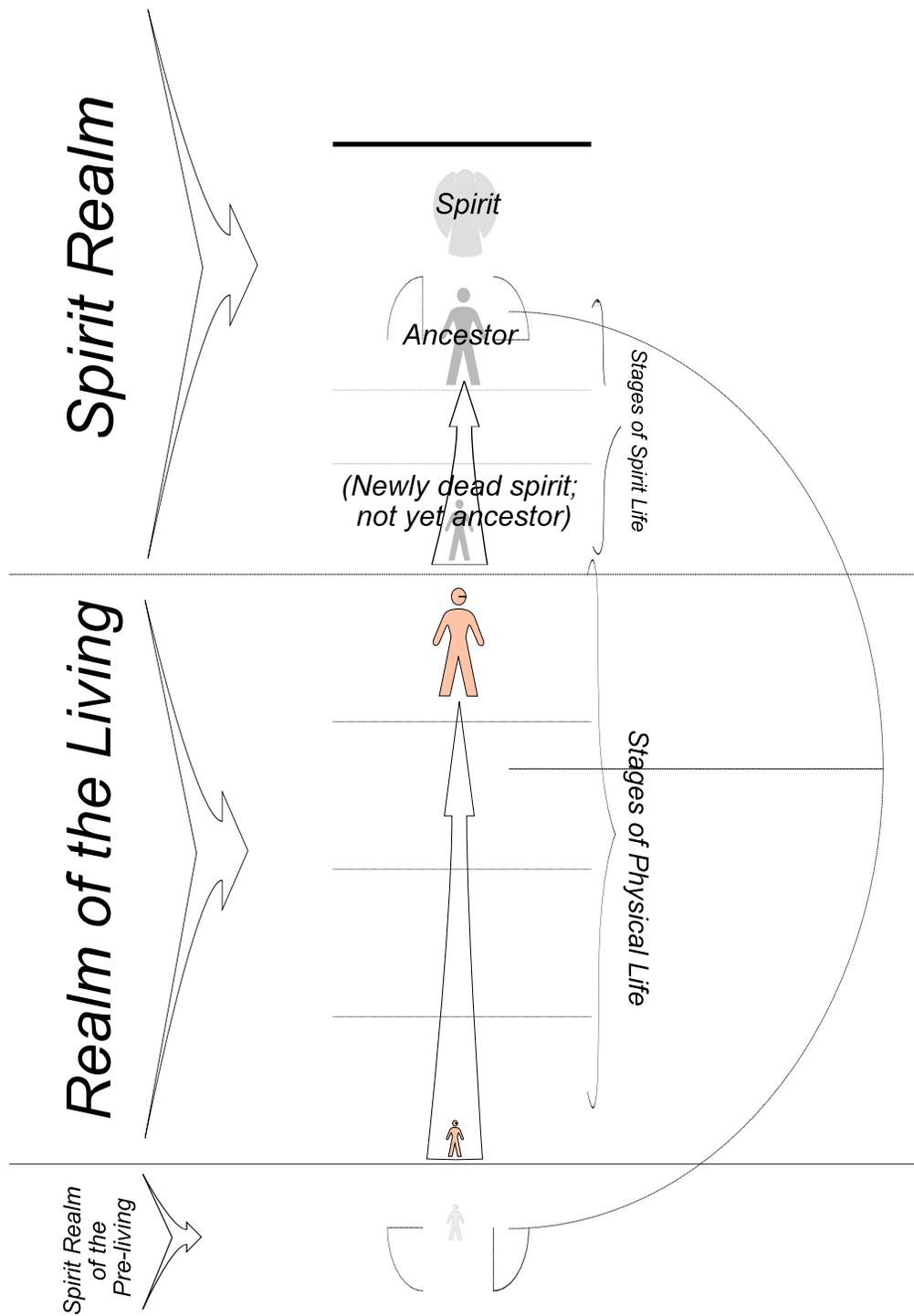
Attitude	Contextualization Process	Toward a Contextualized Application
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be a learner, humble in approach.</li> <li>2. Be sensitive to traditional currents underlying modern events.</li> <li>3. Be sensitive to both the spiritual and the sociological dimensions of occult practices.</li> <li>4. Be prepared to take time, persistence, and patience in seeking to minister effectively in this area.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Come to grips with the biblical teachings first.</li> <li>2. Seek the <i>facts</i>, but recognize that 1) world view determines what are judged to be 'facts' and 2) this is a deeply held belief system.</li> <li>3. Research the beliefs in your particular setting through reading and questioning of informants from within the culture.</li> <li>4. Strike a balance between excessive gullibility and excessive skepticism.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Constantly ask God for wisdom, insight and discernment.</li> <li>2. Develop simple scriptural lessons to deal with biblically and culturally relevant issues.</li> <li>3. Do not let fear of alienation or rejection stop you from teaching biblical truths in a relevant, loving manner.</li> <li>4. Consider understanding the spiritual arena as an important part of the normal discipleship process.</li> </ol>

Towards a Missiological Analysis of Ancestral Practices

Ancestor worship viewed as a specific form of worship, needs a proper method of investigation. Ancestor worship not only manifests the religious consciousness and spirituality of the people who practice it, but also reflects their world view, life style, and value system. In this sense, the study of ancestor worship should reflect a comprehensive understanding of the people who created, developed, and preserved such worship.

