

A MAN OF GOD CAN BE DECEIVED (Video)

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the dangers of deception and the importance of obeying the Word of God to prevent falling into deception. It delves into the story of a man of God who was deceived by an old prophet, highlighting how deception can lead us astray and the consequences of disobedience. The sermon provides practical insights on recognizing and exposing deception, the tactics of the enemy, and the significance of humility in staying aligned with God's will.

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, Ephesians 6:11, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8, 1 John 4:1

Topics: "Deception", "Obedience to God's Word"

Description

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Transcript

A man of God can be deceived. We're in a Timeless Truths series. And what I mean by that is timeless truths, that some truths are timeless if it's according to God's Word, right? I guess you could say all truth is timeless.

And the whole series is going to last months, maybe a year. I'm not sure. I'm not in a hurry.

But it's going to focus on timeless truths and things that we need to focus on. A man of God or a woman of God can be deceived. And I will let you know up front, I talk about this often, but it's good to know that much deception can be prevented by simply obeying the Word of God.

If we simply obey the Word of God, we can get rid of a large amount of deception in our lives. God wants us to obey, but what does the flesh want to do? It kind of wants to disobey and go a different direction. Just this week, I received a call from my son.

He's 10. And he said, Dad, can I build a fort on the roof of the house? And I said, no, you cannot build a fort on the roof of the house. He wasn't too happy, but obedience, right? Leads to safety.

It leads to wise decisions. So, I'm going to actually be in 1 Kings 13. 1 Kings 13, chapter 13, verse 11.

We're going to have it on the screen. And it's quite a bit to read, but I don't want to lose the power in the story. And it's an interesting story.

Here's the context. The man of God, he's just known as a man of God, he prophesied against the king and against his false worship and against his false altars. So, this man of God, he prophesied against the king.

In other words, he spoke God's truth to the king. And he came against the false altars, the false worship, and the king became very upset and he railed against him. He probably cursed him out, we don't know.

And he was probably going to harm him. But the king's arm, his hand, began to wither and it began to get diseased because of his rebuke against the prophet and the word of God. And the prophet prayed for the king and the king's hand was restored as new.

As a result, the king offered this mighty man of God a reward. He said, I'm going to give you whatever you want for restoring my arm and for speaking to me what God has said to you. What do you want? And the man of God was very keen, very insightful.

You'll see this throughout a lot of the prophets in the Old Testament. He simply turned down the offer of reward and instead said, no, I can't eat here. I can't drink here.

I need to go a different way and I need to leave this place. So that's where the story picks up. Interesting thing happens to this man of God when he begins to disobey.

Let's read this, 1 Kings 13:11. Now an old prophet who dwelt in Bethel. This is different from the man of God. An old prophet dwelt in Bethel and his sons came and told him all the works that this man of God had done that day in Bethel.

They also told their father the words which he had spoken to the king. And their father said to them, which way did he go? For his sons had seen which way the man of God went who came from Judah. Then he said to his sons, saddle the donkey for me.

So they saddled the donkey for him. And he rode it and went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak tree. Then he said to him, are you the man of God who came from Judah? And he said, I am.

Then he said to him, come home with me and eat bread. Now remember, he was supposed to leave, get out of this region, go and back home. But now this other old man, man of God comes to this prophet and says, why don't you come back to my house and eat bread with my family? So verse 16, and he said, I cannot return with you nor go with you.

Neither can I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place. For I have been told by the word of the Lord that you shall not eat bread nor drink water there nor return by going the way you came. So he knows that God spoke to him.

He knows that he's not supposed to be even considering any other option. But here's where the deception comes in. He said to him, I too am a prophet as you are.

And an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord. Many false cults begin because an angel spoke to them and told them something different that God has spoken. So the angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord.

And the angel said, bring him back to you and your house that he may eat bread and drink water. And in parentheses there, it says he was lying to him. So he went back with him and ate bread in his house and drank water.

Now it happened as they sat at the table that the word of the Lord came to the prophet who brought him back and he cried out to the man of God who came from Judah saying, thus says the Lord, because you have disobeyed the word of the Lord and have not kept the commandment which the Lord your God commanded you, but you came back, ate bread, and drank water in this place of which the Lord said not to. Gets a little confusing there, so I'm going to skip to verse 13. So it was, oh, I'm sorry, I'm going to continue.

