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## ARE YOU DECEIVED?

**“ And JESUS answered and said to them: Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying “I am the Christ,” and will deceive many.”  
(Matthew 24: 4,5)**

In the 24th chapter of Matthew our Lord clearly tells us what signs to look for as we approach the “end of the age”. He warns us that “Many” believers would be deceived by false teachers. These false teachers, we are told by JESUS, would use His name and many false prophets would rise up and deceive many. (V.11) JESUS declared that false prophets would rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. (V.24) Now I do not know about you, but these warnings cause me to fear and tremble, because I know that I too could end up deceived.

My brothers and sisters, let me state clearly at the outset of this message that I make no claim that I am “deception free”. Neither do I consider myself to be less vulnerable to deception than anyone else. While I do not believe myself to be presently deceived in spiritual matters, I never the less acknowledge that I could be. One thing that I am certain of. If the Holy Spirit does not protect me from the spirits of deception, I would soon be deceived - believing the lie to be true, and leading all those who would follow into the same deception.

Some time ago I was having a conversation with a preacher friend of mine, and I made the statement that “I knew I was wrong somewhere, but I did not know where”. My friend quickly said to me that he was not wrong in what he knew, but, he said he knew only “in part”. The second part of his statement was true (see 1 Corinthians 13:9), however the first part where he stated that he was not wrong in what he knew, had a clear ring of spiritual pride in it. In his heart, my friend was convinced that what he believed, and all that he believed was truth. If we would admit it, my guess is that all or nearly all of us, sincerely believe that we are right in what we believe and we are sure that we are not deceived. In my opinion, this is a very dangerous attitude of mind.

Obviously, when one is deceived, they believe they are right. They sincerely believe in their heart that they are correct and will think, speak and act in accordance with what they believe. Most of us believe what someone else has told or taught us to believe. Many of us who call ourselves Christians and profess to follow JESUS have taken His word and have added to it and taken away from it. We have come up with varied translations and interpretations of the true meaning of God’s word. We have even organized ourselves into separate groups, depending upon what we believe to be truth. Some of us believe that once saved we are always saved. Others believe we can lose our salvation and gain it back over and over. Then there are those who believe that GOD Himself established their denomination or church. The Catholics believe that theirs is the only “true church”, while the charismatic Pentecostals believe that speaking in “tongues” is the one certain evidence of being baptized in the Holy Spirit. Of course there are others (and I know some) that believe that speaking in tongues is of the devil. We Christians cannot agree

upon what God's word says concerning baptism, teaching with authority, divine healing, head coverings, divorce, homosexuality, submitting to authority, heaven or hell etc, etc, etc. The fact that we disagree should not surprise any true believer. After all, GOD'S ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8)

**“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:9)**

The fact that we disagree is not the problem. The problem is that we are each correct in our own minds. We are so convinced that we are right, that we will even risk an eternity in Hell to defend our position. May God have mercy!

Folks, somebody is deceived! If God were as split, divided and confused as we seem to be, there would be no creation, much less human life. The evidence is overwhelming and undeniable. The vast majority of we who profess to believe in JESUS and who call Him Lord, are either deceived or are in open rebellion against His word. Either way, we have a major problem with a Holy God whose very word will judge us in the end. (see John 12:48) We have a major problem with a God who has sworn not to alter His word. (see Psalms 89:34) We have a major problem with a God who has declared that His word would never pass away. (see Matthew 24:35. Mark 13:31 and Luke 21:33) Over and over and over again our FATHER has warned us about treating His word lightly. He declared through the pen of His Apostle Paul that when it came to His word, that only His word was true, and every man a liar. (see Romans 3:4) Oh yes! We have a big problem, and it is a lot bigger than we have realized. Deception, in relation to GOD'S word is now spreading across the land and around the world like a summer firestorm being driven by hurricane force winds.

Is it any wonder that we Christians now match the secular world in the matter of sin? Is it any wonder that we have become lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God? Is it any wonder that sickness and disease are sweeping through the churches and meeting little spiritual resistance? Is it any wonder that so few of us actually fear our God? Is it any wonder that so many of us have fallen under the influence of the Jezebel spirit of control, manipulation and domination and call it “leadership”? Is it any wonder that what we call Christian television is now dominated by voices that look and sound like carnival barkers and hucksters as they plead for more and more and more - money? Is it any wonder that we pay little attention to “every word” that has come out of the mouth of God, even though He has declared that we cannot live except by “His every word” (see Matthew 4:4) Are we now so deceived that we truly believe that we can turn a deaf ear to every word uttered by a holy GOD to unholy man? Are we so deceived that we can loudly plead the blood of JESUS over our mocking of His word and believe that we will not suffer for having done so? Are we so deceived that we now believe that we can bring shame and reproach on His name and get off free and clear?

