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Pigs In The Parlor

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Understanding Pigs In The Parlor: A Comprehensive Guide to Deliverance Ministry

For decades, the phrase **Pigs In The Parlor** has resonated deeply within certain circles of Christian ministry, particularly those focused on spiritual warfare and deliverance. Written by Frank and Ida Mae Hammond, this seminal work has helped countless individuals understand the dynamics of demonic oppression and the path to spiritual freedom. While the title may initially conjure whimsical images of farm animals in unexpected places, the metaphor is both powerful and unsettling, representing the intrusion of unclean spirits into the sacred space of a human life.

This article explores the core teachings of **Pigs In The Parlor**, its impact on modern Christian thought, the theological framework it presents, and the practical steps it offers for those seeking deliverance. Whether you are a student of theology, a ministry leader, or someone personally seeking freedom from spiritual bondage, understanding this work provides valuable insight into a controversial yet influential aspect of contemporary Christian practice.

The Metaphor That Defines a Ministry

The central metaphor of **Pigs In The Parlor** is brilliantly simple. Imagine a beautiful, well-kept parlor in a Victorian home. This parlor represents the life of a believer, saved and sanctified, yet somehow vulnerable. Now, imagine pigs roaming through this parlor, knocking over fine furniture, leaving mud on the carpets, and filling the space with an unbearable stench. These pigs are not welcome, yet they have found a way inside.

According to the Hammonds, these pigs represent demonic spirits that have gained access to a Christian's life through various entry points such as sin, trauma, generational curses, or ungodly soul ties. The parlor represents the believer's spirit, soul, or body where these intruders have taken up residence. The goal of deliverance ministry, as outlined in the book, is to identify these intruders and cast them out, restoring the parlor to its original state of peace and purity.

The metaphor is effective because it communicates several key truths: the incongruity of evil in a sanctified life, the need for active removal rather than passive tolerance, and the promise of restoration once the intruders are expelled. This imagery has stuck with readers for generations, making **Pigs In The Parlor** one of the most memorable titles in Christian literature.

The Authors and Their Background

Frank Hammond was a Baptist pastor and counselor, while his wife Ida Mae was a teacher and co-laborer in ministry. Together, they traveled extensively, teaching on deliverance and conducting deliverance sessions. Their approach was deeply practical, rooted in their own experiences and observations from years of ministry.

Importantly, the Hammonds did not claim to be theologians in the academic sense. They were practitioners who

compiled their findings into a manual for both ministers and laypeople. This practical orientation is one reason why **Pigs In The Parlor** has remained in print for decades and continues to be used by deliverance ministries around the world. Readers appreciate that the book does not dwell excessively on abstract theory but instead provides actionable steps for identifying and expelling demonic influences.

The authors drew primarily from their interpretation of Scripture, particularly the Gospels where Jesus casts out demons, and the Epistles, where Paul discusses spiritual warfare. They also incorporated insights from other deliverance ministers of their era, creating a synthesis that has become a standard reference in the field.

Core Teachings of Pigs In The Parlor

The book presents a systematic approach to deliverance based on several key principles that distinguish it from other works on spiritual warfare. Understanding these principles is essential for anyone seeking to apply the book's teachings.

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of **Pigs In The Parlor** is its assertion that Christians can be demonized. The Hammonds carefully distinguish between demon possession, which they agree is not possible for a true believer whose spirit is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and demonization, which they argue is an external oppression or influence that can affect a Christian's soul and body.

They use the analogy of a house: a Christian's spirit belongs to God, but the soul and body can still be infiltrated by demonic influences. This distinction is crucial and is supported by scriptural examples of believers who experienced spiritual oppression, such as the woman whom Jesus said was bound by Satan for eighteen years. The Hammonds argue that if such oppression were impossible for believers, Jesus would not have needed to address it.

According to the book, demons do not simply invade a person's life arbitrarily. They require legal entry points, which the Hammonds identify as various forms of sin, trauma, and ungodly connections. These entry points include:

- Willful sin: Habitual sin that is not repented of can open the door to demonic influence. The book emphasizes that sin itself is not the demon, but it creates a foothold.
- Trauma and abuse: Severe emotional and physical trauma can create wounds in the soul that demons exploit. The Hammonds argue that deliverance often requires healing these wounds alongside casting out spirits.
- Generational curses: Patterns of sin and bondage that run in families can create legal grounds for demonic activity. The book provides extensive teaching on identifying and breaking generational curses.
- Ungodly soul ties: Deep emotional or sexual connections with ungodly individuals can create spiritual connections that allow demonic transfer.
- Occult involvement: Any participation in occult practices, even seemingly innocent ones, is considered a major entry point for demonic spirits.
- Rejection and bitterness: These emotional states are identified as particularly common entry points that must be addressed through forgiveness and inner healing.

