

I. WHAT IS DECEPTION

A. The Definition of Deception

1. Deception is an act or statement which mislead or hides the truth, or promotes a belief, a concept or an idea that is not true.
2. To Deceive someone is "to cause them to accept as true or valid what is false or inva[lid]" It implies imposing a false idea or belief.
3. To be carried off, or to be led astray.
 - It is often done for personal gain or advantage.

B. The Origin of Deception

1. Who is behind all Deception?

Revelation 12:9 (NKJV)

*9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called **the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world;** he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

- All of this world's deceptions have their origin in Satan
 - He is behind every deception in this world
2. According to John 8:44, we learn that Satan is the Master and originator of Deception.

John 8:44 (NKJV)

*44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, **and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.***

- Lying is a part of who he is. His desire is to lie.
- Jesus calls the devil the **father of all lies**.

C. Deception: Satan's Greatest Strategy

1. Satan's most effective strategy in this world is deception

- The devil's strategy is so effective that all throughout the bible we are warned to guard against his devices

2 Corinthians 2:11 (NKJV)

*11 lest Satan should **take advantage** of us; for we are not ignorant of his **devices**.*

- Paul makes references to the fact that the devil is out to take advantage of us
- The word “advantage” comes from a Greek word that means to outwit, to trick, to take advantage of someone through some sneaky, underhanded way.

Paul describes Satan as one who is constantly scheming and conniving, and coming up with underhanded ways to hurt us or deliberately mess up our plans, health, marriage, business, reputation, and family.

2. How effective is the Devil's deceptive ways?

- Eve becomes the very first victim of Satan's deceptive ways.

Genesis 3:13 (NKJV)

13 And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived (beguiled KJV) me, and I ate."

Genesis 3:13 (AMP)

13 And the Lord God said to the woman, What is this you have done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled (cheated, outwitted, and deceived) me, and I ate.

- **It was through deception that sin entered our universe.**

This is why deception is such a serious matter because deception caused man to sin and rebel against their creator, bringing separation between God and man, and bringing curses upon themselves and all of mankind all because one person chose to believe a lie.

- Lets' look at another example of how destructive his deception is.

2 Timothy 2:16-18 (NKJV)

16 But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.

*17 And their message will spread like cancer. **Hymenaeus and Philetus** are of this sort,*

18 who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.

- Hymenaeus and Philetus had deviated from the truth which means they once knew the truth.
- Having heard from false teachers that the resurrection had past already, both these former believers were deceived into believing it as truth and went around deceiving others with the same false teachings causing others to deviate from the truth

3. Being deceived will always cost us something

1 Timothy 2:14 (NKJV)

14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

- **Romans 5:12** says that through one man sin entered into the world and death spread to all men.
- **Romans 5:19** says that through one man's disobedience many were made sinners

Satan's deceptive nature is so powerful that he deceived 1/3 of the angels to leave God and follow him

Satan is a Master Liar!!!!

Satan is such a good and dangerous liar that he can make a lie look and sound like the truth

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 (AMP)

13 For such men are false apostles [spurious, counterfeits], deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles (special messengers) of Christ (the Messiah).

*14 And it is no wonder, **for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light;***

*15 So it is not surprising **if his servants also masquerade as ministers of righteousness. [But] their end will correspond with their deeds.***

In other words, he is not coming at you looking like a lie, but looking like truth which makes him such a dangerous liar.

II. WARNINGS AGAINST DECEPTION

A. Warnings against being Deceived

1. Jesus Warnings

- Jesus Himself warned us not to be deceived.

Matthew 24:4-5 (NKJV)

*4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "**Take heed (look out, beware) that no one deceives you.***

*5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' **and will deceive many.***

Matthew 24:24 (NKJV)

*24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders **to deceive**, if possible, even the elect.*

Luke 21:8 (NKJV)

*8 And He said: "**Take heed that you not be deceived.** For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time has drawn near.' **Therefore do not go after them.***

2. Paul's Warning to the Church

- Paul's concern for the Corinthian church

2 Corinthians 11:3 (NKJV)

*3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent **deceived Eve** by his **craftiness**, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

*4 For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted--**you may well put up with it!***

- Paul warns the Ephesian church

Ephesians 5:5-6 (NKJV)

5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

6 **Let no one deceive you** with empty words, for because of **these things** the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

3. The scriptures warns us against deception over and over again.

- Here are just a few other texts that warn us:

1 Corinthians 15:33 (NKJV)

33 Do not be deceived: *"Evil company corrupts good habits."*

2 Timothy 3:13 (NKJV)

13 *But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, **deceiving and being deceived.***

2 John 1:7 (NKJV)

7 *For **many deceivers have gone out into the world** who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a **deceiver** and an antichrist.*

And so the Scriptures warns us of deceivers in the world and in the church, warning us not to be

deceived by them, not to be carried away by liars who say exactly the opposite of what God's Word says, who call good or "no big deal" what God calls sin.

The Devil is not going to come at you looking like a lie, but looking like truth

B. Many Faces of Deception

1. Satan is described here as someone with many disguises

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 (AMP)

13 For such men are false apostles [spurious, counterfeits], deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles (special messengers) of Christ (the Messiah).

