

Eight Ways of Deceiving Ourselves - Part 3

by Zac Poonen

Don't be deceived by thinking you can live as you like and still go to heaven, instead, be humble, protect yourself from self-deception, and be careful of the company you keep.

Duration: 10:48

Scripture: Proverbs 1:7, Matthew 7:21, Romans 6:23, 1 Corinthians 6:7-15, Galatians 6:7, James 1:22, 1 John 1:8

Topics: "Self Deception", "Righteous Living"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of humility in seeking wisdom from God's Word, highlighting the need to acknowledge our limitations in understanding spiritual truths. It also warns against self-deception, particularly in areas such as legal disputes among believers and living in sin while claiming to be a follower of Christ. The message stresses the seriousness of living a righteous life and the danger of being deceived into thinking that one can continue in sin without consequences.

Transcript

So like it says here, I make myself a fool when it comes to this book, because it's true. I am foolish concerning spiritual things. Then it says, I wonderful promise, I can become wise.

I can become wise and I want to say to all of you young people, you need wisdom. And you can only get it from God's book, the Bible. And you can get it only if you come to this book with the humility that acknowledges that all your earthly cleverness is of no use when it comes to understanding God's word.

We've seen that also in our own churches. Some people who can't speak English and who have studied very little in the villages, what a revelation they have on scripture sometimes. More than a lot of PhDs.

So we've seen the reality of it. So that's number one. Humility to acknowledge that when it comes to God's book, my intelligence is not much use.

Then I will protect myself from self-deception. Okay, then we'll go to number two. And that's in chapter 6 and verse 9. Let's start in verse 7. It says, it's already a defeat for you that you have lawsuits with one another.

He's talking here about some brother who's been wronged and he goes to court, verse 1. He has a problem with another brother and he goes to court. He says, that's crazy, it's foolish. He says, how can a believer do that? It's already a defeat.

He says, if you go to court, you're defeated already. There's no question of whether you win in the court or not. You're already defeated when you enter the court.

Verse 7. Why don't you allow yourself to be cheated? Do you know the number of Christians who have gone to court against one another? And, oh, somebody called me a heretic. Or they defamed my God. They defamed my God? Is your God so helpless that he can't defend himself? That you've got to go and fight for this helpless God? I tell you, one proof of the fact that Christianity is the truth is that if somebody defames my God, I don't have to fight for him.

He fights for himself. He'll deal with his enemies. That's the proof.

Every other religion, they fight for their God. But not true Christianity. Oh, no.

Our God can take care of himself. So, we don't go to court. And then he says, don't you know that the unrighteous Verse 9. will not inherit the kingdom of God.

He says, don't think, oh, just because you say you're believers and you can do whatever you like, you can go to court and take other people to court and do all these things. And, don't be deceived. That's what he's saying here.

Don't be deceived. Fornicators, and idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, homosexuals, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, swindlers, will not inherit the kingdom of God. Now, a lot of people get upset when they read something like that.

Well, I'm just reading the Bible. That's what scripture says. That's God's Word.

We're just reading the Bible. But what if somebody says, well, I'm a believer. What do you mean you're a believer? You're a believer and you're a fornicator? You're a believer and you're an idolater? You're a believer and you're an adulterer? You're a believer and you're effeminate? That means a man who bathes like a woman.

And you're a believer and you're a homosexual? And you're a believer and you're a thief? You're a believer and you're covetous? Desiring things that don't belong to you? You're a believer and you're a drunkard? You're a believer and you're a slanderer, reviler, backbiter? You're a believer and you're a swindler? Sorry, he says. Don't deceive yourself. You can't be a believer and be these things at the same time.

No, it's like saying I'm black and I'm white. How can that be? Black and white are no mix. He said these are two different things.

Don't be deceived. That means don't say, oh, once upon a time I said Lord Jesus come into my heart. No, it doesn't really matter how I live.

Don't be deceived. This is the second area where we really have to be careful that we don't deceive ourselves. What's that? That I don't think that just because I ask Jesus to come into my heart once in my life I can just live as I like and one day God will carry me to heaven.

Don't be deceived. He's talking about you. You were like that once upon a time, were a slave man, but you were justified.

Now, what is the need to give such exhortations to believers in Corinth if they are not in any danger of being lost? I can't understand this. Some people say, well, once you accept Christ you can never be lost. Well, then why in the world do you tell these believers that if you do this, you do this, you do this, you won't inherit God's kingdom? This is the tremendous deception of Satan that he's accomplished among believers all over the world.

That he's made them feel, oh, well, if I've accepted Christ once, I'll be okay. And they sail along fornicating, idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, stealing, covetous. Say, I'll go to heaven.

And one day they wake up in hell and the devil says, oh, I deceived you, got you. And the guy wakes up in hell and says, boy, all these preachers who told me that once I was saved, I was always saved. Where are they? Next to you.

They're there too. Be careful. Don't be deceived.

This is God's word. Don't listen to me, just listen to God's word. Don't be deceived.

No fornicator, idolater, adulterer, effeminate, homosexual, thief, covetous, drunkard, swindler, rebiler is ever going to get into God's kingdom. That is the word that lots and lots of believers today need to hear. You can't play the fool with sin and think, oh, well, I accepted Christ.

You just can't do it. You're lost. Maybe you were saved once upon a time, but right now you're lost.

And you need to repent from there and come back. Turn from that sin which will land you straight into the lap of the devil and come back and go through that list and see whether you fit into any of those things. And he's talking to people who take others to court.

He said, don't think you'll get into God's kingdom either. You think a lot of believers believe that? That you take somebody else, a believer, to court and you go into God's kingdom? You've got it. Deceive yourself.

A lot of people are deceiving themselves. That's the whole meaning of that passage. Okay.

Now we go to one more verse and that's 1 Corinthians 15. Number three. 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

Where again it says in verse 33, don't be deceived. Bad company corrupts good morals. That's another area where particularly young people need to be careful.

They can say, well, I've accepted the Lord. I'm strong. And you say, no, no, no.

Bad company is not going to affect me. Bad company will ruin you. You may be a very good mannered, well behaved, God fearing young man or woman.

But you get into the wrong company, it'll corrupt you. And you won't even know it. Because it's a slow type of corruption.

It doesn't happen overnight. But little by little by little by little, you get corrupted. And that is an area where we can deceive ourselves.

You say, oh well, it's okay. We're going to keep friends with some of these people. Who are always talking nonsense and speaking evil.

And when you work in an office, you can't avoid having to mingle with people who don't have any standards. You can't escape it. But if they are the ones you long to be with, that's the question.

Are they the people you want to be with? Or are they the people you just endure because you have to go to work and earn your living? Or are they the people you enjoy being with? I believe all of you need to ask yourself. Who do you enjoy being with? Answer that question honestly to yourself. Who do you really enjoy being with? Is it those worldly people? Or is it godly people?

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