Eat no bread and drink no water. Your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers. So it was after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk that he saddled his donkey for him, the prophet whom he had brought back.

When he was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him. And his corpse was thrown on the road and the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood by the corpse.

And there men passed by and saw the corpse thrown on the road and the lion standing by the corpse. Then they went and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt. So that's a lot to read, but I wanted you to hear the impact of how deception works.

Isn't it interesting? This man is convinced he knows what God has told him to do. He's on his way to do God's will, but then he gets sidetracked and a lion attacks him and he dies. I mean, every time I read this, I'm just perplexed.

And this week I'm like, Lord, I need some insight here because this is a very interesting story. So I wanna just go over a few points here. First, like I said earlier, you can never go wrong obeying God.

You can never go wrong by obeying God. And I just wrote this down yesterday and I strongly wanted to get this point across. Everything we're thinking of, from dieting and getting in shape to attitude adjustments to the Lord is speaking to you about certain areas of your life, whether it's consuming certain foods, drinking certain things, doing certain things.

If he's speaking to you, you know it's resonating in your heart. You know the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Obey that voice.

Listen to that still small voice of the Holy Spirit directing you. Because often we wanna hear this, right? Like, oh, okay, I know now, but the Holy Spirit's often, hey, stop, stop. I'm still gonna keep knocking.

And so that's my encouragement to you tonight is to obey that still small voice. I believe, and again, just throwing out some personal opinion here, that I believe that many people are suffering from even health issues because they're not obeying that voice and they're not taking care of this body that God has given us. I believe that we're in many different problems, encountering many different problems in our life because we're not obeying that still small voice and we're fighting against God.

So be encouraged tonight to get back on track. So here's the first point that we see. Deception is often sent.

The enemy will send deception. Now, sometimes it just finds us, but often the enemy will send deception. You know the story of Samson and Delilah, correct? Some of you, most of you? Delilah was sent.

And it doesn't matter what Delilah is. The Bible doesn't describe Delilah. It just shows that she was sent, there was enticement, and that's the first thing you need to remember about deception.

It is sent to kill, to steal, and to destroy. The enemy goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Now, a church can say, you know what? I'm not gonna talk about this.

I don't wanna upset people. I just wanna be very positive and uplifting, and that's wonderful, but you don't prepare people for spiritual battle. You don't prepare them for the deception that lies ahead.

And here's where we see deception is being sent. Verse 12, and their father said to them, which way did he go? Which way did this prophet, this man of God go? I'm going to go to him. He sent to him, and I'm gonna go to him, and I'm gonna tell him that an angel spoke to me and have him come back to my house.

Personally, I think whoever this older gentleman was, he just wanted the prophet, the man of God, to come back to his house and have dinner with him and fellowship with him, and he was lying to him, so deception is sent. Then the second point we can find from this is this. Deception will often relate to you, okay? Deception will often relate to you.

He said to him in verse 18, I too am a prophet. You're a prophet? Me too. Oh, and now I'm disarmed.

Right, when I was talking against the king, I was Mr. Tough Guy. But now when the prophet comes and says, hey, I'm a prophet too, it disarms us. So deception, it often relates to us.

It's the person that says, hey, I know how you feel. Or that struggle or that different thing. Hey, I know how you feel.

I can relate to you. See, if deception was like a sounding alarm, we wouldn't open the door. But it's that, hey, I can relate.

I understand you. I'll listen to you. Do you know that most affairs, when adultery occurs, it's because the person, the spouse that had the affair found someone that would listen to them? That would understand them? That I can so relate to you? We should have married.

I mean, I don't know what God's, how did God mess up? I can relate to you. And see, it's calming. It's reassuring.

That's how deception works. Listen, when I go fishing, the fly on the end of my little leader looks like a fly. They think, well, that's a nice big mosquito the fish thinks, right? That looks wonderful until he bites it.

It's got a hook right here. So the deception is always going to look good. So don't be fooled by your feelings.

And also, most people fall into wrong relationships because the person relates to them. I talked about adultery, but also in dating. How many people compromise? This is for young adults or you're singles out there.

