

Meeker Christian Church October 23, 2022 DECEPTION

Matthew 24:4 NIV *Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you.*

We all know and have a definition of the word "deception" in our mind. But in part because of that familiarity with the word, we have become complacent as to what the reality and effect of it is in our culture and lives today. ///

Picking up from where we left off last week, there are two forces in the human experience. The force of good and the force of evil. They are both evident and real experiences in every moment of our lives. The big difference is evil has been deceptively accepted as harmless and only a result of ones own personal definition and imagination within accepted cultural standards!!!

Whereas good has been deceptively described as overbearing, domineering, dictatorial while violating ones personal preferences and self authority. // Exactly the same deceptive lying tool that satan used in the Garden of Eden record thousands of years ago.

Those of us who understand and accept the Bible as God's instruction to mankind for good and righteousness, should be reminded of deception, it's source, purpose, and result./// We get this very direct instruction from Jesus' mouth: Matthew 24:4 *Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you.* And later in the same chapter Jesus declares in very strong language His description of the end times as a warning for all generations of human life on earth that deception would remain, continue and increase. Matthew 24:24 *KJV For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*

Deception is present, all around and is and will continuing becoming more frequent, more clever, more diabolical and more destructive. *if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.* That is why we are reviewing this subject today – so you – God's elect in this generation will have armor against and to defeat satan's deceptive practices.

satan uses deception to send the souls of naive' persons to eternal punishment, and believe me he has his eye on you and me and anyone who claims Jesus as Lord. Thus the importance and urgency of this reminder. Turn with me to Genesis 3:1-5 and the source and practice of deception **3** *Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had*

made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”² The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’” ⁴“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman.⁵ “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

Listen carefully, get hold of the devils first application of the lying tool of deception Gen 3:4 “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” Ha! the same hook that is still being used to set in the jaw of those who make themselves equal to or even greater than god – whether outright deliberately and vocally or by action and activity.

All history and the condition of our world today is a result of that Genesis 3 encounter and failure to recognize and righteously respond to deception.

Are there any Denver Bronco fans in here? How did you feel when they were tied at the end of the game and went into overtime. Hopeful? How did you feel when they lost in overtime? Disappointed, frustrated, angry, whatever? A thousand times greater is the Christians sense of disappointment, frustration, and anger with the experience, identification and encounter with deception!!!

Study Genesis chapters 2 and 3 again and you will note how the devil DISPUTES God’s word then DISPLACES GOD’S WORD by lying satanic deception!

I have heard all too often that we need not allow something that someone thinks perfectly good to become evil because of it’s heritage or the vestiges of tradition attached to it. They say, we are living in an age of enlightenment when sophisticated persons can do their research and arrive at sensible conclusions regarding culture, habits and traditions. Deception cannot trick or otherwise affect us!

Those are beautiful sounding words and arguments you have heard or observed. But for today let’s examine some scripture and hear the truth from God, first from the Old Testament by reading from Deuteronomy 18:9-13 *When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. **10** Let no one be found among*

you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, 11 or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. 12 Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD; because of these same detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you. 13 You must be blameless before the LORD your God.

And from the New Testament 1 Timothy 4:1-3. *The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. 2 Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. 3 They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.*

With this background let me give you a teeny, tiny sample of the result of deception in our world, nation and it's impact in our lives, please keep in mind we are dealing with just two forces, Good and evil:

The evil one planned and manipulated for hundreds of years the development of the occult that has reached epidemic proportions in this generation. The word sorcery used in scripture in the Greek language is pharmicia, in English it is translated pharmacy or drugs and implies use and abuse.

Apply that knowledge and understanding to the recent news headlines: **Fentanyl drug overdoses have become the No. 1 cause of death among US adults, ages 18-45: 'A national emergency' was the headline and explained** More adults between 18 and 45 died of fentanyl overdoses in 2020 than COVID-19, motor vehicle accidents, cancer and suicide. DECEPTION results!

