

# The Dangers of Self Deception Part 4 - Denying Your Sin

by Phil Beach Jr.

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*Self-deception is a serious issue that prevents us from seeing our need and prevents us from properly judging others, and it can only be overcome by being humble and honest before God and letting his word judge us.*

**Duration:** 1:22:12

**Scripture:** Revelation 3:15

**Topics:** "Deception", "Self-Deception", "Truth in Christ"

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## Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the critical nature of recognizing self-deception in our lives, particularly in denying our sins. He explains that self-deception blinds us to our true condition, affecting how we see ourselves, others, and God. Through the examination of our words, actions, self-opinion, and associations, we can identify areas where we may be deceived. Beach urges the congregation to seek humility and honesty before God, allowing His Word to reveal the truth and set them free from the bondage of self-deception. He concludes with a call to embrace the truth of God's Word as the only means of genuine transformation.

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## Transcript

Father, again, we thank you for your presence in our midst this morning. We thank you for the Holy Spirit, the spirit of truth, and we pray, Lord, that this morning you would speak to our hearts through your word, that you would draw us close to you, that most importantly, Lord, you would reveal your heart to us. Lord, we pray for a special grace this morning to help us be honest and transparent in your presence as you plan on revealing areas of self-deception in our life through your word.

I pray, Lord, that you will give us humility and grace to be able to acknowledge areas of self-deception and be free through the power of your truth. Lord, glorify yourself in our lives, we pray for Jesus' sake. Amen and amen.

As you know, for many weeks now, we have been speaking on the topic of self-deception, and it's very important when we come together and approach this topic that we do not err by listening and saying, oh, yes, brother so-and-so is truly self-deceived. Sister so-and-so, oh my, how I wish they were here so they could hear this and be set free. We learned that the nature of self-deception is that when we are self-deceived, we don't know it, and so therefore it requires a measure of grace working in our life that will

help us to see our vulnerability to becoming self-deceived.

Now, we already covered this, so we're going to just do a very quick review. We saw the three major areas of our life that is affected by self-deception. The first area is we do not see ourself properly.

Secondly, we don't see others properly, and thirdly, we don't see or hear the Lord properly. We discovered that in Revelation chapter 3, verses 15 through 17, Jesus spoke to the Laodicean church, and he said, thou sayest, thou sayest, you are rich, increased with goods, and in need of nothing, but thou knowest not. There is the nature of self-deception, thou knowest not.

So, the condition that the Laodiceans were in was dreadful, but the fact that they didn't know that they were in that condition was even more dreadful. We also learned in Matthew chapter 7, verses 3 through 5, that Jesus said, why do you attempt to take, this is a paraphrased version, the toothpick out of your brother's eye when you have a telephone pole in your own eye? He actually said, but considereth not the telephone pole in your own eye. The word there, consider, means to see, to clearly see.

So, self-deception prevents us from seeing our need and prevents us from properly judging our brother and sister. And then Jesus goes on to say, first take the telephone pole out of your own eye, and then you will clearly see how to help your brother, how to help your sister. Now, what I'd like to do is show you the four areas of our life where self-deception can be identified.

Now, again, beloved, it takes tremendous honesty before God in order to be free from self-deception. It takes humility. Now, I'm sure that if everyone would ask yourself the question, am I self-deceived? Most likely, perhaps one or two, but most likely a quick answer would be, of course I'm not self-deceived.

What we have to do is we have to dislodge that knee-jerk reaction, because the only way to tell if we are self-deceived is to let God's word judge us, to let God's word shine upon us. And then in light of God's word, we can answer that question. Now, listen carefully.

Self-deception can be identified by our words, number two, by our actions, number three, by our opinion of ourself, and number four, by the associations we keep. The people we hang out with. And number two, the stuff we think about.

Now, beloved, the answer to the question, am I self-deceived? Are you self-deceived? Can only be answered in light of letting God's word shine light, revealing our words, our actions, the opinion we have about ourself and the associations we keep. And in light of that, we can discover whether there is any form of self-deception in our life. You see, the Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth, the spirit of truth, the passion in God's heart is to establish truth on the inward.