Young-chan Ro, "Ancestor Worship," 8

1. The phenomena
  - a. Death is not viewed as an end of life, but as a passage into a different type of existence
  - b. Cultural practices involving the dead:
    - i. Pre-burial preparation of the body (can include washing, trimming of nails, hair; substance(s) placed in body openings, clothing, and associated rituals for each of these acts of preparation)
    - ii. Burial (in grave, river, bush; belongings were sometimes buried with the body; ritual mourning)
    - iii. Post-burial: Songs of mourning, feasting, rituals of abstinence (e.g., sex), purification rituals (such as sex), offerings, dreams, naming of children, and so on.
  - c. There can be little doubt of their importance: they were included and consulted in the major events of life, seen in the offerings, sacrifices, and libations given to them.
  - d. The underlying cosmological system of ancestral spirits may be seen:
2. Emic perspectives (see diagram)
  - a. Shortly after death, the ancestor was thought to be still interested in the living, doing things (good or bad) to ensure that his descendants remembered him. Not everyone who died achieved ancestral status; generally this was limited to adults (usually male) who had children before dying.
  - b. Depending on their status before death, these spirits could be linked relationally to a single family, to the larger clan or age group, or to the whole people group.

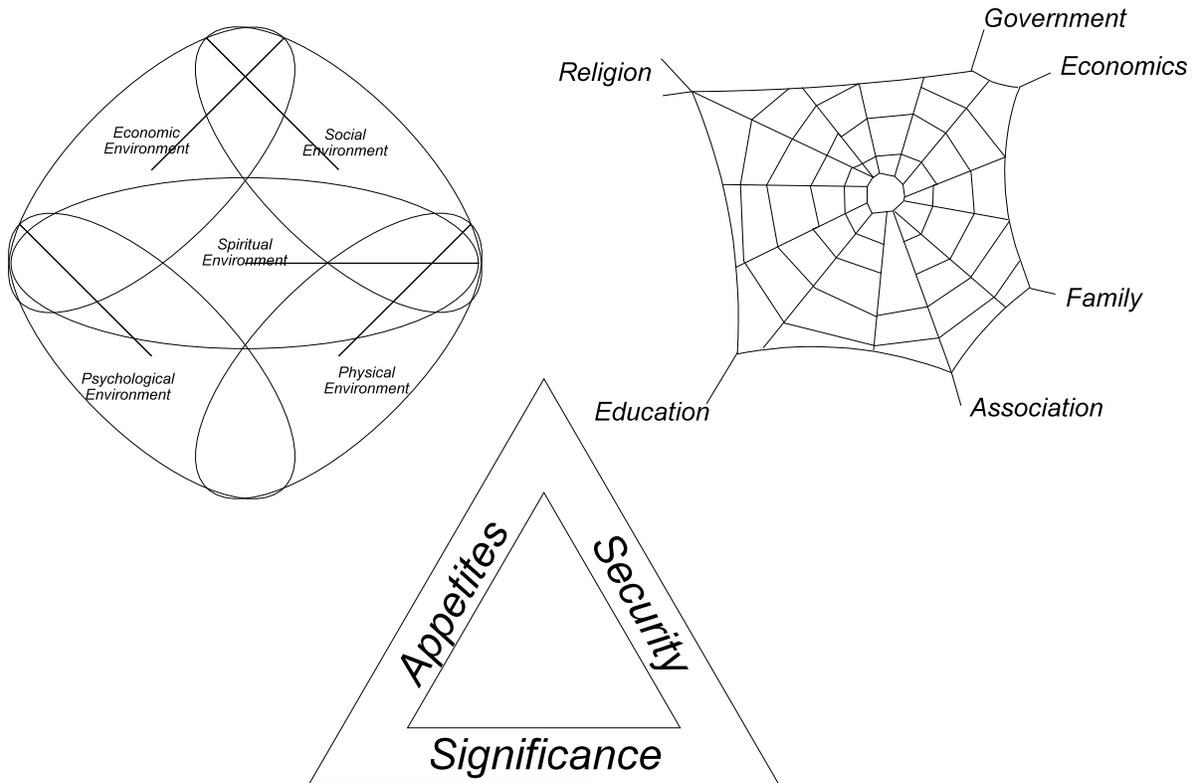


- c. If neglected for too long, they trouble the family as a reminder of their needs. This can be done through possession, illness, death, or other disasters.

- d. They were not thought of or prayed to as if they were gods--they were usually treated as superior elders, but not as objects of worship.

In Nyoro traditions, what is called worship of the dead is nothing but a rational recognition and realization of the afterdeath existence of any human being who dies. In the case of ancestors, there is the idea of filial respect, where people believe they must respect their ancestors whose existence they do mostly justify from their own existence. Consequently, there are filial duties that must be rendered to their sources of life. *Kubembeka* is the duty in point here whereby the dead ancestors are officially remembered at least once a year, and people eat and drink in their honor.  
 Byaruhanga-Akiiki, *Religion in Bunyoro*, p. 27

- 3. Etic: The types of factors involved include the environment, the social institutions, and the individual needs:



Because of the complexity, a variety of approaches have been used to explain the ancestral systems found in many cultures:

- a. **Sociological/anthropological** explanations generally are built on the presupposition that ontology is not important (while at the same time often

assuming that there are no such things as ancestral spirits!). Therefore all explanations for the ancestral framework must be found within the social structure.