**“Do not add to His word,  
Lest He rebuke you, and you  
be found a liar.” (Proverbs 30:6)**

One of the last things that the Lord JESUS CHRIST commanded that we do is found in Matthew 28: 19,20. Listen -

**“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,**

**baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,  
teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo  
I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”**

JESUS CHRIST commanded those who believe to “go” and “make disciples”. He also told us to “teach them” to observe or “obey all things that He had commanded that we do”. The people of God have a long history of turning a deaf ear to the word of God. It started in the garden with Eve and I would submit to you that nothing much has changed with the heart of man until this very day. Lucifer attacked Eve by questioning the word of God. (see Genesis 3:1-19) Eve then fell under the influence of the spirit of deception. What appeared to be good and desirable and right was in fact death, darkness, suffering and pain. Eve believed in her heart that she was right, but in fact she was deceived. We are no different today, as we listen to the same spirit of deception that approached Eve, Lucifer himself. The approach is always the same - “Did God say?” and then a statement that would directly contradict God’s word, such as - “it doesn’t really mean that” or “that only applied to the people of that day, it no longer applies to you”. This hiss of Hell is frequently heard saying - “you need to understand Hebrew or Greek to actually understand what the Bible says”. Of course the voice of the one speaking tells you that they understand Hebrew or Greek. It sounds good. It even reasons out to be right in the mind of man, but if that man’s interpretation does not confirm God’s word, that man is speaking on Lucifer’s behalf. Only pain and suffering will follow those who step into the snare of deception. God’s word delivered in a 99% pure form with only a 1% impurity is just as deadly as if it - God’s word - was 100% impure. Think of it this way. Lets say that your physical body is 100% healthy. Now we inject into your body “one” tiny malignant cell. You then go have a through physical examination including blood work, Cat Scan, etcetera. The result of your physical states that you are in good health. You feel good, you look good and in your heart you believe that you are 100% healthy. However, somewhere deep inside your being there is one tiny malignant cell that has now begun to multiply. Left unchecked long enough that one tiny cell will destroy your entire body. Do not ever think that you can allow God’s word to be altered in your heart and not suffer for having done so. You cannot!

Several years ago I was given two dreams over a period of time, that I believed then were from God. Today I am convinced they were. Both dealt with the issue of deception. In the first dream, I was in a large auditorium that was filled with people. It was not a Church but rather like a theatre. No one was at the podium speaking, so I turned around in my seat and was talking to the folks behind me. Then the speaker began to speak. I recognized the speakers voice as that of a good personal friend. As I ended my conversation with those behind me, I turned around to listen to my good friend who was a man that I had known for years. What I saw behind the podium shocked me. I was speechless. Standing behind the podium was one of the most beautiful women that I had ever seen. But the voice coming out of her mouth was clearly that of my male friend. I continued to stare at this woman. There was no doubt, she was a woman and a beautiful one at that. But the voice - the voice was my friend. All of a sudden I heard a loud voice saying - “All things are not as they appear to be!” Had you asked me to bet my life on the certainty of the voice being that of my friend, before I turned around, I would have - and would have lost my life.

The second dream was different. I was allowed to see into a house where a mother and her children were in a panic. It was very late at night. The mother and her children were alone. Outside the house there were several evil men who were trying to get to the woman and children. I knew that they desired to kill, rape, steal and destroy. The mother was running from room to room locking windows and doors. I was allowed to physically feel the mother’s fear and terror. It was horrible. All of a sudden the

mother, with children in tow bolted out of the back door and fled around the house to the front yard. At the same time, I saw a Kentucky State Police cruiser speeding down the street toward the house. I watched the cruiser skid to a stop, the door flew open and the State Trooper jumped out. I heard the trooper's radio in the background. The woman and children ran into the trooper's arms, and again I was allowed to physically feel her relief as she sensed safety and deliverance from harm. It was a wonderful feeling. Then the trooper revealed himself to be one of them. They were caught in the horror of deception. All of a sudden, I heard the same loud voice - "All things are not as they appear to be"! I woke up.

I believe these two dreams were given to warn me of the danger of deception. I further believe they are a warning to you. What seems to be right - what sounds right - what feels right and what one believes to be right, does not necessarily make it right. Be assured that Lucifer is a master of deception, and apart from the presence of the Holy Spirit of God, we are no match for him. No match what so ever.

**“And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.**

**Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also  
transform themselves into ministers of righteousness.”**

**(2 Corinthians 11:14,15)**

Saints of God please remember when the spirit of deception comes, which will either be Lucifer himself or one of his demons, they will appear to be light and righteousness. Also please remember that GOD'S word will be used. The enemy will attack you according to your personality. He will use our FATHER'S word to convince us that he is right and if we are not looking only to JESUS for our protection, we will be quickly ensnared by the enemy. We will then follow the dictates of our own hearts, all the while loving to have it so. May God have Mercy!