And the apostasy of Christianity today can be identified by the decay of truth on the inside, but a continuous explosion of an outward form of godliness, an outward form of religion. As we have mentioned many times, Jesus did not come to establish a Christian religion. There is nowhere in God's word that says Jesus came to start a new religion.

And in the day that we live in, there is a Christian religion and it's all about outward things. But Jesus came to save sinners. And enable them by the power of the Holy Spirit to lay their lives down for him, not to become part of a Christian religion where we talk and do nice things, but inwardly.

We're doing our own thing. And so the spirit of truth and God's word is working together in this hour that we're living in to secure a people in whom truth, the truth of God's word, the truth of Jesus Christ is raw on the inside. Jesus is looking for men and women who will follow him and obey his word.

Huh, not religious Christians. James 1.26, we already went over this, so we're not going to go into it in detail. The first sign that we are being self-deceived, James 1.26, please turn there.

Now, brothers and sisters, when we really, truly have an encounter with the Holy Spirit of God. And we truly fall in love with the word of God. God will talk to us about truth.

He'll talk to us about his son, he'll talk to us about his desire to transform our lives. James 1.26, if any man among you seem to be religious, that word religious simply means devoted. If any man among you seems to be religious.

But bridle, if not his tongue, but deceives his own heart. This man's religion is vain. We learned several weeks ago that.

The word bridle comes from a word that means to restrain, so as to lead brothers and sisters, listen carefully, listen carefully. We know that a bridle was put on a horse in order to prevent it from what going its own way so it can be led properly. Listen, listen carefully.

God, give us ears to hear the cry of your heart. A sure sign that self-deception is working in your life is not whether or not you think it is. A sure sign that self-deception is working in your life or in my life is an unbridled tongue.

A tongue that is not under the control of God's spirit and the control of God's word. A tongue that is able. To say things.

And not be troubled about it. Ephesians chapter four, for your notes, verse twenty five, four, twenty nine through thirty one, Ephesians five, four. These are all ways in order to determine whether we have an unbridled tongue.

Very quickly, an unbridled tongue is seen in lying. That's an unbridled tongue, lying, any kind of a falsehood that we might utter anything. That is an attempt to deceive.

Brothers and sisters. If you have a lying tongue and you attempt to deceive in any way with your tongue, there is self-deception working in your heart. And when the Holy Spirit truly comes into your life or works among a group of people, whether it's two people or whether it's two thousand people, the spirit of God will expose an unbridled tongue.

And where there is no exposure of an unbridled tongue, there is no genuine move of the Holy Spirit of God. It is impossible. You see the apostles as they followed Jesus and and as they walked with him, what was he constantly exposing to them? What was he constantly showing them? Their depravity.

In one instance, when Jesus revealed his glory, what did Peter say? Oh, Lord, depart from me, for I am a sinful man. That's what happens when we have an encounter with the Holy Spirit and the word of God. And he shows us our unbridled tongue, lying, corrupt communication, words that are worthless, words that are of no value.

That which causes something to be brought into a worse state. Evil speaking, this covers a broad category of slander, gossip, backbiting, wounding the person's reputation by falsifying information about that person and spreading evil reports not based on truth. Any person, any person who engages in gossip or slander or evil speaking of any form is gripped by self-deception.

And unless they are confronted by the truth of God's word and enabled to repent and confess their sin, they will become deluded. We need to become reacquainted with truth. And the spirit of truth, foolish talking, jesting.

We learned that jesting is the ability to extricate oneself from difficult situations with witty or clever words to extricate means to free or disentangle yourself. Brothers and sisters, whenever we find ourself in a difficult situation where we are in need to acknowledge our error, acknowledge our sin, confess our fault, you might have said something unkind to someone, you might have been caught doing something deceitfully, and you try and extricate yourself through witty and clever words trying to avoid the need to acknowledge your wrong, to acknowledge you sinned, there is self-deception working in your heart. You know what that means right down where we live? Every husband in here, if you cannot look at your wife in your eyes, in her eyes, and say, sweetheart, I am wrong, I was wrong, I shouldn't have said that, I shouldn't have done that, forgive me.