*14 And it is no wonder, **for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light;***

15 So it is not surprising if his servants also masquerade as ministers of righteousness. [But] their end will correspond with their deeds.

2. One of his disguises is Manipulation

- Manipulation - To manipulate is to handle or control unfairly in a skillful manner, or to influence for one's own advantage.

- Manipulation forces, or attempts to force another person to do what he or she would not do otherwise.
- Example of Manipulation - Delilah

Judges 16:15-17 (NKJV)

15 Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your great strength lies."

*16 And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death, 17 that he told her **all his heart**, and said to her, "No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. **If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.**"*

DECEPTION WILL COST YOU SOMETHING

“If the Devil can lie to you and make you believe that the lie is truth, then the devil can own you and hold you hostage.”

3. Another disguise is Flattery

- Flattery is a lie covered in chocolate.
- It’s sweet on the outside, but bitter and insincere on the inside.

The purpose of flattery in the negative sense is to gain favor or advantage over someone.

Jude 1:16 (NKJV)

*16 These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, **flattering people to gain advantage.***

- Paul had something to say about flattery.

Romans 16:17-18 (NKJV)

17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

*18 For those who are such **do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.***

Proverbs 14:15 (NKJV)

*15 **The simple believes every word,** But the prudent considers well his steps.*

4. Deceiving Ourselves

- Other texts warn us against deceiving ourselves.

James 1:22-24 (NKJV)

*22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, **deceiving yourselves.***

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;

24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

1 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

18 Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.

1 John 1:8 (NKJV)

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

The devil will use these devices; lies, manipulation, flattery, to trick you and gain advantage over you and to eventually own you.

III.HOW TO AVOID DECEPTION

A.Spiritual Discernment

2. Two Important Elements

- There are two key elements to avoiding deception in which one cannot do without the other.

- They are...
 - * God's Word
 - * Spiritual Discernment
- They both go hand in hand together

2. What is Spiritual Discernment?

1 Corinthians 12:10 (NKJV)

10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

- Discernment is the ability to make sound judgements and decisions by becoming aware of, or recognizing what is not readily obvious.
- Discernment is the ability to judge or to distinguish or identify between what is right and wrong, what is wise and unwise, what is good and what is best, and what is good and evil.

1 Corinthians 12:10 (AMP)

10 "...to another the ability to discern and distinguish between [the utterances of true] spirits [and false ones],..."

3. Example of Discernment (Barnabas & Saul)

Acts 13:5-10 (NKJV)

5 And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as their assistant.

6 Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, **a false prophet**, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus,

7 who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. **This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.**

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, **seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.**

9 Then Saul, who also is called Paul, **filled with the Holy Spirit**, looked intently at him

10 and said, "**O full of all deceit and all fraud**, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?

- The false prophet was exposed by Saul's ability to discern deceit and fraud, calling him "son of the devil" because he was being influenced by the author of deceit
- The Lord places a high value on these spiritual gifts and He desires that every believer operate in these giftings.

1 Corinthians 14:1 (NLT)

1 **Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives—especially the ability to prophesy.**

- BY OPERATING IN THIS GIFT, WE'RE INVITING GOD TO BE INTIMATELY INVOLVED IN ALL OUR DECISION-MAKING.

- Spiritual discernment protects us from being deceived into making decisions or going in the wrong direction based on what looks good or feels good.

1 John 4:1 (NKJV)

*1 Beloved, **do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.***

3. And as believers, we need to develop a discerning spirit, otherwise, how will we know what is true?

GO TO HEBREWS 5:11-14

Hebrews 5:11-13 (NKJV)

11 of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.

Hebrews 5:14 (NKJV)

*14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use **have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.***

Hebrews 5:14 (AMP)

*14 But solid food is for full-grown men, for those whose senses and mental faculties are trained **by practice to discriminate and***

distinguish between what is morally good and noble and what is evil and contrary either to divine or human law.

- Notice the connection between God's word and the ability of discernment.
- The only way believers can develop the gift of discernment to guard against deception is to ground themselves in God's Word.
- The more time we spend filling our hearts and minds with God's thoughts, the more discerning we will be.

James 1:22 (NKJV)

22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, **deceiving yourselves.**

- Just knowing biblical truth is not enough. You must put it into practice so that it becomes more than head knowledge.
- If we lack the word, we'll lack discernment
- The Word of God contains principles and instructions to help guide our decision making.

2 Timothy 3:13-17 (NKJV)

13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, **deceiving and being deceived.**

14 But you must **continue in the things which you have learned** and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,

- 15 *and that from childhood **you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise** for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*
- 16 *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*
- 17 *that the man of God may be **complete, thoroughly equipped** for every good work.*

Psalm 119:105 (NKJV)

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

- In addition to this, we have the Holy Spirit, where the gift of discernment comes from, as our Helper, whose assignment is to guide us into all truth.

John 16:13 (NKJV)

13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

- Our Helper will teaches us the wisdom of God's way and knows exactly how to apply it to our unique circumstances.

John 14:26 (NKJV)

26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.