How many people compromise? Well, I know what God's Word says. I know that it's not really right, but I can relate to this person. It just feels good.

It's kind of warm and welcoming. So deception does that. It always relates to us.

And if you're not sure about something, here's what I recommend you do. Wait, trust God, pray, and obey what you do know. Pray, stay, and obey.

It's very easy to remember. You just pray, Lord, I don't know what to do in this situation. I'm trusting you.

I'm praying, I'm obeying you. And the enemy will use the opposite. He uses confusion and rushing, and rushing, rushing, that's a new word.

So he uses confusion, rushing, and pressure to move us. So do you ever feel that when you're feeling rushed and pressured, and ah, you can be sure the enemy and deception is trying to work? Do you ever fly off the handle and say something you shouldn't have, or text it, or email it, or were you in a nice, calm state when that happened? Or were you rushing and being pressured, and just leave me alone? So deception is this. That's the second point, is it relates to us.

It tries to disarm us. And then the third point that we find from the story, deception often works through familiarity. What is familiar? Again, he said, I too am a prophet.

And when something is familiar, it relaxes you, correct? And here's something I've noticed over the years. Old strongholds that people go back into, they go back into it because it was familiar. They go back into that deception or bondage because it was familiar to them.

It felt comfortable. So the man of God who was bold against the king now is dropping his guard because this guy is relating to him. This sounds familiar.

This works for me. So he dropped his guard. And you ever read in the Bible where it says familiar spirits? There are familiar spirits in there.

There are demonic influences, and the demonic realm that imitates people sometimes in order to deceive. So if it's familiar spirit, it comes in in order to deceive you. Now, I don't want you to get worried, oh, anything that's familiar or comfortable, I gotta watch out.

No, just understand though, that's how deception works. It's smooth. It's one step at a time.

It's one compromise at a time. It's what's familiar. It's what's comfortable to you, and that's the draw.

I mean, think about it. If it was difficult, if deception felt like getting a root canal, nobody would be deceived. It doesn't feel like a root canal.

It tastes like the Snickers bar. So that's why you have to look through what the enemy is trying to do. And what happens is we put our guard down in familiar settings.

Nothing bad can happen here. Nothing bad can happen here. We put our guard down.

They said they were a Christian. Have you ever hired somebody or dated somebody? They said they were a Christian, right, because it was familiar. So the guard goes down.

I've learned when I get a business card from somebody, if it's got a sign of a fish on it, that doesn't necessarily mean this person's going to be wonderful. Call references. Call references.

It doesn't matter if there's a bumper sticker on their car. Bumper sticker. I love Jesus, and then above it says tax service.

Make sure, make sure that... I'll call that person to do my taxes. It's familiar. It's comfortable.

He stood strong against the king, but not to the prophet who could relate to him. So here's the key that I said earlier. When God says something, do it.

When God says something, do it. He's not schizophrenic. He's not Jecon Hyde.

His name, His truth, His counsel is wonderful. So when God says to do something, I know I'm speaking from personal experience, sometimes we think we know better than God. Right? Don't leave me hanging on that one.

You don't feel that way. We think we know better than God. The best safeguard against deception is obedience.

Now the fourth point. Deception can use Scripture or Bible lingo. Here's where you need to be careful.

Deception often quotes Scripture or using something biblical. Many cults, I can name them, around here and around the valley. They all use the Bible.

Their books and their curriculum and their material comes above the Bible, but they still use the Bible. And I've seen this sometimes in charismatic circles or Pentecostal circles. It's why we have to be careful.

Sometimes, people can come and say, well, the Lord spoke to me. Oh, really? The Lord, what did He tell you? And then we just throw caution to the wind and go with it. You know, God says discern the spirits.

Are they really of Me? And be careful of those who say, well, God told me to tell you. I mean, usually somebody where God puts something on their heart, they'll come in humility. They'll come in fear and trepidation.

I mean, if I'm going to say, hey, God told me that you might want to sell your house, I'm going to be, actually, I've never said that God told me to say something. I've said, hey, I've had this impression all week. I feel really inclined to want to give you a call and share this with you, test it.

I'm not sure. And you share that with them. But deception uses Scripture or Bible lingo in a different way.