Some of us remember the stories of prohibition and it's repeal to allow the free flow of alcohol nearly 100 years ago - now look at these resultant statistics:

95,000 alcohol-related deaths in the United States Annually

10,51 drunk driving deaths in the US in 2021

47,500 deaths attributable to the long term health failure from drinking. DECEPTION

Do you now see the application of Proverbs 14:12 *There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.* And it is repeated in Proverbs 16:25 *There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

We continue with the examples of the results of deception: **Cigarette smoking causes about one of every five deaths in the United States each year. Cigarette smoking is estimated to cause 480,000 deaths annually (including deaths from secondhand smoke) DECEPTION's**

In 2021, there were 47,646 suicides in USA Some 580 members of the military, among active duty, reserves and National Guard, died by suicide in 2020. The report also shows 202 military family members died by suicide in 2019. DECEPTION

Those represent an infinitesimally small example of deception all around us in our lives!

The list is virtually unending disrespect, lawlessness, bitterness, envy, hatred, every imaginable perversion including human trafficking add your own... Here is the message in a sentence:

Without God no one could survive or have any eternal victory hope.

It is a dangerous time, since all of these and many more have been culturally accepted through a variety of deceptions as seemingly harmless involvements. But they can and also become entries for the occult, and can prove very tragic for the unwary. astrology, dungeons and dragons, ouija board, tarot cards, palm reading, tea leave readings etc... they seem innocent at first, but neutralize the discernment for deception and invariably usher in other greater and even more dangers to the soul and spirit. I have the personal testimonies of those in my years in ministry including some of the most terrifying experiences and miraculous delivery like that of Tim and Lenny Callihan. It is delusionally dangerous and can be terminal.

Let's see more about how GOD feels about activities resulting from deception:

Exodus 22:18 *"Do not allow a sorceress (witch) to live.*

Leviticus 19:31 *"Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the Lord your God.*

Leviticus 20:6 *"I will set my face against anyone who turns to mediums and spiritists to prostitute themselves by following them, and I will cut them off from their people.*

Galatians 5:16-21 *So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Everyone of those are results of deception from evil sources! But God has been gracious and has not left us defenseless or ignorant unless we chose and insist on being so.

2 Corinthians 2:9 & 11 is a powerful testimony to the power and importance of accepting Jesus for salvation: *9 Another reason I wrote you was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. 11 in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes. **Being a child of the king is a defense against deception...***

Paul continues in 1 Timothy to explain the protection and purpose of salvation:

1 Timothy 4: 4-8 *For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, 5 because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer. 6 If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. 7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. 8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.*

Just a footnote to the subject of deception is halloween. In some circles halloween is for ghosts, ghouls, death and everything despicable. Satan has done that for it may not always have been so according to these two paragraphs I got off line:

“The spelling of *Halloween* derives from its earlier name All Hallows Even (or eve) which took place the night before All Hallows Day, now known as All Saints Day. All Hallows Even was shortened to *Hallowe'en*, and later to *Halloween*. The costumes and the trick-or-treating may come from a mix of Celtic and Middle Ages traditions.

The first records of the word *Halloween* come from around the 1550s. *Halloween* is sometimes

spelled *Hallowe'en*, reflecting the fact that its name comes from a shortening of *Allhallows Even*. Allhallows is another name for the Christian holiday known as All Saints' Day. In *Allhallows Even*, *even* means the same thing as eve—the evening or day before a holiday (as in *Christmas Eve*). The word hallow is used in reference to the saints—hallowed means “holy.”

However there are some circles that contend haloween has always been a pagan holiday. The confusion is typical of satan's activity and it creates deception and harms the message and example of righteousness. I am drawn to Romans 14:16-18 *Therefore do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil. 17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, 18 because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval.*

I wish it were as simple as redefining the word haloween to what may have been its original intent like “Halloweve”. Our society frequently redefines words to lessen or eliminate their impact. Wouldn't it be fun to see Halloweve on the calendar and in October 31 promotions??? But in the meantime, at least in Christian circles the wonderful trend of Christ followers coming to the forefront in establishing acts and activities of Righteousness for the celebration to honor our Heavenly Father. I commend that effort.

As we read earlier salvation is our only protection against deception and evil. When those first century persons heard the message from Peter and asked what should they do, here is his answer and the answer for anyone asking that question today: Acts 2:38-39 *Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”*

That is exactly the invitation I extend to you. If you have a decision to make as a testimony to others, please come speak to me as we stand and sing... **Are You Washed In The Blood 328**