- i. The social anthropologist approach (Singleton, "Ancestors, Adolescents, and the Absolute")
  - (1) Not all who die become ancestors. Why not?
  - (2) "Sociologically speaking, the ancestors seem to represent a personified recapitulation of all that a given society holds sacred, in the same way that witches mirror all that the same society abhors. The sociologist sees no reason why ancestors should be any more real than witches." (p. 4)
  - (3) They are the patterning of authority on which the social solidarity of a culture depends (filial piety carried on in life as a pattern of authority and order continues after death; provides stability for society). In China and Korea, for example, the Confucian tradition of filial piety has been the most significant moral foundation for ancestor worship (Ro, "Ancestor Worship," p. 12)
  - (4) Placing the dead in the category of ancestor in one sense removes them from living authority in day to day events, and allows the mantle of authority/responsibility to pass on to the next generation peacefully. In one sense, their entry into ancestorhood sanctions the subsequent rise in status of the still living.
  - (5) Ancestors are symbolic expressions of psycho-social experiences (culturally conditioned images of readily identifiable social and psychological phenomena, such as the conflict between men and women or tension between young and old.)
  - (6) Where there are alternate means of acquiring power and prestige to the family system in a society (e.g., education, politics, business, religion, etc.), the ancestors are likely to be benign and benevolent.
  - (7) Ancestors are a vehicle through which the social code is maintained--fear of their reprisal keeps people in line.
- ii. The Marxist approach (Bond, "Ancestors and Protestants"):
  - (1) The ancestral cult is intimately associated with domains of domestic (pre-capitalist) productivity and the related systems of

social stratification

- (2) It reinforces enduring structural relationships, though at the same time they are part of the process of change
- (3) Can be used manipulatively by men and women to accomplish their goals (both personal and social)

b. The psychological approach

- i. Ancestors are projections which provide an explanation system for the "great divide" between the death and life. They enable a people to face the reality of death.
  - ii. As stabilizing factors in a culture, the ancestral system provides a foundation for understanding daily life and the roles people are expected to play in life.
  - iii. The ancestral framework prevents a sudden cutting off of the senior people from their traditional sources of wisdom. They do not have to bear the full burden of life alone; they have the ancestors continued presence to lead, guide, and protect.
- c. The spiritual approach requires a holistic understanding of the religious propositions and/or ideas underlying the practices and the development of a biblical response to them.

### SHAMANISM

(contours of discussion adapted from Atkinson, "Shamanisms Today")

1. Origination: used among the Tungus in Siberia and Central Asia, it was broadened beyond its original context (similar to *mana*). One of the major anthropological criticisms is that this decontextualization robs the term of significance in any particular context. In effect, a plurality of shamanisms and shamanistic approaches needs to be at the foundation of our understanding.
2. The search for generalities in a world context
  - a. Earlier disrepute of the psychological profile of a shaman: fantasy prone, unstable, hysteric, abnormal
  - b. More recent disrepute (including deconstruction) of the term "shaman" itself:
    - i. Geertz: "insipid categories by means of which ethnographers of religion

devitalize their data." ("Religion as a Cultural System" in Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion)

- ii. In the 1980s, however, the term evidenced a resurgence in scholarship. However, it has spread out of anthropological circles into psychology and New Age thinking (e.g., Michael Hamer).
  - iii. It has moved from the category of abnormal psychology to the category of universal psychobiological capacities.
- c. Fields of study and foci:

Field of Study	Focus
Therapeutic/psychology	Shaman and patient
Phenomenology	Shaman and the spirit(s); trance state
Performance arts	Shaman and his/her human audience

3. Clusters of ideas to consider:

- a. Trance (altered state of consciousness [ASC], shamanistic state of consciousness [SSC]): Trance itself is also a broad term, and in cultures it can range in meaning from psychological disconnection to spirit possession.
  - i. The neurophysiology or the ASC (use of psychedelic drugs and the more recent study in endorphins [opiate like compounds that the brain releases in response to certain stimuli])
  - ii. The psychology of shaman, patient, and audience (and noting that there is certainly trickery within the broad spectrum of shamanism), identifying therapeutic aspects within cultural knowledge systems
  - iii. The spirituality: as Christians we cannot overlook the spiritual side of shamanistic journeys into other planes of existence.
- b. Social contexts of shamanism
  - i. Adaptability: "Shamanism, as the oldest form of religious belief in Korea, has always been the most influential religious tradition. Due to its flexibility and receptivity, shamanism has been successfully incorporated into other major religious traditions, such as those of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Christianity that have been introduced into Korea." (Ro, "Ancestor Worship," 11)

- ii. Examining shamanism only in regard to the ASC is "akin to analyzing marriage solely as a function of reproductive biology" (Atkinson, 311).
  - iii. Social functions and dynamics must be considered in discussion of any local shamanism. Social anthropologists are extremely reluctant to discuss shamanism outside of any social manifestations of it.
  - iv. Not all shamanistic practices have healing as their goal; societal considerations give us categories broader than the shaman/patient event for interpreting how shamanistic concepts and performances are interwoven into the fabric of a culture.
  - v. Classic Marxist anthropology examines the economics of shamanistic activities in light of the self interest of the shaman, generally regarding the supernatural components as bogus. More recently, anthropologists have seen the need to avoid divorcing shamanism from its economic and political contexts. Note, for example, Korean intellectuals have adopted shamanism as a means of protesting against the ruling government.
- c. Ritual:
- i. The importance of the ritual *process* (as a means or religious expression) cannot be separated from the importance of the *product* (generally the healing of the patient(s)).
  - ii. The parallels between shamanistic ritual and psychiatric ritual cannot be ignored. Jung himself showed a deep interest in shamanism, and his influence remains today (especially in the use of the concept of archetypes)
  - iii. Art: shamanistic ritual as a category of performance art has received some attention recently, and merits significant study
- d. Cultural system of knowledge: The ritual meaning and efficacy, success and failure of a particular shamanistic event is essentially negotiated through schemata of social interaction among the shaman, the patient, and the audience.
4. Neo-shamanism in the United States: the most significant development in the field is the rise of shamanism (not just the study, but the practice) in the US and Europe.