Like we saw in verse 18. An angel spoke to me. An angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying, bring him back with you to your house that he may eat bread and drink water.

Do you know the church down the street began a couple hundred years ago because an angel spoke to Joseph Smith. Told him about gold tablets and special glasses to use to read the gold tablets. And he said, the gospel has fallen astray.

Nobody's preaching the real gospel. You are going to restore the gospel. And then they start to teach many things that are just not biblical, such as you'll rule planets with your celestial wife and have spirit children.

And things that God was once like us. Just saying that gives me the goosebumps. God was once like us, and then someday we'll be like God.

See, where does that come from? But an angel spoke to me. An angel spoke to me. Well, did the angel confirm what the word of God says? Because Paul tells me if an angel or any other person preaches any other gospel than what we have preached to you, let them be anathema.

It's a Greek word that means cursed. Any other gospel is cursing. There's other religions where an angel spoke to a certain prophet and that religion formed because of it.

So just because there's some Scripture on it, or just because our guard does let down sometimes. Sometimes mine lets down if somebody uses Bible language. And they use the Bible verse.

It's like, oh, my guard's let down a little bit. But the enemy knows the Bible verses as well too. And I've seen a lot of people get in a lot of trouble with taking Scripture out of context.

I've had alcoholics try to continue their addiction quoting Paul's words to Timothy to take a little wine for your stomach. Yeah, a little wine. Maybe now and then.

Or leaving their spouse. What are you doing? You need to stay married. No, whoever doesn't leave father and mother, husband and wife and children does not follow Me is not worthy to be My disciple.

They'll quote that. Like, wait a minute, context is king here. Context is king.

Jesus is saying you have to love Me more than any other relationship. You have to put Me first. So we have, deception will twist the Word of God.

The LGBT community, then homosexuality and different things, people I reach out to, I love that group just like I love any other group. But they will use Scripture and they'll turn it, judge not, love your neighbor. That was Old Testament.

That doesn't apply now. God created me this way. He loves me just as I am.

I love Jesus and I can be gay. And we begin to twist things and turn things. We should just let the Word of God speak and say what it says about any area of life.

An angel spoke by the Word of the Lord, saying, bring him back with you to your house that he may eat bread and drink water. And this actually was the first red flag. This was the first red flag because the other deceptions are he's feeling comfortable, the Delilah was sent, technically there's familiarity, but it's okay, he had a chance.

But it's when he said, okay, I believe you and not God, I'm gonna go to your house. When he turned, when that deception made him turn course, that was the big red flag. And then the fifth point, deception uses the flesh against you.

Now I know how much we love ourselves sometimes, right? We love our body as far as eating and drinking and sleeping and it's comfortable and we have this relationship with the flesh. But the flesh is not your friend. The flesh is the carnal nature, the old man.

So the old man was crucified with Christ, the Bible talks about. So now we live with the new man, the born again spirit within us, the Holy Spirit within us. But that old man is still there.

That carnal nature is still there. So here's what deception does. Deception doesn't relate to the Holy Spirit in you, it can't.

Deception relates to the carnal man that's in you. That he can draw from. So he'll go and deception will go after your flesh.

Here's basically what the flesh does. It says, I feel a certain way. I feel like Jesus felt hungry when He was fasting.

I feel like bailing out on my marriage or I feel like doing this. I feel like angry outburst. Do you ever feel like an angry outburst? Come on, this Wednesday night, you're just for spiritual people coming to church on Wednesday.

You know, you know, boy, sometimes I tell myself if I was not a Christian, I would let that person have it. My goodness, I could let them have it if I was not a Christian. And then the flesh, come on, just let them have it.

Just let them have it, Shane, just this one time, God, could I please? And it's this battle because the flesh is never satisfied. So think about this. Without this pull, there wouldn't be a lot of deception.

Because I'm wanting to walk with God, my flesh is wanting to go out the side exit. So I'm wanting to walk with you, Lord, but this flesh is wanting to take the side exit. So that's where the deception is.

So when I'm hungry, say I'm fasting or I'm hungry, that door opens and there's a big Subway sandwich. Right, it's the attraction or the lust of our flesh. It's sleep instead of come to prayer meetings, right? Sleep instead of coming this Sunday at 6 a.m., no pressure.

