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"If it is by the finger of God that I drive out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you" (Luke 11:20).

[Gal 3:7-14; Luke 11:15-26](#)

Jesus' critics were confounded by his apparent command over evil, and so they accused him of being in league with Evil. He exposes the absurdity of this by asking if evil would drive out evil. No, power divided against itself would collapse. The only explanation for his authority over demons is that it is from God. He is the "finger of God" that heals and restores everything he touches.

This gospel passage goes on to describe a person who gets free from one evil spirit but fails to fill his life with a good spirit. His "house" is unprotected and soon invaded again by even more evil.

What a powerful description this is of the recovery process from addiction without building a counter force to the original causes of dependency. Temporary success turns to self-deception, which opens the door to compulsion and need, and the victim is back to old habits. As AA predicts, without replacing the spirit of dependency (the "stinking thinking") with new habits and a new life-giving spirit, the addiction only tightens its death grip.

Discipleship is not just an option but a matter of life and death. Faith is not just an idea but a personal surrender to the embrace of a loving God, which alone can protect us from the lure of counterfeit lifestyles and empty promises to make us

happy and free. We cannot serve both truth and lies, evil and good, or we will be a house divided waiting to come crashing down in a moment of crisis.

But grace is always stronger than sin; love is stronger than death. God is the "higher power" always there when we ask for help, especially through the community of support we all need to become whole.

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