You can't do that. There is self-deception working in your heart. And likewise, every woman, every wife, when you are caught, when God's Word catches you, what do you do with it? How do you handle it? Are you always making excuses, always making excuses, always trying avoiding the need to take responsibility for your actions, saying clever, witty things? Self-deception has gripped your heart, beloved.

The next we learned that our actions reveal whether or not we are engaged in self-deception. James 1.22. The first one was James 1.26. Now, the second form of self-deception deals with our actions, and that's James 1.22. Listen carefully. But be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

The second form of self-deception has to do with what we do with God's Word. How it affects us. Brothers and sisters, we're living in a day when hearts have become calloused to God's Word.

I was reading this morning in Jeremiah, when Nehemiah read the book of the law. And you know what they did? They wept. They wept as God's Word was read because they were convicted by its power.

Then, of course, Nehemiah said, oh no, this is a day of rejoicing. And he said, stop weeping. But today, God's people don't want to weep.

They only want to rejoice. They only want to sing. They only want to shout.

No one wants to weep. No one wants to weep because of our sin. We learn that the key to being a doer of the Word and not a hearer only is found in a heart condition of meekness.

As it says in James chapter 1 verses 19 through 25, meekness. Oh God, give us a meek heart. The second key is we must continue in God's Word.

So with a meek heart, we continue in God's Word. And as we continue in God's Word, then God does the work inside of us. And we find that we become a doer and not just a hearer only.

And God heals us from self-deception. First John chapter 1 verse 8, which is where we're at today. This is another form of self-deception.

This also has to do with our actions. First John 1 8. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. Now, most of us would read that and immediately say, oh, brother, brother, I don't need to worry about that because I know that I have sin.

That's the problem. We're so vague, aren't we? We like to keep it very vague and ambiguous and far off. Oh, yeah, I have sin.

But how well do you do in regards to confessing your sin and acknowledging your sin and identifying it when the Holy Spirit and the Word of God reveal it? Self-deception is present in our heart when we refuse to acknowledge our sin. Not simply, oh, I, you know, I know I'm a sinner. I know I have sin.

Everyone can say that. Proverbs chapter 28 verse number 13. Proverbs 28 13.

He that covers his sins shall not prosper. But whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. The word cover there means to keep secret, to hide, to conceal.

If a man say, I have no sin, he deceives himself. If God deals with us about something and we cover it and we refuse to confess it, then we deceive ourselves. How well are we doing? You see, the spirit of truth, the spirit of truth and the Word of God wants to get on the inside, deep on the inside.

In John 9 39 through 41, Jesus said to the Pharisees, because you say, because you say, I am not blind, you are blind. I can see I, I don't acknowledge my need. I like I can acknowledge it in a vague way.

It's OK. I can I can make general statements about myself. But you know what God required of Jacob before he his name was transformed to Israel? God required more than a vague statement.

He said, what is your name? What is your name? God was requiring that Jacob would come in honesty and say, my name is Jacob or my name is a deceiver. That's what the word deceive means. The word Jacob means deceiver, a supplanter, a con artist.

What's your name? What's your name? What's the thing that God is requiring that you confess? Are you saying, well, I have no sin. I have no need to confess that. If so, self-deception is present in your heart.

Self-deception is present in your heart. So, number four, Galatians 6, 7. Galatians 6, 7 and First Corinthians 6, 9 and 10. Galatians 6, 7. This is the next form of self-deception.

Listen to what Paul says here. Galatians 6, 7. Be not deceived. There you go.

Be not deceived. God is not mocked, whatever a man sows, that shall he reap. This form of self-deception is revealed regarding what you believe as to the consequences of your actions.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked, whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap. We live in a day where people no longer feel that their actions will result in consequences. No one wants to take responsibility for their actions.