- a. Historical factors include: the drug culture of the 1960s and 1970s; the human potential movement; environmentalism; interest in non-Western religions; and popular anthropology (especially Castaneda).
- b. Michael Harner comments:

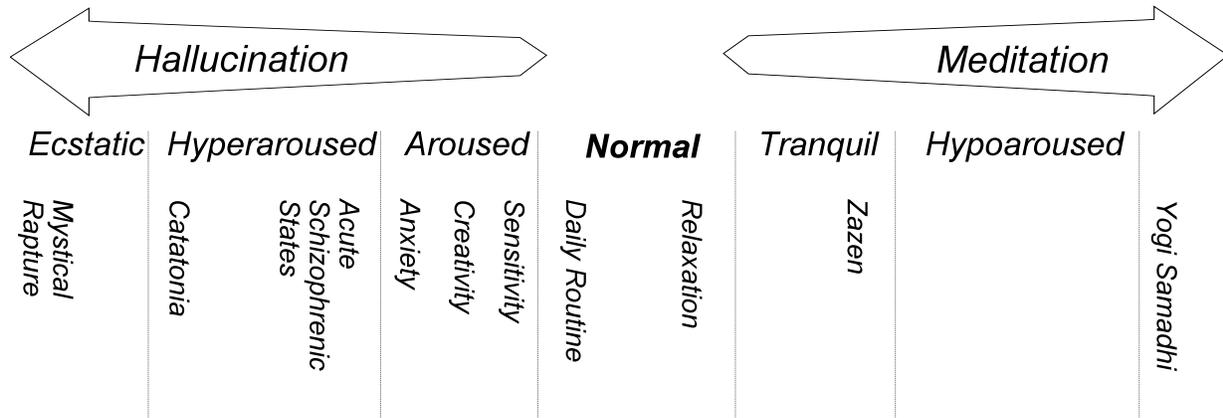
"It is not that we are 'playing Indian' and trying to adopt an archaic cultural style that does not suit us. Rather, we are simply attempting to 'play human' by going back to the saner and healthier world view that we had before the church and the state. Evidence in progress in this return to our shamanistic roots can be seen in the fact that now shamanic journeys are being labeled as 'guided imagery' or 'visualization' and are even accepted in some official medical circles. Nevertheless, it should be noted that real shamanic journey goes well beyond what is called 'guided imagery.'

"Much prejudice against shamanism still remains, based mainly on misconceptions about what it is. As I have tried to show, shamanism is really just getting back to our common human nature and reconnecting with the plants and animals and the planet itself. Therefore, when people in Western civilization profess that shamanism would be unsuitable for them, they are actually saying--probably without knowing it--that getting spiritually in touch with the planet, other people, all species, and their own hearts and souls is not for them." ("What is Shamanism?", 10-11)

5. Variations on shamanism seen around the world:
  - a. Witches
  - b. Sorcerers
  - c. Witch doctors
  - d. Medicine men
  - e. Diviners
  - f. Astrologers
  - g. Magicians

#### *POSSESSIVE STATES*

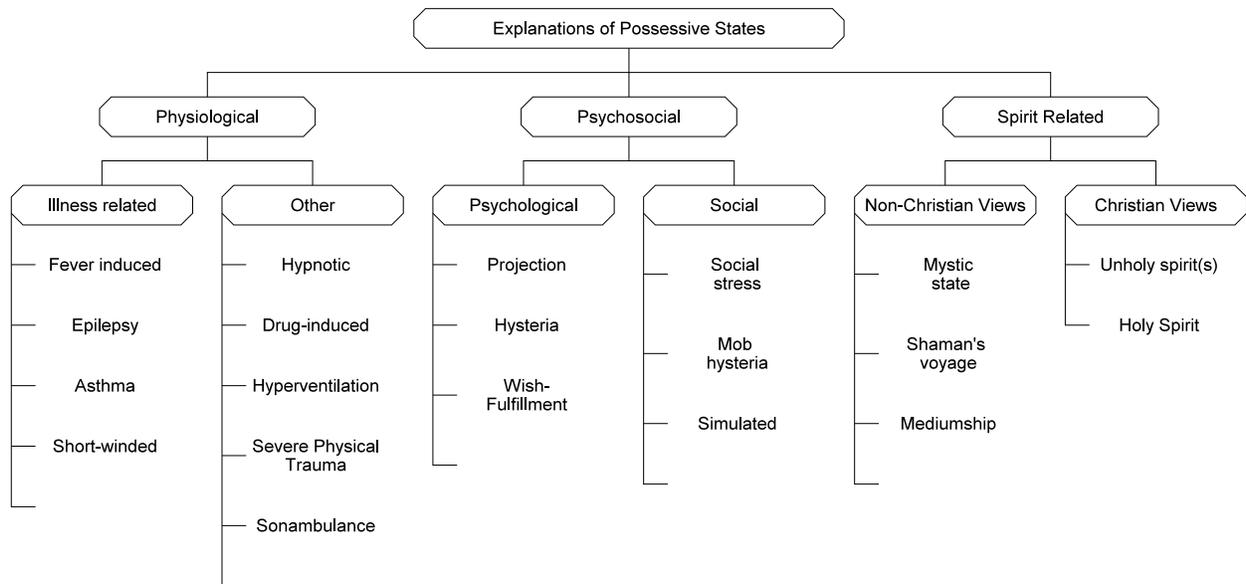
1. States of human experience (source: Fischer, "A Cartography of Ecstatic and Meditative States"):



2. Nature of possession: What are the possible explanations of possession?

In all continents, there are groups in which particular persons at specific times undergo startling and dramatic changes of personality—trembling, sweating, groaning, speaking with strange voices or in unintelligible sounds, assuming a different identity, claiming to be a spirit and not a human being, asserting authoritative leadership with commands, or foretelling the future.