I'm gonna put worship on at 6 a.m. to show you how bad the flesh really is and how much it wants to keep us in bed. So be here at 6 a.m., just an hour of worship on the screen. The lights are low, we're seeking God, and trust me, nobody leaves here disappointed they came.

But the flesh, that doesn't even sound good. That doesn't sound good to my flesh and I have to be here. Right now as I'm saying it, my flesh is saying, you should have never committed that.

You could have just slept in. So but that's where you have to remember. This has helped me a lot when I learned this many years ago that the flesh, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life is what is going to always be the attack of the enemy.

We saw this in Eve, right? She saw that the fruit was good for food. Oh, this looks good. Food, flesh.

Or pleasant to the eye, it looked good. Or desirable to make one wise. The devil said, you'll be like God.

You'll understand things. So it's either going after my flesh. It either looks good like, oh, that new Dodge truck with the diesel cummings and the mega cab.

I know it's \$65,000 and if we stop giving, we can probably afford it. And see, that's the flesh talking to me, right? The lust of the eye. The lust of the eye.

You walk through the mall and you're like, oh, that's a \$300 whatever. The lust of the eye wants that. So that's where he's going to be working in your heart.

And that's why some couples get in fights. Do you know couples fight over finances? Just throwing it out there so you know. Okay, now you know.

Now you can leave here going, I didn't know that. But that's why, right? Because we lust and we war. We lust and we war.

I want the money for this. The other one says, I want the money for this. So the lust of the eye.

Now with the lust of the flesh, we don't even need to fill in the blank on that one. And we know what that is. It's what the flesh craves, what the flesh desires from everything.

From eating too much and drinking too much to this epidemic with pornography to all these different things. The flesh, the lusting of the flesh to fulfill that lust. And I truly believe if the flesh had its way completely, it would just kill us.

It would overindulge on everything. A second helping, I'll be done after 10 helpings when I can't even walk. That's why I don't avoid, all of you can't eat sushi now because you just leave there.

Right, it's just a parade of flesh. Oh, 30 bucks, I can eat whatever I want. Or as much as I want.

And the flesh just keeps filling up. And then the final thing is one of the most deadly is the pride of life. He uses pride in a very interesting way because we want to get the last word in, right? We want to be right.

We want to get our name. See, it's all about humility a lot of times. So if a person wants a big name in business or anywhere else, they're fighting and they're striving for that, there's deception in that.

Or pride in men. Pride in women, it's just ugly. So deception will work against you in that way.

So it's interesting, in verse nine, here's how it worked against him. So he went back with him and he ate bread in his house and drank water. See, it's interesting, this old fake prophet didn't entice the man of God by saying, hey, come back with me and you can help me cut a cord of wood.

Does that sound fun? Hey, I need help cutting a cord of wood and loading it. Can you come back? No, no, God already spoke to me. But he went after his appetites.

Because I know this guy's hungry, right? He's been walking. Back then, they didn't have Taco Bell in the corner. It was walk from Bethel, Judah, and you could go all day without eating back then.

I know it's hard to believe, but people, and he was probably hungry, so he related to the lust of the flesh. Come back to my house, an angel told me it's okay, and have bread and water. He's probably just chomping at the bits, ready to get back to that.

So that's how deception works in those areas of the lust of the flesh. It uses the flesh against you. And the sixth point, deception grows when we fail to expose it.

Here's where it gets important for us. Not that the other points were, but this is where there's a turning point. Deception grows when we fail to expose it.

Which basically means acknowledge the deception. Do you know you can stop deception in your life right now? Right now, if you're caught in deception, and there are a group this size, there are people caught in deception. They are being deceived.

You can stop it right now if you simply acknowledge it. And take it to God, repent, and say, Lord, help me. I'm acknowledging it, I need help.

Shane, you don't know how far I've fallen. You don't know how deep I'm in. I do know this, though.

When you give it to God, He can repair and rebuild and restore it, and way more easily than you think you're going to try to hide it and work around it. Usually when God does something, you look back and you say, Lord, your mercy and your grace, I can't believe you fixed all that. Thank you, Lord.