No one wants to acknowledge that if I do this, this is what is going to happen. Part of the presentation that I give to high school students regarding abstinence is a lesson on critical thinking. I help them to

understand that if they take a risk and engage in sexual activity, there is a strong likelihood that they will suffer emotionally, mentally, socially, and physically.

And that this idea that I can engage in immorality and be free from consequences is wrong, it is a lie, and we have to be delivered from it. There are consequences to our actions. Young people, please remember, it doesn't matter if everyone is doing it.

It doesn't matter if Joe Schmo and Sister Lou did it and it seems like they got away with it. It doesn't matter. Be not deceived, God is not mocked.

If there is a tendency in your heart to feel that you can do something that's wrong and somehow, somehow it's going to be all right, you are self-deceived. You are self-deceived. If the thinking process is operating in your mind when you're tempted to do something that's not right, well, I'm a Christian and God's grace is sufficient.

Beware, beloved, that's turning the grace of God into a license to sin. Well, the fact is, I know a good friend of mine and they've done it several times and everything's okay and it doesn't seem like they're suffering. Beware, beware, young people.

Now, I just want to go through a list here of some things that people are doing nowadays and don't feel that they're going to suffer consequences. And if in any way you find yourself identified with one of these things, beware of self-deception. It is lurking in your heart and we need to pray and cry out, O Spirit of God, O Word of God, deliver me, set me straight.

Do you believe that you are not accountable to God for what you do? I'm going to be reading a number of works found in Galatians chapter 5, verses 19 through 21, Galatians 5, 19 through 21. And every one of these works that I'm going to read has a dreadful consequence. Not just a little slap on the hand, they have a dreadful consequence.

And let me tell you something, the consequences are not only reaped by those who don't know the Lord, they are also reaped by those who do know the Lord. See, becoming Christians does not exempt us from consequences to our actions. We have got to get that in our brains.

As a few weeks ago I mentioned, one author said, every Christian needs to take his brains out of his head and wash it in the Word of God, wash it in the truth, and put it back in so he can think clearly. We need to get this in our brains. Parents, you need to be teaching your children there are consequences to your actions.

Mom and Dad, you need to look at each other square in the eyes every night and say, don't forget there's consequences to your actions. Self-deception has gripped our heart. When we feel that we can do something and escape responsibility for it.

And it's running wild in the church today. It's running wild in the church today. We heard a testimony of a certain lady who was living in an adulterous affair and she was confronted by another believer.

She went to a different church and she said, oh, I'm sorry, we don't judge one another. We don't judge one another. We all have besetting sins.

That happens to be mine. Don't judge me. God doesn't judge me.

Brothers and sisters, this is dangerous. This is a leaven of evil. Paul said, purge out the leaven.

Purge out the sin. We cannot feel comfortable in our sin. If we are a lover of truth and we are truly fellowshiping with the son in the light that he radiates, we will not be comfortable in our sin.

And when we do fall, we will feel the remorse and the sense of our need to confess and repent. And we will not be able to just go our happy-go-lucky way knowing that our heart is not right with God. We won't be able to do that.

Now listen closely, beloved. Listen closely. May God wash us with His Word.

May God wash us with the Spirit of Truth. These are works of the flesh that have consequences. First of all, adultery.

The act of having intimacy with another married person. It doesn't matter what people are doing. It doesn't matter what the church votes is right or wrong.

Adultery is still wrong. Remember it. Hide it in your heart, beloved.

It is sin. It is wrong. Be not deceived.

Well, Phil, I think that you're being a little harsh. Watch out. Watch out.

Self-deception is creeping in. I think you're being harsh. I think God understands.

Uncleanness. Any form of moral filth, obscenity, impurity, defilement, acted out with oneself or with others, any form of uncleanness is wrong. Do you see what happens, brothers and sisters, when we get into the pure, simple truth of God's Word? Do you see what happens? How we start to see clearly and we realize the whole world has gone crazy and that there is no sense of right and wrong anymore? That uncleanness has become so much a part of this culture that so many Christians don't even blush at it anymore.

We don't even feel ashamed anymore. Almost. Almost.

