

Week Forty-nine: "Deception"

Day One: "Deception"

Read: James 1:13-25 (p. 1441)

Read: Commentary (p. 1442)

Reflect: How easy it is for you to be deceived? Do you have your guard up a lot?

Dig: How might deception and temptation be related to each other? Study verse 13 and then verse 14 to find a biblical answer.

The word "deceived" or "deceive yourself" occurs three times in this passage (James 1:13-25). Fill in the blanks below as you study:

We are deceived if we don't see that everything _____ comes from God. (vs.16)

We deceive ourselves if we _____ to the word but don't _____. (vs. 22)

We deceive ourselves if we think we are religious but don't _____ our tongue. (vs. 26)

According to verse 21, what two things must we do if we are going to proof ourselves against deception?

According to verse 27, what two ways are we told by God to live in a truthful and acceptable manner?

Apply: Use the following prayer to confess our sins (Freedom in Christ Bible, p. 1512)

Lord, I confess that I have deceived myself by _____. Thank you for your forgiveness. I commit myself to believing only Your truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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Day Two: " False Prophets and Teachers"

Read: Jeremiah 23:14-32 (p. 855)

Read: Commentary (p. 856)

Reflect: Is your "crap detector" tuned up so that you know when a teacher or preacher is teaching something that is not true?

Dig: How does this chapter begin? Read verses 1-4 and notice what God complains about in terms of Israel's leaders.

What is a common moral failure of leaders who are spreading false teachings? For a biblical answer see verse 14.

Read Ezekiel 33:1-4 (p. 939). What does the loss of the teaching of judgment and hell have to do with this passage and false teaching?

Look up I Cor. 14:3 (p. 1320). What three effects should true prophecy produce in believers?

Apply: Pray for your pastors and teachers and mentors by name today. Ask God to keep them pure and loving truth.

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Day Three: "Signs and Wonders"

Read: Deuteronomy 13 (p. 207)

Read: Commentary (p. 207)

Reflect: Have you ever witnessed a miracle? If so, what effect did it have on you?

Dig: Does God allow misleading "signs and wonders"? See verse 3 for an answer.

Why would God want to "test" our trust in him?

See James 1:2-4 (p. 1441) for a biblical answer to this question.

How seriously does God take false teaching and leaders who mislead?

-see verse 5 of this chapter

-how seriously does the contemporary church take false teaching?

How did Jesus respond to people who followed him because of signs and wonders?

-see John 2:23-25 (p. 1200) for a biblical answer.

Apply: Read James 1:5-7 (p. 1441) and then pray a prayer for discernment and wisdom as you hear teaching, follow leaders, and read books and articles.

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Day Four: "Counterfeits Within the Church"

Read: 2 Peter 2:1-11 (p. 1459)

Read: Commentary (p. 1461)

Reflect: Do you put effort into building your "crap detector" and refining its ability to filter out false teaching? Why or why not?

How is a "crap detector" built?

Dig: What is the strategy of false teachers? (see verse 1)

What is their motivation? (see verse 2)

What three actions of God does Peter remind his people of to show what God will do? (see verses 4-9)

How do those who follow this false teaching relate to authority? (see verse 10)

What does 1Timothy 3:1-13 (p. 1397) tell you about what kind of leaders we need to select?

Apply: Turn to page 1513 and slowly read number 7. In prayer, ask God to lead you into all truth and to cause your heart to burn for truth.

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Day Five: "Testing the Spirit"

Read: 1 John 4:1-6 (p. 1468)

Read: Commentary (p. 1470)

Reflect: Where do you see examples of false teaching and preaching?

What person of the Trinity does most false teaching attack: God the Father, God the Son or God the Holy Spirit? See if you can explain your choice.

Dig: How do verses 18-20 of chapter three set the context for our study of 1 John 4:1-6?

Read verse 2 and then notice how the gospel of John treats this truth: read John 1:1-5,14 (p. 1197)
How is Jesus described?

Is he equal with God the Father?

What does Acts 4:12 (p. 1239) contribute to your understanding of truth and how it is being attacked in our day?

What is the final test of truth and falsehood that John gives in verse 6? How could we apply that in our own church without falling into pride or narrow-mindedness?

Apply: Read verse 4 and then form a prayer asking God to give you the courage and boldness to trust that he will protect you from false teachings.