My friends I beg you. If you are following a man, a church, or a denomination - STOP! Let me be really personal. Do not follow any man, regardless of how much light he may have, regardless of how righteous or holy he may appear to be. Do not listen to the voice of man. Listen to the Holy Spirit of God. Do not take man's word as truth, even if he claims to be speaking God's word or claims that he has authority over you. Get into the word of God and search out the matter for yourself. Look only to JESUS as "the Head of His body". Do not even trust me or my writings. I have already told you that while I do not believe that I am deceived, I nevertheless acknowledge that I could be. Take what I say and check it against FATHER'S word. Then ask FATHER to confirm that which is of Him and remove the rest. Even if you find what I have written to be true, please, please, please do not look to me - look only to JESUS. Sooner or later I will disappoint you or fail you, not because I desire to, but because I am just your brother and nothing more. Focus all of your devotion, all of your allegiance, all of your praise, all of your worship and all of your love on JESUS alone. He is sufficient to keep you out of harms way and that He will do *if* you will listen to Him. (see Jude 24, 25) If you refuse to turn only to JESUS as your ultimate authority and truth (see John 14:6), then know that you are in great danger. FATHER has warned us, Listen -

**The coming of the lawless one is according to the  
working of Satan, with all power, signs and lying wonders,  
And with all unrighteous deception among those who perish,  
because they did not receive the love of truth, that they might be saved.**

**And for this reason God will send them strong  
delusion, that they should believe the lie,  
That they all may be condemned who did not believe  
the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”**

**(2 Thessalonians 2: 9-12)**

It makes no difference how religious or spiritual we may be. It makes no difference how faithful we are to a Church, or about how much money we give to the needy. It makes no difference how much time we spend in prayer meetings or in doing good works. If we do not submit our all to the “Truth”, JESUS, then we have little hope for the future.

**“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit,  
according to the tradition of men, according to the basic  
principals of the world, and not according to Christ.  
For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;  
And you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”**  
**(Colossians 2: 8-10)**

In most cases deception enters into the life of a believer or group of believers in a very subtle way. This spirit of Hell eats away at the truth until the believer does not know the difference between the holy and the unholy. Those in positions of leadership are extremely vulnerable. If a leader becomes deceived, he or she will unwittingly lead all of those who follow them into the same deception. This delights Lucifer and his agents. I want to share two high profile examples of just how deceived leaders can become.

On Saturday, May 10th *The Charlotte Observer*, the major newspaper of Charlotte, North Carolina, carried a story about Carlton Pearson. Carlton Pearson is a long time leader in the full gospel movement and is well known in many Christian circles. Pearson was reported to now be preaching the “doctrine of inclusion” that everyone is saved no matter what they do. Selwyn Crawford of *The Dallas Morning News* quotes Pearson as follows. “*It is reasonable that Satan himself will go to Heaven.*” “*It’s possible*”, says Pearson, “*that God could have made a mistake in condemning Satan to eternity in Hell.*” This my friends is a doctrine of devils - the hiss of Hell and deception in full bloom!

In the fall and early winter of 1999 Benny Hinn made several public statements that were documented in writing and by audio recording. *The Calvary Contender* Vol. XVI, No. 24, dated December 15, 1999, published Hinn’s comments. In addition to my reviewing the printed report that I received by e-mail on April 26th, I have also listened to the audio recording twice. It is shocking to say the least. Most of his comments that I share here were the result of an interview with Paul Crouch of Trinity Broadcasting Network.

Hinn said; “*I place a curse on every man and woman that will stretch his hand against this anointing. I curse that man who dares to speak a word against this ministry. But any man, any woman that raises his or her hand in blessing toward this ministry, I bless that man.*” Hinn also said in the Crouch interview the following. “*People, I am telling you, I feel the anointing talking to me. People are going to be canceling funeral services, and bring their dead in caskets, placing them before a TV set, waiting for God’s power to come through and touch them. I see their loved ones picking up the hands of*

*the dead, and letting them touch the screen, and people are being raised as their hands touch that screen. TBN will no longer be just a television network, it will be an extension of heaven to earth. The Lord has just said these words to me. TBN will be an extension of heaven to the earth, like a tube from heaven that the earth can look and say I am looking at heaven. I'm partaking of heaven. I'm getting connected to heaven through this TV tube. It is heaven's signal to earth, it will be as though heaven is transmitting and earth is receiving thru the TV set. So if you want to go to heaven, you want to see heaven, you want to taste heaven, turn on that channel."* This is deception in full bloom. This is the hiss of Hell being spread around the world. Nearly four years have passed since this internationally known Christian leader made these comments and he is still going strong today. Sadly, untold thousands are following this man who appears to be light. Oh the deception - May God have mercy.

To those in leadership positions who are aware of the deception that Pearson, Hinn or others are spreading and keep silent, I say to you - Shame on you! Shame on you! for not protecting the sheep. Shame, Shame, Shame on you!

Just before the Apostle Paul was beheaded for preaching JESUS CHRIST alone, he wrote two letters to Timothy. In his second letter he warned us as follows: "But evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." (3:13)

Dear brothers and sisters I plead with you, take your Bibles and steal away to the "secret place". Turn away from the flesh and deception of man and yield yourself to JESUS alone. He will protect you from all deception. In the shadow of His holiness all darkness will withdraw from you. If you are "born again", you are one with Him. (see John 14:20) He loves you more than you can imagine. He is jealous for you and He asks of you only that you devote yourselves wholly unto Him and love Him with all of your heart. No living human loves you as He does. No living human will protect you as He will. Abide in Him, obey Him and follow Him alone.

**"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,  
And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,  
To God our Savior, who alone is wise,  
Be glory and majesty, dominion and power,  
Both now and forever. Amen."**

God Bless,

Tom