But when we go our own way, we're in misery. There's regret because we thought we could fix it. So you can expose it.

So that's how deception grows. It grows and it grows and it grows when we fail to expose it. Here's something interesting, a question you can ponder.

Did God know a lion would meet Him? Of course He did, right? And it doesn't say that God sent a lion. It says that a lion meant Him on the road. So I obviously pondered this week and not sure of the exact answer, but could it be that God was warning this man of what direction to go because He knew what would befall him if he went that direction? I mean, it doesn't say God sent a lion to go and eat Him and punish Him.

It says He meant a lion on that road because he disobeyed the Word of God. So many times I think, and I know actually, that God is trying to prevent us from going down the wrong path. We don't see the lion two miles away.

We only see the nice, smooth road, right? The relaxing things. But God warns because He sees down the road miles and miles down the road. So repentance and acknowledgement may have redirected His course.

In verse 23, it indicates there wasn't remorse. So this old man, if you look at verse 23, this old man told the prophet after he had already eaten and stuff, he goes, oh, prophet, man of God, I lied to you. You went against the Word of God.

Instead of saying, oh, I can't believe it, and remorse and repentance, it's almost like he said, oh well. It said after he had eaten bread and finished and after he had drunk, then he saddled the donkey and the prophet whom he had brought back, when he was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him. So you have to wonder, could he have redirected his course? And that's applicable information for us today.

The point of application is, can we redirect our course? We can. That's why I think God gives messages like this to redirect our course back on the right path. And then the last point, verse 7, deception always takes and never gives.

Deception always takes and never gives. Something I used to say many years ago when we started the church, actually seven years ago, is this, and I found it again. Sin takes us farther than we want to go, keeps us longer than we want to stay, and costs us more than we want to pay.

You could easily put in there, deception takes us farther than we want to go, keeps us longer than we want to stay, and costs us more than we want to pay. Deception always takes and never gives. So remember that, no matter what you're going through or going to go through, that deception, as it's running its course, the end of that course is not the light at the end of the tunnel.

It's darkness. It's deception. So that's why God tells us, hey, get back on track.

Get back on track. So I don't want people leaving here going, you know, in the state of fear and anxiety and things, but just to turn back to God. To get off that course of deception, whether it's addiction, the lust of the flesh, whatever is happening in your life, to expose it and get back on the right path.

I mean, you're here, so you haven't met a lion yet, right? And it's funny, though, because I thought of the Bible talking about the enemy goes about, the devil goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. This man met the actual lion on the road because he allowed deception to take him off course. That's what the enemy's looking for.

That's why it says he goes about as a roaring lion. He can't do anything. That lion is roaring.

He can't do anything until you what? Open the door. And he jumps in. That's how the roaring lion does anything.

We give him the power. Isn't that? It's like a toothless, snarling lion outside. He can't do a thing to me.

He can't do a thing to you. Maybe harass mentally, maybe bring in obstacles or challenges or different things, but think about that. He can't do anything.

What can he do if Christ is in me? If Christ is in you, greater is He that is in me than he that's out there. There's no deception. Nothing can overtake us.

Paul has said nothing can even separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Height and depth and principalities and powers and things to present, things to come. No creative thing can separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

So the roaring lion is nothing unless we invite him in. And it's interesting in contrast in the Old Testament, the Bible says that the eyes of the Lord go to and fro throughout the whole earth. So you have the eyes of the Lord going to and fro throughout the whole earth, finding those whose hearts are loyal to him.

You find the enemy going about as a roaring lion seeking who devours. So basically it boils down to this, who finds you? Who finds us? Who finds you? Where are you at? The eyes of the Lord, he's looking for those whose hearts are loyal to him. And the enemy's looking for you.

Who finds you? It's who you open your door to, what you do with deception. And I don't want anybody to think that I've mastered this area or my wife has mastered this area. We're going to teach this wonderful course on preventing deception because we finally have mastered it.

It's working. Same things I just broke down to you work in all of our lives. In mine too.

High alert. When the enemy's coming in in these areas, when my flesh is wanting to be pleased, when I'm wanting to just get lazy or different things. You know all these things we struggle with.

So let me throw this out there. If someone you can relate to is leading you astray, if something that is familiar and they're leading you astray, break it off immediately. Do something.