*Augsberger, Pastoral Counseling Across Cultures, 291*



3. What are immediate trigger factors in causing possession phenomena in cultures? Two major classes may be noted:
- a. Physiological:
    - i. Physical stress
      - (1) From exertion (dancing, drumming, running, cutting, etc.)
      - (2) From deprivation (fasting, meditating, lack of sleep)
    - ii. Rhythm related (drums, cymbals, bells, rattles)
    - iii. Biochemical (drugs)
    - iv. Spontaneous (i.e., no apparent physiological trigger)
  - b. Psychological:
    - i. Tension/stress
    - ii. Guilt over transgressions
    - iii. Need for attention
    - iv. Permission within the framework of the culture—available scripts of possession phenomena and appropriate social behavior (e.g., certain types of worship and/or prayer).
4. How is possession manifested in various cultures?

The forms that possession takes vary widely from culture to culture. People cut themselves with knives, walk on hot cinders, climb ladders or razor blades, bathe in boiling oil, or even enucleate eyes while in trance. Or possession may take highly verbal forms of speaking, singing, or prophesying to an audience; or there may be cursing, blaspheming, scatological language, and threatening hostile behavior.

The outward manifestations of spirit possession vary widely—from fainting, trances, glossolalia, rigid postures, violent dancing, acts of extreme agility such as climbing down tree trunks head first, chewing broken glass, gripping hot irons, walking over glowing coals. At the time of the trance state most people are amnesiac, recalling little or nothing.

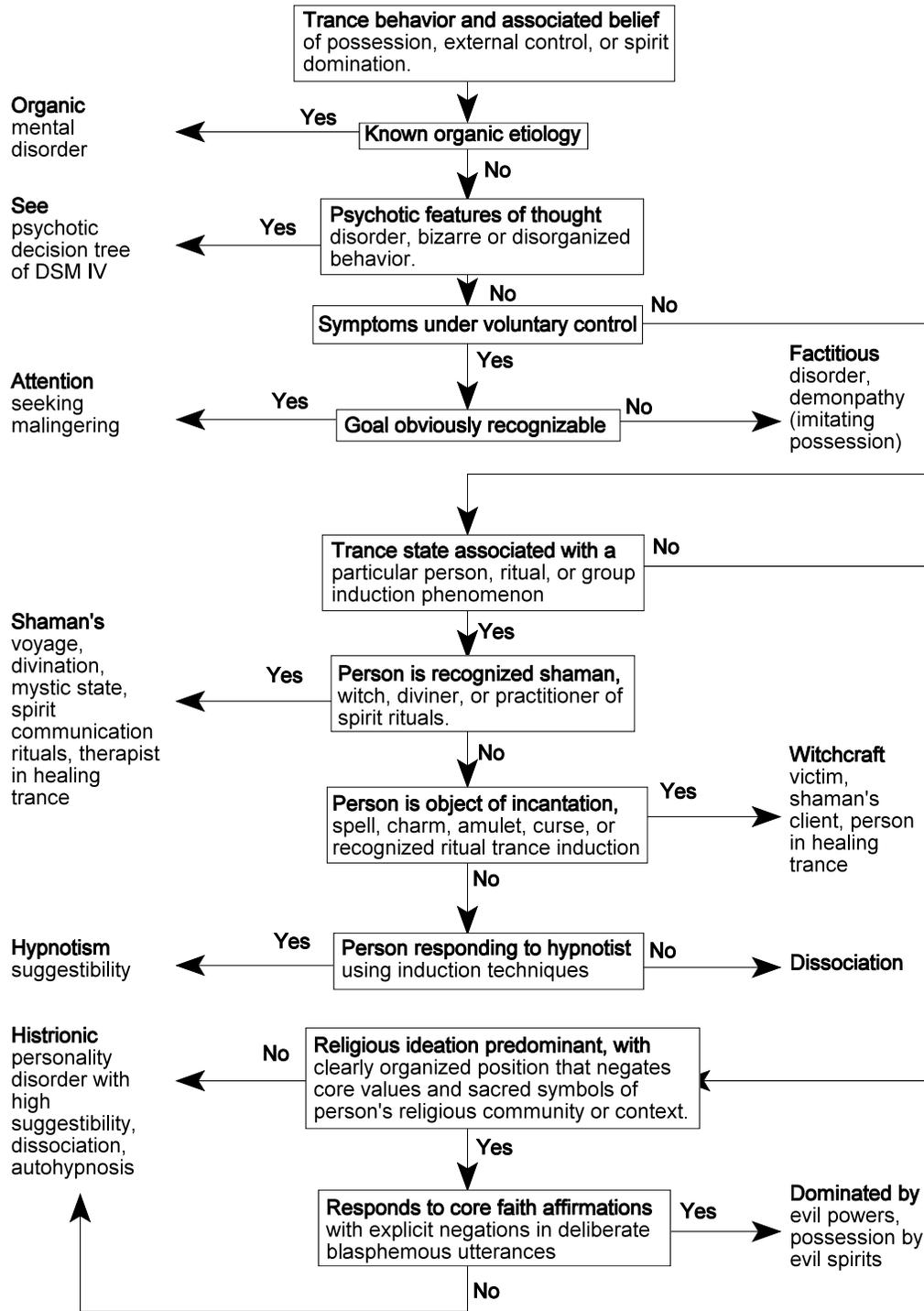
*Augsburger, Pastoral Counseling Across Cultures, 292*

- a. Trance/dissociation
- b. Violence

- c. Strength
  - d. Convulsions
  - e. Glossolalia
  - f. Voice change
  - g. Personality change
  - h. Knowledge
5. Functions of possession
- a. In meeting the daily needs of life, whether facing life`s dangers or striving for success (as culturally defined).
  - b. It enables change within the community. This may range from change needed to alleviate social stress (removal of oppressive circumstances) to change in response to cultural collapse (e.g., from an "invasion" of an outside more powerful culture)
  - c. It is used to sustain the life of the community, to keep in place the moral sanctions that make up the community.
  - d. It is used as a communication channel with the powers.
  - e. It affirms the faith of the local group as a genuine faith; it shows that spirit beings are real.
6. The spectrum of possession