I'm tempted to say everything, but I won't because I know all-inclusive statements can get you in trouble unless they're true. But almost everything that you watch on TV is unclean. It's filthy.

But yet, how so many Christians can sit, not only watch it and movies, not only sit and watch it, but be entertained by it. We learned a couple of months ago that the meaning of true love in 1 Corinthians 13, love does not rejoice over iniquity. We learned after looking into the language of that that it can actually mean love is not entertained by lawlessness.

The church is entertained by lawlessness. We enjoy lawlessness. We enjoy watching that which is corrupt, that which displays the sin within the heart of men, that which causes Christ to weep, that which brought Christ to the cross and crucified Him.

We are entertained over what has happened, O God. Where is the Word? Where is the pure Word? Where are the true prophets in God's house rising up with tears rolling down their face saying, O people of God, wake up. Turn back to the Lord.

Go back to His Word. Become lovers of truth. Any kind of uncleanness, lasciviousness, that's simply a desire, an insatiable desire for pleasure, excessiveness.

Listen, the absence of restraint or law. Oh, listen closely. The church in America is deceived by lasciviousness.

We don't know the meaning of restraint. We don't know the meaning of contentment. I think it would be safe to say that most of us right now in this room, most of us are not today living in a state of contentment before God.

As we learned several months ago, the enemy of contentment is... We'll have to go through that one again. The enemy of contentment is comparison. Comparison.

I'm content until I compare myself with my brother or sister and then all of a sudden what I have just doesn't seem to be adequate. And then what happens? Discontentment breeds unthankfulness. And when you have an unthankful heart and you have become discontent, guess what? Your wife no longer is sufficient because you're not thankful for her.

You're not content with her. And so you get a roving eye. And likewise, women, your men are no longer sufficient because you've compared them with brothers Joe and Pete and Harry and you're unthankful and in your heart you're bitter and in your heart you're mad and you're roving and you're looking for something.

Your car is no longer sufficient, even though it runs, because you're looking at your neighbor's car. What about the Ten Commandments? Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods. Well, that's okay.

If we live in the 21st century, Christianity today has got a Jesus in heaven who actually anoints us to be greedy. That's what they're teaching. That God wants us to have everything our heart desires.

Jesus came and revealed the kingdom of God when it is revealed in the hearts of God's people. They will forsake greed. They will forsake covetousness.

They will forsake the love of money. And if not literally, inwardly, they'll sell everything they have. Well, brother, the Holy Spirit's not telling me to do that.

That's because He already told you in the Word. We've got our hands too tightly. Do you know the New Testament doesn't teach ownership? Boy, I tell you, we'll get into this.

You preach this stuff and you'll be called a traitor of America because America believes in ownership. It's your right to own. Christians, you don't have any rights.

We're slaves. We have a master. The only right we have is to be called sons of God because Jesus died for us.

Our rights are given over to God. We say, Lord, I have no rights. I want to serve You in Your will.

The New Testament teaching is not ownership. It is borrowing in order to use. That's what Paul teaches in Corinthians.

That's what Jesus teaches. And that's what the book of Acts teaches. Let me just warn you in the love of Jesus Christ, you better be careful with the things that you're holding on to saying they're mine, they're not yours.

And as I've said many times, and I thank God I can say it, I'm not saying this because I want it. I don't want your money. I don't want your property.

I don't want your house. What are you holding on to? Heaven carry. They were after eternal things.

Things didn't matter to them. Things didn't matter to them. Things matter too much to us in this country.

Things matter too much to the church in the day that we live in. We've got our hand too tightly on our reputation. We've got our hand too tightly on our bank account, and our CDs, and our cars.

And if anyone here goes on with the Lord, the Lord is going to require that you let go of your grip. He's going to require that you let go of your hand grip. He's going to require that you let go, and that you say, Lord Jesus, I give back to you everything.

I've been deceived, Lord. I've been deceived because I thought it was mine, but it's not mine. Nothing is yours.

We've been bought with a price. Hallelujah to God. We're slaves, Cary.