And people, it's hard because we, well, this person, I like them. It's familiarity, right? Comfortable. But if they're leading you down the wrong path, what path do you want to be on? Because that's truly, that's really not a friend.

Is it? We think, well, they're friends. I know them well. Is it really? Is it really a friend that's going to lead you down the wrong path? Or are you going against the Word of God? Are you making excuses in a certain area? Is the flesh sidetracking you? Are you hiding and covering up things? Expose them.

Expose it before it's too late. You don't have to make an announcement. Just take it to God.

That's why I said earlier, and I truly believe this, God says expose it and he will take care of the rest. God says expose it, he'll take care of the rest. And we come back and we find out that that's not as bad as I thought.

Yes, I was caught in this. Yes, I was being deceived in this area. I exposed that, I brought it to God, and he saw me through.

But when the deception sees you through, that's when you meet the lion. This isn't the lion, the witch, and the wardrobe. This isn't something made up.

This is, and this is why I get passionate sometimes, because I want to encourage. I want to uplift. But I also know that the spiritual realm and the demonic realm is real.

That they want to take out families. They want to knock us off course. They're after your children, your grandchildren.

He's after me. He's after my marriage. He's after you.

He's after your marriage. So we don't want to ignore the devil and we don't want to talk too much about him. But we have to understand, to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

If I know he's not dressed in red holding a pitchfork, easy to see, if I know he's going to come in as something that is deceptive, but something that pulls the flesh, you can be on guard a lot more. This is why I tell people all the time, do not trust your feelings. They're the caboose of the train.

The Word of God is the engine that drives it. And many times, I've had to make decisions that didn't feel good. I'll just open up to many years ago.

When I came back to the Lord and was struggling with alcohol, I went good for a year and then just fell again. It was almost as if the enemy was putting people in places and things in my mind. But it went back to it just felt good.

It felt good to go and just get relaxed again. And it feels good. You wouldn't do it if it didn't feel good.

So the feelings can't be trusted. When I feel something, when you feel something, you have to filter it through the Word of God. And I'm convinced of this as well.

God, even single people, the devil will use those who are unequally yoked and he will bring them together, have you meet them somehow, and then you say, but it just feels right. Right, that's lust. If the Bible says, listen, do not be unequally yoked, and this person doesn't know the Lord, they're fighting God, they don't want anything to do with God, but they're gonna whisper sweet nothings in your ear because they like you.

And that's gonna draw you to them. Don't trust those feelings. But Shane, I'm single, I can't keep waiting.

Well, I'd rather be in God's will waiting than outside of His will making foolish decisions. So be careful, that's how deception works in a nutshell is it will entice through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life. And it's interesting, here's how pride works is pride says, okay, Shane, that's wonderful for some people but I don't need that.

I'm not gonna fall in this area. I would never. I would never.

You know, it's interesting, I haven't read it in a while, but there's a book written by Steve Farrar. I think it's Finishing Strong, it's a men's book. And he talked about how they interviewed 280 or so, 280 of top Christian leaders in the United States, I think this is 20 years ago now, who fell into sexual immorality.

The top 285 leaders who fell, all these names you've heard before, different things. And the top four reasons were interesting. And those top four was one of these.

All of them without exception said, I never thought this would happen to moi. Me, no, no, no, I preach it, there's no way I'm going to fall. Right, this will never happen to me.

The enemy loves that. Because pride begins to mean, pride comes in, you make up your own rules. You begin to compromise in areas you shouldn't compromise because you're prideful and arrogant and you think you can do that.

The other reasons, a couple were pretty interesting. They were too busy so they had no more devotional time. Isn't that interesting? Too busy so they lost that intimacy with God, no more devotional time.

I can't remember the other two right now. But that's how, that pride comes in, says this isn't, I'm not going to fall in that area. And the enemy works in that.

So pride is so destructive. I've seen that probably more destructive than anything else. Because pride is at the forefront of the other sins.

If you know you have a struggle in a certain area, humility will keep you broken and humble before the Lord and turned away. Pride will keep you strong and think you can handle it. And then that's where you can't handle it because the enemy works in that deception through pride.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/29pCAUawevE.mp4>

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