7. David Augsburger proposes the following decision tree as an aid in diagnosing apparent demonised behavior. Note that several branches which he does not label as demonised could be such (e.g., shaman's voyage; *Pastoral Counseling Across Cultures*, p. 307):



**MISSIOLOGICAL ISSUES IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE***Issues Related to Contextualizing Our Theology*

## 8. A warning to bear in mind:

In the New Testament there are reports of healings and exorcisms by the apostles and others. . . . But there are also signs and wonders of the false prophet and the false Christ (Matthew 24:24; Mark 13:22), and there are signs that are satanic and demonic (2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 13:13-14; 16:14; 19:20). In neither the Old nor the New Testament is the mere supernaturalness of the sign or wonder sufficient in itself to accredit the one who performs it. (Brown, *That You May Believe*, p. 169)

In addition to what Brown points out, we should also remember that God gives us definite commands to test the spirits (1 John 4:1-3), and it will not grieve the Holy Spirit for us to do so. We cannot afford to ignore this possibility as the source of miracles.

9. There has been too much of a tendency to glorify and idolize the people who perform the miracles. God alone deserves the glory for any true miracle. Any man who seeks his own glory should have his power source questioned! Brown relates (Brown, *That You May Believe*, p. 170): "It is characteristic of the magician and the false prophet to draw attention to himself. He seeks to promote himself. It is characteristic of Jesus' works that they point people to the Father."

## 10. The need for a biblical contextual theology of "excluded middle" areas:

- a. Much of the non-Western world has not yet given in to the Western world view of science (to the exclusion of the supernatural). For example, miracles are generally received without the harsh scepticism seen in the West.
- b. Wherever we are, we need to develop a biblical and culturally relevant understanding of the place and function of the excluded middle in these arenas:
  - i. The excluded middle as seen in miracles in the Old and New Testaments: what purposes did they serve, why did God choose to perform them, who can "do" a miracle, etc. In this framework, we need to ask
    - (1) Do we need to distinguish among the miracles of the OT prophets, the miracles of Jesus, the miracles of the apostles in the book of Acts, and the miracles of the church today?

- (2) Were the miracles to be understood as a significant advance in the kingdom of God (James Kallas, *The Significance of the Synoptic Miracles*), or as the sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Colin Brown, *That You May Believe*), or as normal incursions of God into the world which serve as a reminder that the kingdom in its fullness is yet so to come, in at least a partial sense it is already here (Wimber, *Power Healing*; see also Williams, *Signs, Wonders, and the Kingdom of God*)?
  - (3) Did factually verifiable miracles stop with the NT era (B. B. Warfield, *Miracles, Yesterday and Today, True and False*), or are they continuing in full effect today (A. B. Simpson, *The Gospel of Healing*)? The former view seems to be a natural Western *cultural* conclusion resulting from Enlightenment thinking, while the latter seems to have a more solid biblical (and experiential) foundation.
  - (4) What is the "key to unlocking" miracles? Is it dependent on the faith of the believer, or the faith of the "healer", or on the unknowable will of God the Holy Spirit in each given situation?
  - (5) What role did miracles have in the growth and development of the early church? How is that to be carried over into the church today? Do "healing" rallies have biblical precedent and justification? If so, what may we expect to see at such rallies? How are we able to verify that a genuine miracle has been accomplished? Is such verification even necessary?
  - (6) Are miracles only to be "performed" by gifted people, or are they available to the general body of Christ? If the latter is true, is there a "discipleship" process in strengthening faith to see God working miracles which the non-Pentecostal church is missing?
  - (7) Few doubt the "miracle-working" is abused today. As a result, however, some tend to throw out ALL miracles. This appears to be "throwing out the baby with the bath-water". What role does God want miracles to take in the normal life of a healthy, growing church, whatever its context?
- ii. Miracles and the impact of the supernatural on everyday life in the cultural tradition in which we minister. We should especially seek to note how traditional expectations may have carried over into the church, and what the resulting impact of such a carryover is.

- iii. Miracles and their place in the church today--what function do they serve, what are the possible sources, how can we know what the source of a given miracle is, what are the biblical conditions necessary for miracles, etc.?
- iv. Biblically, how do miracles relate to the horizontal element of mission?
  - (1) "Developmental" miracles (healings)
  - (2) "Structural" adjustment miracle: do we see any miracles in the Bible that lead to socio-political reformation? Note that an angel of the Lord killed Herod, but we do not see that death resulting in more justice or peace--instead, it results in the word of God continuing to grow and be multiplied (12:21-24).

### **Issues in Missiological Strategies and Methodologies**

- 1. Power encounter in evangelism/discipleship
  - a. Biblical examples of power encounter as part of God's work through His people:
    - i. Moses and Pharaoh's magicians (Exodus 7-11)
    - ii. Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18:16-40)
    - iii. Elisha and Naaman (2 Kings 5:1-19)
    - iv. Jesus and evil spirits (Matt 8:28-34, 12:22-29, 17:14-21, etc.)
    - v. There are many such encounters found in Acts:

Peter and John with the lame beggar (3:1-4:22); Peter and Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-11); The apostles as a group and the sick (5:12-16); Philip and the evil spirits in Samaria (8:6-8); Peter and Simon the sorcerer (8:9-24); Peter with Aeneas (the paralytic; 9:32-35); Peter with Dorcas (the girl who died; 9:36-42); Peter and Herod (in Peter's escape from prison; 12:1-24); Paul and Elymas the sorcerer (13:6-12); Paul and the unbelieving Jews in Pisidian Antioch (13:46-52); Paul and the unbelieving Jews in Iconium (14:1-7); Paul and the lame man in Lystra (14:8-18); Paul (in Lystra) and the unbelieving Jews from Antioch and Iconium (13:19-20); Paul and the demonized slave-girl in Philippi (16:16-21); Paul and the local officials in Philippi (the miraculous jail escape; 16:22-40); Paul and illnesses (while in Ephesus; 19:11-12); The seven sons of Sceva lose an encounter with a demonized man, which results in fear of the Lord and destruction of occultic materials (19:13-20); Paul raised Eutychus from the dead (20:7-12); Paul and the snake bite on Malta (28:1-6); Paul and the father of Publius (28:7-10)