We belong to another. The thought of mine ought to scare the daylights out of us, but it doesn't. The thought of holding on to something and guarding it as if it's got value ought to scare the daylights out of a true, Holy Ghost-filled, Word-loving Christian, but it doesn't.

And all this means is that we have fallen so far, so far, so far, that we're living in the throngs of self-deception and don't even know it. And our only hope is a revival, and that not of noise and movement and manifestations. The only hope is a revival where we come back to the Spirit of God and the Word of God and fall before Jesus and give Him the rights once again.

That's the only hope we have. I believe that if something doesn't happen, it's possible that our children, or maybe our children's children, if Jesus tarries, will grow up and be taught a Christian religion that has nothing to do with Bible-believing, serving Jesus Christ. They will be taught a Christian religion, but it will have nothing to do with an encounter with the living God where their soul is pierced by the Word, and they come to God in repentance and fall on their face and cry out to God for mercy, and they abandon their life and disown themselves, and the things of this life have a bitter taste, and they don't want it.

They want God. They want the things of God. Listen, that form of biblical Christianity is almost gone.

I can't find people anymore that I can sit down and talk to that want to talk about Jesus, that want to talk about heavenly things, that want to open up the Word and talk about the dealings of God in their life. I can't find people like that anymore. But you talk about jobs.

You talk about money. You talk about this and that. People can talk all day.

It's very serious, beloved. It's a very dreadful situation that we're facing today that we live in. Very, very dreadful and serious.

Self-deception has come. Idolatry. It all goes together.

By the way, the Bible says that covetousness is idolatry. So any form of covetousness in our life indicates that we are idolaters, that we are actually engaging in idolatry. Let me ask you a question.

Why is covetousness idolatry? Because covetousness is the condition where you want more than you need. And when you want more than you need, you are setting your heart up to worship that thing. Listen, you better not define your standards of living by what America is teaching, brothers and sisters.

You're going to end up being led astray. We better wash our minds from what our politicians are telling us our rights are. And we better pray, God, give me a hunger for Your Word again.

If you're not hungering after this Word, and wanting the truth of this Word to transform your life, and you find more pleasure in entertainment, more pleasure in just going about your day and drifting, and you're not hungry for God and hungry for His Word, and your conscience is not tender, and if you don't go to bed at night, oh God, I'm homesick, I want to know You deeper. Brothers and sisters, are we men and women enough to acknowledge that if that's true, then our hearts are cold and hard, and we have begun the road of backsliding? You might be incredibly faithful to your religious activities. You might be a churchgoer.

You might be a Bible student. You might be doing all kinds of things. But if your heart is not hungry for God... Listen, if you can be entertained by evil, and that basically means if you can watch that television and feel comfortable and be entertained by it, something's wrong, something's wrong, something's wrong.

Next, we find that self-deception can be seen in all forms of witchcraft. All forms... Listen, listen closely, beloved. All forms of the occult, sorcery, illicit use of drugs, trances, magical incantations, Ouija boards, astrology, horoscope, tarot cards, palm reading.

Brothers and sisters, this is not only a danger outside the church, but it's a danger in the church. Whenever you are taught or prompted by whatever it is to take God's Word and use it as a means to get what you want, that is a form of witchcraft in the church today. In many Christian circles today, God's Word has been reduced to simply a book of Christian incantations.

All you have to do is say the right thing a number of times, and it'll happen. It's sorcery. It's Christian sorcery.

It's witchcraft, brothers and sisters. Hatred. Variance, which is strife, contention.

Verbal disputings or fightings. You see what we're looking at? Our actions. Remember the question we asked? Are we self-deceived? No, of course not.

But now in light of God's Word, what do we see? Oh God, have mercy. Maybe it is possible, Lord, there's areas of self-deception in my life. Strife.

Contention. And all the things like these. Be not deceived.

God is not mocked. What's your take on these things? 1 Corinthians 3.18 Let no man deceive himself. If any among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise.

