

Eight Ways of Deceiving Ourselves - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

The entire world is deceived, and self-deception is a real problem that can affect even believers.

Duration: 9:59

Scripture: Matthew 24:24, 2 Corinthians 11:3, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-11, Revelation 12:9, Revelation 20:2-3, Revelation 20:7

Topics: "Self Deception", "Spiritual Discernment"

Description

This sermon delves into the theme of deception as highlighted in 2 Corinthians 11 and Revelation, emphasizing how deception has been a tool of the enemy from the beginning with Eve and will continue until the end times. It explores the concept of self-deception and warns about the prevalence of deception even among believers, stressing the need for discernment and reliance on God's mercy to avoid falling into deception.

Transcript

We want to turn to 2nd Corinthians in Chapter 11. 2nd Corinthians in Chapter 11. A verse that we have looked at many times.

Verse 3. I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if someone comes and preaches another Jesus whom you have not preached, or you receive a different spirit, or a different gospel, you bear this beautifully. He is talking about being prepared to be ready as a bride, verse 2, as a pure virgin for being married to Christ when he comes again.

And he says the thing that can prevent you from being ready for that wonderful marriage day when the bridegroom comes in glory is deception. That's very interesting. And here he says that the first sin in the world came through deception.

We must never forget that. The first sin in the human race came through deception. Satan, verse 3, deceived Eve.

And when you come to the end of the Bible, the book of Revelation, you see a strong emphasis on deception again. You see in Revelation in Chapter 12, one of the titles given to Satan in verse 9 is the deceiver of the whole world. 2nd Corinthians, Revelation 12, verse 9. There is nobody who escapes the whole world.

He does with the whole world exactly what he did with Eve. Now, I believe the Bible. I believe this is true.

I believe that the entire world is deceived. A lot of people don't think so. They think that, yeah, a lot of good people, they can't be wrong, etc., that's fine.

But that's exactly how Eve thought also. There couldn't be anything wrong, but she was deceived and she didn't know it. And the entire world is deceived and they don't know it.

Chapter 20, we read of after the coming of Christ, and we are raptured to meet with him in Chapter 19, and then in Chapter 20 he comes and establishes his kingdom on earth and binds Satan, verse 2, for a thousand years. You know, just by the way, we can't bind Satan now. Nobody can bind Satan.

We can bind his activities, but you can't bind Satan himself. Jesus is going to do that when he comes to earth and is going to bind him, it says in Revelation 20, verse 2, for a thousand years. And at the end of a thousand years he's going to be released from the pit.

And during those thousand years, verse 3, it says he will not be able to deceive. 20, verse 3. When Satan is bound, locked up in a pit, that's the only time he's not able to deceive. But when he's released, notice what happens after he's released.

And the thousand years are completed, verse 7, and the Lord allows Satan, he could have sent Satan straight into the lake of fire from there, but he doesn't do it. He's going to allow Satan to be released for a short period. Why? I mean, one would have thought that after seeing Jesus rule the world for a thousand years, all human beings should be just delighted to follow him and to say no to the devil.

But God wants to show how corrupt man is, that even after seeing Jesus reign for a thousand years, there are still going to be some people who want to follow the devil. You wouldn't believe it, right? I wouldn't believe it either if it were not written in the Bible. You know, a lot of people think that man would only follow Jesus if he knew how good Jesus is.

I mean, if Jesus came here and everybody saw how good he is, people would follow him. Well, he was on earth for three and a half years and they killed him. Wasn't he good then? No, he's going to be on earth for one thousand years and they're still going to reject him because we haven't seen the corruption of our human nature.

At the end of Jesus reigning and peace in the world, no deception, and they've seen us with glorified bodies, there are still going to be people, sinners born on the earth at that time, who don't submit to Christ. And then when the devil is released at the end of a thousand years, it says here, verse 7, he'll come out and deceive the nations again. It's unbelievable that the nations that have seen Jesus rule for one thousand years will still go after the devil.

Yup. And he's going to gather not just one or two. I mean, one or two, we can understand.

It says he's going to gather so many people, verse 8, like the sand of the seashore. Boy. So many people who've seen Jesus reign for a thousand years, they still want the devil.

And they come and surround the camp of the saints. These people want to attack God's people even after all this. And fire comes down and burns them up and the devil is thrown into the lake of fire.

It's just a few seconds. It's all over. But the devil is released for that short time just to show the human race, don't think people will turn just because they see Jesus is so good.

They saw him for three and a half years, they rejected him. They'll see him for a thousand years and still reject him. It's only God's mercy that can save us from deception.

It's good to remember that. So, I want to show you eight verses in the New Testament that speak about self-deception. Now in the Old Testament we read that Satan was deceived.

Deception started there. But here are verses that speak not just about Satan deceiving us, but can deceive us so thoroughly, even believers, that we can deceive ourselves. You know, Jesus spoke about in the last days, even the elect would almost be deceived.

There's going to be a tremendous amount of deception in the last days. Paul says in 1 Timothy 4, the Holy Spirit underlines that many deceiving spirits are going to go into the world. I thought about that.

I said, I mean, I'm a father and I wouldn't like deceivers to come and talk to my children, even to my grown-up children, leave alone small children. Which father or mother would allow someone whom they know to be a deceiver to come and talk to their little children? Would you do it? I mean, if you didn't know, you invited somebody to your house, you didn't know he was a deceiver, okay. But if you know the guy is a deceiver, would you let him come in? I mean, you may be able to handle him as an adult, but would you let him come and talk to your little children? Yet, God is a better father than us, but He allows it.

And the first proof of it is He allowed the deceiver to come to the Garden of Eden, to innocent Adam and Eve. He allowed the devil to come as a deceiver there. And you know very well, when we look around at Christendom today, all the cults, all the multitudes of denominations, all the Christians who've got strange ideas, where did it all come from? The deceiver has been at work, very hard at work.

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