- b. It is helpful to chart out the sign phenomena seen in Acts and the corresponding results for each occurrence (the initial idea for this came from Wimber, *Power Evangelism*, pp. 116-7 and 181-2):

<b>Unspecified Signs and Wonders</b>	
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Results</b>
2:43: Many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles	2:43-47: Sense of awe; holding all in common; fellowshiping with unity and joy; daily adding to their number
4:29-30: Disciples prayed to speak with confidence that God would extend His hand to heal, and that signs and wonders would take place through Jesus' name	4:31: The place where they were was shaken, and the were all filled with the Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness
4:33: Apostles gave witness to Christ with great power	4:34-35: Abundant grace was on them all; not a needy person among them; they shared all, as each had need
5:12: At the hands of the Apostles many signs and wonders were taking place	5:14: They were in one accord; multitudes were constantly added to their number
6:8: Stephen was performing great wonders and signs among the people	6:9-15: The Jews became jealous. Unable to out-argue him, they trumped up false witness and brought him to trial
11:21: And the hand of the Lord was with them (??)	11:21: A large number who believed turned to the Lord
14:3: God granted signs and wonders by Sauls and Barnabas' hands	14:4-7: The city was divided; they eventually had to flee to other cities

<b>Judgments from God</b>	
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Results</b>
5:1-10: Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead at Peter's announcement for lying to the Lord	5:11: Great fear came upon the whole church, and on everyone who heard of this
12:21-23: An angel of the Lord killed Herod for not giving glory to God	12:23-24: Herod died, but the word of the Lord continued to grow and be multiplied
13:6-11 Elymas the magician, who opposed Paul' witness to Sergius Paulus, was struck blind	13:12: Sergius Paulus came to faith in Christ

<b>Speaking Sign Phenomena</b>	
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Results</b>
2:3-4: The 120 spoke in tongues (praising God in actual languages)	2:5-41: The people became open to hear Peter's sermon--eventually 3,000 were saved
10:44-46: Cornelius and his family spoke in tongues	10:47-48: They were accepted as genuine believers, and Peter ordered that they be baptized
11:27-28: Agabus prophesied that famine would come all over the world	11:29-30: Famine took place; the disciples all gave in proportion to their means for the relief of the Judean brothers
13:1: The Holy Spirit said (through prophecy??) to set apart Barnabas and Saul for mission	13:3-4: Paul and Barnabas were commissioned and sent out by the church at Antioch on the first missionary journey
15:32: Judas and Silas, prophets, came and gave a lengthy message at Antioch	15:32: The brothers were encouraged and strengthened
20:23: Holy Spirit testified to Paul that bonds and afflictions awaited him in Jerusalem	20:22: The same Spirit "bound" him to go to Jerusalem, even though he did not know what would happen there
20:25; 29-31: Paul told the Ephesians that he knew that he would not see them again	20:37-38: The people wept, grieving that they would not see Paul again
21:4: The disciples urged Paul "through the Spirit" not to go to Jerusalem	21:5, 13: Paul went anyway--he was constrained by the Spirit to do so

21:11: Agabus prophesied about Paul's capture by the Jews and subsequent transfer into Gentiles' hands	21:13-14: The church begged Paul to reconsider, but he would not--he was going to Jerusalem (even if he died there)
27:9-10: On the way to Rome, Paul warned of disaster if the ship left at the time they were planning.	27:11: His word was ignored, and they set sail into disaster

<b>Visions</b>	
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Results</b>
7:55-56: At his trial, Stephen saw Jesus in His glory	7:57-60: He was stoned and died as a result
9:1-9: Jesus appeared to Paul on the Damascus road	9:3-19: Paul came to faith
9:10-16: Ananias had a vision in which the Lord told him to go and minister to Paul (who in turn had a vision preparing him for Ananias' visit, v. 12)	9:17-22: Ananias obeyed the Lord. Paul regained his sight, and was baptized. He then began to preach Jesus to the people, who were amazed.
10:9-20: Peter had a vision of God telling him to partake of unclean food. As Peter reflected on this, the Spirit came and told him to go with the men who have come to him from Cornelius.	10:19-48: Peter went to Cornelius' house and preached. As a result, they all came to faith in Christ, confirmed by the gift of the Spirit, which was evidenced through their speaking in tongues and exalting God.
16:9: A man from Macedonia appeared to Paul in a vision	16:10ff: Paul went to Europe rather than Asia to preach
18:9-10: The Lord told Paul not to fear in Corinth, and to go on speaking	18:11: Paul settled in Corinth for 18 months, teaching them the word of God
22:17-21: Paul related a vision in which he was told to leave Jerusalem after his conversion	9:30: Paul obeyed (the brothers sent him to Caesarea)
23:11: The Lord told Paul that he would speak of Him in Rome	28:30-31: Paul eventually ended up in Rome, preaching with all openness, unhindered

<b>Miracles</b>	
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Results</b>
8:39-40: Philip "snatched away" by the Spirit, and "found himself at Azotus"	8:40: He went from Azotus to Caesarea, preaching along the way
16:22-26: God brings an earthquake, releasing Paul and Silas from prison in the process	16:27-34: As a result, they had the opportunity to share with the jailer, who, together with his family, came to Christ