1 Corinthians 3.18 Your attitude about yourself will reveal whether or not there is an area of self-deception working in you. And basically, if you think that your worldly wisdom and your knowledge and your gifts and your skills and your success, whatever it is that you feel you have, if you think that impresses God one bit, you're self-deceived. Be not deceived.

If any man among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise. Your opinion of yourself. God tells us in Romans chapter 12 the right kind of an opinion to have about

ourselves.

We've taught on this before, but you know what gets you in trouble. Whenever you feel that you've advanced beyond being a servant, you're going to get in trouble. Because a servant doesn't feel like it has any rights.

But as soon as you promote yourself above a servant, you have too high of an opinion about yourself. And you're going to get offended because the expectations that you have about yourself, now that you've grown up and you're no longer just a servant, those expectations are not going to be met. And whenever they're not met, you're going to struggle with bitterness, resentment, unforgiveness, anger, all because you have got too high of an opinion about yourself.

There was a certain man who used to come home from work every day. And he'd come home and he'd walk into the house and he was restless. He sat down on his chair and looked around.

Nobody was around. He did this day after day after day after day. And finally, he realized he was angry and bitter.

He was getting angry and bitter. And so he went to a wise counselor and said, I don't know what's wrong, but I feel bitter and angry and it's toward my wife. The wise counselor said, well, tell me what you do.

Well, I come home. What else do you do? I sit down. What else do you do? I look around and then I just go upstairs in my room.

And he says, well, why do you do that? I'm not sure why. And the wise counselor said, well, what do you expect when you come home? Well, I expect to be greeted. I expect to be waited on.

I'm the king of my house. I expect my wife to drop everything and sit down so I can tell her all about what happened at work and all about my struggles and problems. Hmm.

Mm-hmm. The wise counselor, mm-hmm. How long have you been married? Oh, so many years.

How many children have you got? Six children. Oh, six children. What's your wife doing when you get home? Well, she's taking care of the kids.

The wise counselor looked at this guy and said, you know why you're bitter and angry and struggling with all that sin? He said, why? Because you resent the fact that when you come home, you're not served and waited on. You think that you deserve better treatment than that. He said, and that sin has blinded your eyes.

The wise counselor goes on to say, rather you should come home. Hi, I'm home. What's going on? It's not about me.

What's going on? What are the kids doing? How can I help? If any man thinks he's wise, if any man thinks he's been promoted above simply a servant, he's deceived. When you walk with Jesus and you walk with the truth of God's Word and you walk with the Holy Spirit, He's not going to let you get so high up here. He's going to keep you a servant.

Romans 12, 3, For I say through the grace given to me to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, soundly, according as God hath dealt to

every man the measure of faith. Galatians 6, 3. You ready? If a man thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Do you know how to tell whether or not you think you're something when in fact we are all nothing apart from the grace of God? When you buck up against in your heart something that requires your heart, your interest, your attention, that you just frankly don't feel you need to be bothered with.

Paul said, I am less than least of all the apostles, chiefest of sinners, a slave to Jesus Christ. That's what he thought of himself. And that's what we need to think of ourselves.

Beware of self-deception. If a man thinks he is something when he is nothing, that word nothing literally means not even one. No, not one at all.

Not a single one. Absolutely no one. That's what it means.

Nothing. That's the antithesis, the opposite, of what one perceives him or herself to be when their heart is inflated with pride. When their heart is inflated with the idea that you are more than just a servant.

This is why families are being destroyed. This is why divorces are happening. This is why people can't get along.

Because we've forsaken the truth of God's Word and we just let the world define who we are, what we're going to do, what's important to us. We let the world define to us what we're going to pursue after. We let the world define to us what we're going to laugh at, what we're going to be entertained by.

We let the world define everything. And brothers and sisters, until we come back to God's Word on our knees and pray for a washing, we will continue in self-deception. It's no longer good enough to just go find some church to join, get connected to some programs.

That's not going to cut it anymore. God is calling His people back to Himself, a personal walk with Him, and obeying His Word. We're going to save the last one for another time.

We've looked at our words. We've looked at our actions. And now we've looked at the opinion we have of ourself.

