



DO NOT BE DECEIVED

Deception seems to be more and more a reality in our world today. Children are watching more and more TV and mimicking what they watch not knowing the reality of their actions until it is too late. Even as adults we have a hard time knowing what's real and what's fake or not true. The word deceit means deception or a trick. How many of us follow a trick or someone's deception because it seems the right thing to do or we've heard a voice tell us to do a certain thing. Deceive means to be **misled**. How many times have you been misled into doing something you didn't want to do? Maybe you did something just to belong to a group, or you may have done something secret and thought that no one will ever find out? We need to question who are we really following? If you have been battling with certain habits that you know are not Godly yet for some reason you can not seem to break free of, then it is time to grow and know that you can be free from this burden. Scripture tells us that the truth shall set us free. We must know the truth in order to not be deceived.

John 8:32, "**And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**" (KJV)

As Christians our faith is based on the word of God. Faith comes by hearing the word of God. However, for some of us, it may be hard to understand the word plus try to apply its meaning to our lives. Like a child we are told what not to do. We try hard to accomplish that purpose of not giving into temptation. But, it happens and we soon give up. I want to encourage you not to give up. We must acknowledge that we have an enemy who is against our well being. Even though we may struggle in the flesh it is really a spiritual battle that we are fighting. Most of us pray to God to remove us from this temptation and when the answer is not there we wonder what's happen. Why did God not answer our prayer? Soon doubt begins to play into our minds thinking we are no good and God does not love us anymore. What's the use of trying! Frustration sits in and we can not come to terms with the situation that we find ourselves in. Let me share the following excerpt of an email sent to me:

"I think that maybe God and I have finally gone our separate ways because of something I did and it scares me. So I do not feel like God would honor my prayer if I were to call out to him."

This dear child of God is really crying out for help but fear and doubt has taken hold of them and separated them from their relationship with God. We must know that sin does separate us from God. **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,"** Romans 5:12 (KJV). How is it that we can so easily lose sight of who we are in Christ? My friend, we have an enemy who is ever drawing us from the truth. However, we are told that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

1 John 1:9, "**If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**" (KJV)

We are told to come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (See Hebrews 4:16) Yet we can be so easily misled. We have a deceiver who goes after our minds to confuse, create doubt, and weaken our faith in God. His name is Satan. There are four scripture's that explains who he is.

1.) He is "**The God of this Age**". [2 Corinthians 4:4]

2.) He is "**The prince of the power of the air**". [Ephesians 2:2]

3.) He is "**The ruler of this world**". [John 12:31]

4.) "**The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one**". [1 John 5:19]

One of the main reasons why Jesus came and died on the cross is to overcome the evil one, (Satan). That means Satan does not have a hold over us, if we are a child of God. If you have accepted Christ as your personal Savior then you are free from the hold of Satan, or his influence. Let's look at the following scripture:

1 John 4:4, "**Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.**" (KJV)

You may have heard the statement; "The devil made me do it". If you do not take your place as a child of God then you may be under his influence. The power of suggestion is strong indeed and you may have heard a voice to urge you on. But, the choice is still ours to make. We will either follow Christ or follow after the evil one. The devil would love to be your scapegoat. But remember you have the choice. There is a way out for you. Scripture tells us to choose life and not death. It is interesting to see and read scriptures as to how we are to behave as servants of the Lord. Our mission is to instruct others in hope that God would grant repentance to that person who is trapped by the enemy and have them escape from the clutches of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. [See 2 Timothy 2:23 - 26]

We are not left defenseless. We have been given instructions and warnings in the Bible to be aware.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5, "For though we walk in the flesh, **we do not war according to the flesh**, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. {We are} **destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and {we are} taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.**" (NAS)

Every thought, voice, or action that is contrary to the character of God, we do not listen to, no matter how we feel. We do not base our faith on our feelings but on the word of God. Jesus is the author and the finisher of our faith.

Hebrews 12:2, "**Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.**" (KJV)

Therefore we look to Jesus who is ever interceding on our behalf. So we can have the confidence as we become doers of the word of God and not just hearer's only. We can take the steps to victory by Submitting to God and resisting the devil. Let's look at the following scriptures:

James 4:7-8, "**Submit your selves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you.**" (NIV)

We submit to God by placing our will under His will and authority, and then we resist the devil, which means to oppose actively every thing that is contrary to the character of God and His word. For example, you may have a thought to steal a particular item from a friend. Now you know that it is wrong and it does not follow what and who God is. His word says that you should not steal. So, you take action to oppose the thought by saying, "I am a child of God and His word says I am not to steal.

I now renounce this thought in the Name of Jesus." I will not listen to this thought anymore, for I stand in the Name of Jesus and in the Power of His Holy Spirit, I will walk in the truth of His word." You will be surprised how this simple but effective prayer can work in your life. You do not need to be deceived any longer. Try to memorize the following scripture:

Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (KJV)

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