<b>Angelic Visitations</b>	
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Results</b>
1:9-11: Two angels came after Jesus' ascension, announcing that Jesus would return the way He had gone	1:12: The disciples returned to Jerusalem
5:19-20: An angel released the apostles from jail, and commanded them to preach to the people	5:21-42: They preached, and were brought to the Sanhedrin. After questioning, they were flogged and released, rejoicing that they were suffering for Christ. They kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.
8:26: An angel told Philip to go to a desert road	8:27-38: The Ethiopian eunuch came to faith
10:1-6: An angel appeared in a vision to Cornelius and told him to send for a man named Peter	10:7-8: Cornelius obeyed the angel's command by sending for Peter
12:5-11: An angel rescued Peter from prison	12:16-19: There was "no small disturbance" among the soldiers over the escape; the brethren are amazed
27:23-24: An angel appeared to Paul, promising him deliverance from a shipwreck	27:44: As the angel had said, all the people were saved

<i>Healings and Demonic Expulsions</i>	
Examples	Results
3:7-8: Peter healed a lame man	3:9-4:4: The people were filled with wonder, and Peter preached. He was jailed as a result, but many people believed
5:15-16: The sick and those afflicted by demons were healed	5:17-18: The Jews were filled with jealousy, and arrested the apostles
8:6-7: Philip "performed signs", namely, he cast out demons and many who were paralyzed and crippled were healed	8:6, 8: Close attention was paid to his preaching; there was great joy in the city
9:17-19: Paul healed of blindness by Ananias	(Serves as a metaphor of Paul's former blindness and his new service to the Gentiles)
9:32-34: Peter healed Aeneas, who was paralyzed for eight years	9:35: All who lived at Lydda and Sharon saw him, and turned to the Lord
9:36-41: Peter raised Tabitha (Gk. Dorcas) from the dead	9:42: It became known all over Joppa, and many believed
14:8-10: Paul healed a lame man who had never walked	14:11-18: The people took Paul and Barnabas as gods, and were re-strained from sacrificing to them only with difficulty
14:19-20: Paul raised from dead (?) after stoning	14:21: Paul is able to continue his ministry.
16:18: A slave girl with a spirit of divination was released from the demon by Paul	16:19-24: Paul and Silas were dragged before the authorities, beaten severely with rods, and imprisoned
19:11-12: God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, including apron and "sweat-rag" healings	19:13-20: Some Jewish exorcists tried duplication and failed. The rest feared and magnified Jesus' name, confessing sins and burning magic books.
20:7-10: Paul raised Eutychus from the dead	20:12: The people took him alive and were greatly comforted
28:3-6: On the island of Malta, Paul survived a snake bite	28:6: The people thought him a god
28:7-9: Still on Malta, Paul healed Publius' father and the rest of the people on the island who were sick	28:10: The people honored them with many marks of respect, and supplied provisions for their continuing journey

- c. An examination of the "results" of signs and wonders in Acts seems to indicate four major categories of responses (see the charts above):
- i. The church grew in terms of increase in witness and/or numbers (2:5-41; 3:7-4:4; 4:29-31; 5:11, 14; 8:6-8; 27-38, 39-40; 9:3-19, 32-35, 36-42; 10:19-48; 11:21; 12:23-4; 13:1-4; 6-12; 16:9-10ff, 27-34; 23:11 with 28:30-1);
  - ii. The church grew in terms of quality (people deepening their faith, and their commitment to each other as the body of Christ, etc.; 2:43-7; 4:34-5; 5:14; 10:47-8; 11:27-30; 12:5-19; 15:32; 18:9-11; 19:11-20; 20:7-12; 21:4-13);
  - iii. The church underwent persecution from the (often jealous) enemies of Christ, who responded to miracles and church growth with violent persecution (3:7-4:4; 5:17-18; 19-42; 6:8-15; 7:57-60; 14:3-7, 8-20; 16:18-24);
  - iv. In two cases, pagans honored the miracles done by believers, but it is not noted whether or not they came to faith in Christ (14:8-18; 28:7-10)

We must be willing to consider the implications of this for "power mission" in the cultural setting in which God has placed us.

2. In relation to world view:
  - a. Asking God to enable us to change our functional world view to recognize spiritual realities in our feet, not just in our heads.
  - b. Becoming students of the functional world view(s) of those among whom we minister, and developing appropriate environment(s) in which the Spirit can work in and through the local expressions of the Church to become salt and light in the local context.
3. Evangelism and discipleship methodologies that include the excluded middle
  - a. Engaging more actively in prayer for the lost
  - b. Fitting the framework of spiritual warfare into the fabric of our discipleship
4. Serving the body of Christ by personal counseling of the oppressed with methods that are contextually relevant (and biblically viable):
  - a. Personal issues that every culture will face include
    - i. Glorifying God by loving Him with all our hearts, souls, and minds, which will involve:
      - (1) Renouncing personal involvement in prohibited activities (especially spiritual counterfeits),
      - (2) Committing ourselves to God's truth,
      - (3) Submitting ourselves to God
      - (4) Recognizing personal and cultural strongholds and, when appropriate, confessing our sin (especially pride, rebellion, and habitual sin)
      - (5) Renouncing ancestral links.
    - ii. Loving our neighbor as ourselves by
      - (1) Dealing with hurt from past relationships (forgiving others)

- (2) Living out the responsibilities we have in restoring broken relationships
  - b. **How** we counsel in these areas will depend on the cultural context (see Augsburger, *Pastoral Counseling across Cultures*).
- 5. Facing the structural powers in our world (Wink's trilogy *Naming the Powers*, *Unmasking the Powers*, and *Engaging the Powers*), especially developing Kingdom approaches to confronting powers.

