

Lesson # 9 -- Deliverance From Deception.

Introduction

- A. The subject before us in this lesson, although rarely mentioned, is vitally important for the believer.
- B. The deception to which I am referring has to do with the Christian life. It is the deception that keeps the believer from maturity in Christ, from the joy of the Lord, from fruitfulness, from being an effective witness, and from being filled with the Holy Spirit.
- C. It is necessary for every believer to ask whether he is identified with a Biblical church. This is a responsibility each of us must face. However, the type of deception before us in this lesson, is far more subtle and therefore dangerous. The material we must cover is related to our knowledge of God, ourselves, salvation, and how to live the Christian life.
- D. The theme of this lesson is found in the promise and the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth John 16:13.

Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth, John 17:17.

I. The Source of Deception.

- A. The effects of the Fall of Man and sin, Ephesians 4:17,18.

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.

Observation: From the Scripture we understand that we were created in the image of God (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). A part of what this meant is that we were given the capacity to know God and the truth. In the Fall we were so severely damaged and the human race lost so much of the truth that was known, we find our fallen state described in the most negative terms possible. This is where we must begin to understand deception - we do not have within ourselves the ability to be our own authority.

- B. The effects of the sinful world-culture in which we live.

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, Ephesians 2:2,3.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. I John 2:16,17

Observation: These verses remind us that the goals, purposes, priorities, and values of the world are directly opposed to those of the Word of God. We are in the midst of this world system and live among those who shape their lives according to its selfish and self-centered patterns. This cannot help but have an effect on us.

C. The effects of the work of Satan, Revelation 12:9.

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. He was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Observation: One of the main objectives of Satan is to keep the believer from a full knowledge of the truth. If this can be done the Christian will not be able to live in spiritual maturity and fulfillment for the glory of God. The truth has been designed by God to set the believer free (John 8:32) and the Devil knows this.

Summary: All believers know the three truths we have just considered. It is important for us to take the necessary precautions in our daily life and to initiate the correct procedures that will enable us to be free from deception. One tragic part of deception is that it renders one unable to estimate the loss it brings into our lives. Occasionally we can see this in the lives of others, almost never in our own.

II. The Effects of Deception.

A. The Biblical Principle: the total person has been affected.

The heart (person) is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it. Jeremiah 17:9

For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile the man. Mark 7:21,22

Observation: The meaning of these verses is clear - the total person has been brought under the influence and destruction of sin. By use of the word "heart" the Bible reminds us that man in his totality and innermost being has been led away from the truth and is susceptible to continual deception. In fact, man as fallen, deceives himself.

B. The Biblical Explanation: all the abilities and functions of man have been affected by sin.

1. Deception in the area of authority.

There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Proverbs 14:12

All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits. Proverbs 16:2

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Proverbs 3:5,6

Observation: These verses bring the issue clearly before us - we do not have the ability to direct our own life - but we are convinced we can! Even in Eden man was in need of special revelation. Now, even as believers, we may arrogantly take the reins of life into our own hands.

2. Deception in the area of goals.

And He spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do, I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? Luke 12:16-21

Observation: How many of us find the key to our life in the teaching of this parable? Sin has rendered us unable to understand how to live for the glory of God. Even though we may confess this with our lips, our heart and our goals in life may revolve around a selfish and self-centered objective.

3. Deception in the area of fulfillment.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Mark 8:35,36

Observation: We were created by God to find our fulfillment in Himself. He would be our basic satisfaction and through Him all of life would be satisfying through fellowship with Him. Through sin we have lost our satisfaction. Now there is nothing that brings true fulfillment. Even the Christian must learn how to have the joy of the Lord. Too often, even as believers, we live without the fulfillment that has been provided for us.

4. Deception in the area of priorities.

And He said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts, for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. Luke 16:15

Observation: We all know that the values and priorities we have chosen structure our daily life and determine our character and future. This is an area where we are all highly vulnerable to deception. We must seek God and search His Word in regard to our daily priorities. Too often our values are not only highly questionable - they lead us out of the will of God. We must ask if our priorities are "worth it".