Pigs In The Parlor provides a step-by-step methodology for conducting deliverance. This process is designed to be accessible to trained ministers but also practical enough for use in counseling settings. The key steps include:

1. Diagnosis: Identifying the presence of demonic activity through symptoms, history, and spiritual discernment. The book includes extensive lists of symptoms associated with various spirits.
2. Repentance and renunciation: The individual must repent of any sin that gave entry to the demon and renounce the spirit's influence. This is considered essential for removing legal grounds.
3. Commanding the spirit to leave: Using the authority of Jesus Christ, the minister commands the specific spirit to depart. The Hammonds emphasize that this must be done with faith and authority, not as a mere ritual.

4. Filling with the Holy Spirit: After the demon is expelled, the individual must be filled with the Holy Spirit to prevent the void from being reoccupied. This is a crucial step that the book stresses cannot be overlooked.
5. Follow-up and ongoing freedom: The book provides guidance for maintaining deliverance, including ongoing prayer, Scripture study, and lifestyle changes that prevent re-entry.

One of the most distinctive features of **Pigs In The Parlor** is its detailed catalog of specific demonic spirits and their manifestations. The Hammonds describe spirits of rejection, fear, lust, anger, pride, and many others, each with characteristic symptoms and behaviors. This catalog has been both praised for its practicality and criticized for its potential to foster an overly diagnostic approach to spiritual problems.

The authors argue that identifying specific spirits is helpful because it allows targeted prayer and command. Rather than a generic prayer for deliverance, knowing that a spirit of fear is present allows the minister to address that specific spirit directly. The book provides extensive descriptions of how each spirit manifests in thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and even physical sensations.

Controversies and Criticisms

Despite its popularity, **Pigs In The Parlor** has not been without controversy. Several theological criticisms have been raised by scholars and church leaders who question aspects of the Hammonds' framework.

Some critics argue that the book overemphasizes demonic activity at the expense of other spiritual and psychological factors. They suggest that complex human problems are sometimes reduced to demonic categories when they might be better addressed through counseling, medical intervention, or simple discipleship. This criticism is not unique to the Hammonds but applies to much of the deliverance movement as a whole.

Others question the biblical basis for some of the book's claims, particularly regarding the extent of demonic influence in believers' lives and the specificity with which demons can be identified. While the Hammonds cite Scripture extensively, some interpretations are contested within broader Christian scholarship.

A further criticism concerns the potential for the book's methodology to create fear rather than freedom. If readers become overly focused on identifying demons in every problem, some argue, they may develop an unhealthy preoccupation with the demonic realm rather than resting in the sufficiency of Christ.

Proponents of the book, however, argue that these criticisms often come from those who have not experienced the reality of deliverance ministry. They point to countless testimonies of individuals who found freedom through the principles taught in **Pigs In The Parlor** after years of struggling with conventional methods.

Practical Application for Today

For those seeking to apply the teachings of **Pigs In The Parlor** in a balanced and healthy way, several principles are worth considering.

First, approach deliverance with humility and dependence on the Holy Spirit. The book itself emphasizes that deliverance is ultimately the work of God, not a human technique. Methods and formulas are helpful tools, but they are not substitutes for genuine faith and reliance on God's power.

Second, integrate deliverance with other forms of ministry. Emotional wounds, behavioral patterns, and medical conditions should be addressed alongside spiritual issues. The Hammonds themselves recognized that deliverance often needs to be accompanied by inner healing and ongoing discipleship.

Third, maintain a focus on freedom in Christ rather than obsession with demons. The ultimate goal of deliverance is not to know every spirit by name but to walk in the freedom that Christ purchased. A balanced approach uses deliverance as a means to an end, not an end in itself.

Finally, seek accountability and community. The book recommends that deliverance be conducted in the context of the local church with proper oversight. Individuals should not attempt self-deliverance in isolation but should seek support from mature believers and church leaders.

Conclusion

Pigs In The Parlor remains a landmark work in the field of deliverance ministry, offering a practical and systematic approach to spiritual freedom that has helped countless individuals. While it is not without controversy, its core message of hope and restoration continues to resonate with those who struggle with persistent spiritual oppression.

The metaphor of pigs in a parlor reminds us that the presence of unclean things in our lives is not normal and not acceptable. Whether one fully embraces every aspect of the Hammonds' teaching or approaches it with caution, the book challenges readers to take seriously the reality of spiritual warfare and the victory that is available through Jesus Christ. For those seeking to understand deliverance ministry or to find freedom in their own lives, **Pigs In The Parlor** offers a comprehensive and time-tested resource that continues to influence Christian practice around the world.

Ultimately, the book points beyond itself to the One who has all authority over every unclean spirit. The pigs must leave the parlor, but the parlor itself must be filled with the presence and peace of the Holy Spirit. This is the promise and the goal of deliverance ministry, and it is this hope that has kept **Pigs In The Parlor** relevant for generations of believers seeking to walk in complete freedom.

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