By these three categories, let me ask now, brothers and sisters, by these three categories and God's Word shining bright light, have you seen traces or maybe strongholds of self-deception working in your life? Listen closely, please. Ask yourself this question in the quietness of God's presence. Lord, have I fallen into the trap of self-deception? John 17, 17.

Sanctify Him by Thy truth. Thy Word is truth. The only way to be free from self-deception... We're going to close with this.

Listen closely. Listen closely. God's presence is here.

God's power is here. God's Word is present. Our lives can be radically changed if by faith we will submit to the authority of God's Word.

We can be free today. Listen, listen, listen. There are vicious cycles and patterns in many lives here today.

And you have prayed and cried and you've had everybody and their mother's hand laid on you, and you still are the same. Why? Because you're not going to be changed by a preacher's hand slapping you on the forehead or a prophecy coming forth over your life of how great you are and what God's going to do in your life. You're not going to be changed by weird manifestations and visions.

The only thing that's going to change you is the truth of God's Word. Truth. You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.

We need to become lovers of truth. And so there's vicious cycles of sin that many are wrestling with today. Your deliverance is present this morning.

It's not going to be through some weird manifestation or someone laying their hand and imparting on you or casting out some kind of devil. The way to be free from error and self-deception and these vicious sin cycles in our life is number one, recognize our vulnerability to be deceived. Listen, recognize in your words, your actions, or your opinion about yourself.

Recognize that in one of those categories, you are self-deceived. Number two, identify the specific area where you are being self-deceived. Lord, today as I heard the Word, I realized I am a slanderer.

Don't say, well, I have a problem with my tongue sometimes. And I know it's not good, but I have a problem with my tongue. Or I have a problem with my eyes.

Don't listen. Don't be deceived in talking vaguely. Listen, Jesus never talked vaguely to anyone.

He got up in their face. One thing thou lackest. Sell everything you have.

Give it to the poor and follow Me. You didn't hear Him come and say, brother, let me have your hand. I want to pray with you about the possibility that you might be a little bit inclined toward being greedy.

Now, I don't want to judge you. Because I know. But I just want to pray that the Lord might show you one thing thou lackest.

Jesus speaks frankly to us. Okay? Yes, I can be deceived. I identify where I've been deceived.

Confess specifically our sin to God. Calling it what it is. Be specific.

And then number four, cry out to Jesus for mercy and truth. The Scripture says, by mercy and truth, iniquity is purged. We need truth in the house of God.

We need truth. We don't need any more flamboyant prophecies rolling and people putting on a show. We need to be slain by the truth of God's Word.

Cry out to mercy. Cry out for mercy and truth. And say, Lord, take Your truth and deliver my deception through Your Word, through Your truth.

Give me a heart able to receive truth today. I'm going to ask Collette. She would go to the piano.

And very quietly, we want to give the Holy Spirit an opportunity. Listen, listen, listen. I feel the need to emphasize this.

There are life-controlling habits and sin problems that we have wrestled with for years. We have looked for deliverance, and we haven't found it. Today is your day of deliverance because it comes through truth in your inward heart.

Many, many years ago, we wrote a printed message. Remember, it was entitled for you who were around then, Selective Crosses. Listen, we select where we're going to let God deal with us.

And then other areas of our life, we lock the door and we never let God deal with it. Brothers and sisters, you cannot be selective in the dealings of God in your life. But if God is in your face about an attitude in your life that you haven't given to Him, you've got to say, Lord, have your way, or else you'll be captive.

Every single area of your life must become transparent to the Word of God, the truth of God's Word, in order to be free from self-deception. Let's bow our hearts. Holy Spirit, we just ask that now in these few moments, shine light from Your Word into the depths of our heart.

Break down our walls of resistance and help us to bow to the authority of Your Word. Acknowledge our sin and receive the truth which is able to set us free today in Jesus' name. I encourage you to pray.

Pray with a loved one. Be real. Be honest.

And let God's Word free you today. Search us, O God. Make us lovers of truth.

Lovers of truth, Lord. Thank You, Lord. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

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