5. Deception in the area of pride.

They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God, for the spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them (deception of idolatry), and they have not known the Lord. And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face, therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity, Judah also shall fall with them. Hosea 5:4,5

The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high, that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground. Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord. Obadiah 3,4

Observation: These verses remind us of how John describes the world as being characterized as "the pride of life" (I Jn. 2:16). Our pride which grows out of the viewpoint that we are sufficient for the occasion - deceives us. Then through that deception we live in such a way that we grieve the Holy Spirit and fail to do the will of God. The end of such an attitude is to come under God's judgment. It is so easy for us, even as believers, to think we are doing what is right.

III. Our Vulnerability to Deception.

A. We are vulnerable to being deceived through money, Matthew 13:22.

He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the Word and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word and he becometh unfruitful.

Observation: God created us so that we would find our security in Himself. As fallen people we lost that relationship with the comfort and security which accompanied it. Now, even as believers, we often attempt to substitute something tangible for the True and Living God. Money stands at the head of the list. Because of its utility, and scarcity, we find ourselves gathering and treasuring money for the sake of security. We must watch for this form of deception. The covetous person is an idolater and will not go to heaven (Eph. 5:5).

B. We are vulnerable to being deceived through pride, Galatians 6:3.

For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

Observation: This verse explains the content of pride - thinking ourselves to be something or to have something - when all of that is not true. All of this will deceive us. The effects of such deception will lead to a failure to pray, to trust God, to seek the truth in the Scripture, to depend on the Holy Spirit, to fellowship with the people of God. It will also lead to a false trust and dependence on our own resources. This does not mean the Christian must look upon himself as inferior and without self worth. We are God's inheritance and are precious in His sight. But - we must live according to the truth.

C. We are vulnerable to being deceived through our desires, Eph. 4:22.

That ye put off concerning the former conversation (manner of life) the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

Observation: The desires which characterize the life of the non-Christian are here described as "deceitful". This means that they did not satisfy. The sin principle or fleshly nature which we as believers possess, is also characterized by the same desires. The content of these desires will differ from one person to another - but we all have them and we all are susceptible to deception through them.

D. We are vulnerable to being deceived through sin, Hebrews 3:13.

But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Observation: Here we are reminded that every form of sin will deceive us. This should alert us to examine our beliefs. Do we have the right concept of God, the Bible, life, values, ourselves, etc? This verse also shows us that such an act of deception will harden us. The passage is speaking of the revelation of God. Sin will deceive us and then harden us to truth. The warning before us in this verse is of vital importance. Only through the Scripture and under the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the people of God - do we have a measure of protection from deception.

IV. The Biblical Warnings Regarding Deception.

- A. We may be deceived through misunderstanding prosperity, Deut. 11:14-16.

That I will give you the rain . . . corn . . . wine . . . oil . . . grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full. Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived and ye turn aside and serve other gods and worship them.

- B. We may be deceived through misunderstanding worldly wisdom, I Cor. 3:18,19.

Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

- C. We may be deceived through misunderstanding salvation, I Cor. 6:9,10.

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (See also Ephesians 5:5,6)

- D. We may be deceived through misunderstanding providence, Gal. 6:7.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

- E. We may be deceived through misunderstanding faith, James 1:22.

But be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

- F. We may be deceived through misunderstanding Biblical religion, James 1:26.

If any man among you seem to be religious and bridled his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

- G. We may be deceived through misunderstanding our sinfulness, I John 1:8.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

- H. We may be deceived through misunderstanding the effects of salvation, I John 3:7-9.

Little children, let no man deceive you, he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous . . . Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

V. The Divine Provision Regarding Deception.

A. We have been given the Word of God.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path, Psalm 119:105.

Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth, John 17:17.

And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, Ephesians 6:17.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, II Timothy 3:16,17.

Observation: God has given us His Word. Our privilege and responsibility is to learn the Word of God and take refuge in its teaching.

B. We have been given the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak, and He will shew you things to come. He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you, John 16:13,14.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God, I Cor. 2:12.

But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him, I John 2:27.

Observation: The Holy Spirit of Truth has come to teach us the revelation of God and keep us from deception. We must learn how to cooperate with Him through a study of the Bible and a holy walk whereby we practice the teaching of Scripture.

C. We have been given fellow believers to help us.

But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, I Timothy 3:15.

But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, Hebrews 3:13.

Observation: We have a responsibility to help one another. We must learn the Word of God, live it in daily life, and reach out to one another. We must also be willing to be taught by others. We can only succeed through the help of one another.