

## Questions for Lesson 13: What is the Paranormal?

1. Politics is outside of the normal experience for most of us, and it frequently defies scientific explanation, so it is a paranormal area of study?

**Answer:** No. To quote Houdini, just because you cannot explain it doesn't mean that it is of a supernatural origin--be it a god or Satan. To be a paranormal area it must not be able to be explained by any normal technique. Politics is easy to explain in terms of greed, selfishness, a desire for power, and other human emotions.

2. What are three reasons why God would tell Christians to avoid the paranormal?

**Answer:** (A) It puts one's faith in things other than God, and things that don't work.  
(B) It diverts our energy from serving others to unproductive pursuits.  
(C) It frequently puts you in the path of dangerous people. Charles Manson, Jim Jones, and David Koresh are three modern examples of people who thought some deity was commanding what they did.

3. Why is belief in God not a paranormal belief system?

**Answer:** There is massive evidence from science and other disciplines that God does exist and that the Bible is factual and does give a productive way to lead one's life. Belief in quarks or the Higgs Boson or Higgs field are very similar in that the five senses can't be used to perceive them, but there is evidence that they exist.

4. There are four approaches to paranormal phenomena. What are they?

**Answer:** (A) They were and are real.  
(B) They were real in the past, but not today.  
(C) The whole subject is a scam--there is nothing that cannot be explained scientifically.  
(D) A combination of the above--i.e. they were real in the past but are a scam today. This last choice is the one that fits things like demon possession and miracles in the Bible in general.

5. What is the main biblical objection to the paranormal?

**Answer:** Belief in most paranormal claims denies that man is a free moral agent--that we are in control and can make choices.

6. What biblical passages indicate that Christians should not be concerned about being taken over by paranormal forces?

**Answer:** Phil 2:12 says that we can work out our own salvation. We could not do that if paranormal forces could take us over. Paranormal claims such as those on demon possession suggest that we can be taken over by something against our will and caused to be destroyed by forces outside the physical. Hebrews 4:15 says Jesus was tempted in every way as we are. If we could be taken over by paranormal forces against our will, Christ would have faced that same thing. I Corinthians 10:13 says God is in control and will not allow this, and it also promises God will provide a way out of any temptation or attack on us. Romans 8:28 claims God can make good come out of any experience, and paranormal experiences don't seem to fit that.

7. I Samuel 28:8-12 tells of a seance with the witch of Endor. What evidence do we have that this was not like seance claims of today?

**Answer:** The woman is terrified at what actually happens, suggesting she had a prepared result and that is not what took place. She was surprised to see Samuel appear.

8. What does the exorcism of Acts 19:13-16 have that is different from such procedures today?

**Answer:** The exorcists were depending on Paul and his power to cast the demon out, and the demon responded to them explaining where the power actually comes from.

9. What does I John 4:1-6 tell Christians to do in all matters related to the paranormal, and how are Christians to tell what is real and what is not.

**Answer:** Test every spirit. Those that are not in harmony with Christ as the Son of God are to be rejected. That would include most if not all of the claims of the paranormal today.

10. I Timothy 4:1 makes a prediction about the times in which we live. What is that prediction and how is it played out?

**Answer:** The passage says that "...some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons..." You may want to have some discussion about what kinds of this "deceiving spirits" would teach and how. What is happening today is certainly a fulfillment of the way mankind will function. It has been said that if you don't believe something, you will believe anything.