

2.3.20 - Deceived

We want to address the question, why are we so easily deceived by Satan? I am hoping by now that you can see that it applies to textile believers regarding naturism, but I am quite certain that from time to time we are all deceived by Satan about something. Even the greatest of Bible scholars all seem to have been wrong on some part of the Bible. Mathew Henry makes a good example. He has Isaiah looking like an English gentleman without his outer garments in Isaiah 20. There are others, but our goal here isn't to see how many of you we can offend by hitting one of your hot spots. If greater scholars than us were wrong on Bible doctrine, we must be also. We will assume it is Satan who tricked (deceived) us and that we are not aware of it until someone or something challenges our belief. At some point something will come into conflict with what we believe. The hard question is...what will we do about it? Why do we have a tendency to stay with the incorrect doctrine instead of deciding to learn the truth?

The example of the problem that concerns us is how Christianity is supporting Satan's desire to cover the body. If your naturist views are discovered or you share them with the wrong person, you can become incorrectly labeled as a sexual pervert or possibly something even worse. Before accepting the Bible regarding nakedness, I had read about Isaiah, Saul and Peter being naked many times without even thinking how can they do that and not be in sin or why didn't Jesus rebuke Peter for being naked while fishing.

Another closely related example is an honest treatment of the place of sex in the Christian's life. We know that all married couples engage in the activity, but in Christian circles it seems to be considered wrong to say anything about the activity...like it was some great sin such as fornication or adultery. The book of Hebrews tells us that the marriage bed is undefiled. The word "bed" in the Greek is literally "coitus" meaning sex...it's literally stating that sex within marriage is undefiled. The modern translations mistranslate this as instruction to keep the bed

undefiled, but that is not what the verse actually says. Song of Solomon gets into great detail of the love that they have for each other even using illustrations to explain what kinds of activities they are enjoying together. Oral sex is even mentioned in Song of Solomon. Try to find a Bible commentator who is courageous enough to tell you what the euphemisms in the Song of Solomon mean in a sexual application...most will not. The majority incorrectly make an allegory out of the whole book. As we hinted earlier, we all have errors that should be discovered and corrected. We will gain a lot more working on our "beams" instead of wringing our hands over their "motes".

Laziness has to be one of the big reasons if not the biggest. Yes, there are only 24 hours in a day and you need to sleep, go to work, eat, go to church, drive back and forth from work, etc. The motivational speakers tell us that we find time to do the things we want to do and make excuses for the rest. I never liked that idea, but it seemed to be true in my life. Maybe we need to be convinced that something is important enough to take time from our other important things we need (like) to do. Could that be an area of deception? God will understand that the things you are doing are far more important than what He wants you to do. (Satan's message)

Laziness shows itself when we assume the preacher is always right even if the still small voice says, "you should check to see if that agrees with My Word." The pastor may have assumed the professor is always right. The professor may be assuming that his teacher was right without checking the Bible. The teacher maybe repeating what he was taught and etc for generations. Now if someone discovers that the doctrine is wrong, he will receive a lot of pressure to get back in line so all those people do not look to be incorrect.

Laziness is also evident when we do not check accusations against a fellow Christian that seem too bad to be true. Our churches teach that stories like this should be checked before acting on them. When we had an incident that would have been stopped before it got out of hand by

anti-gossip calls, only one person made a call and it got out of hand. How many people read a passage that was assigned by the pastor for next week's lesson or worse yet studied the passage before the lesson. I have been on the list of those who forgot the assignment most of the time. Unwillingness to deal with the problems that could occur if we take a stand for the truth would also be a form of laziness. Some of our friends may not understand. We may have to work harder to keep them as a friend or we may even have to end up making some new friends.

Another reason we are easy to deceive is Bible study with a goal to prove that our belief is right rather than simply studying to learn the truth. There is some laziness in this one, but the approach is wrong. It is easier to find a few verses that agree with the doctrine we are proving and stop instead of looking at all the verses that apply to the doctrine. You could look at all the verses and not see that your doctrine is wrong because you are not expecting to be proven wrong. It is like not noticing how many Hondas are on the road till you own one. Our goal should be to determine what the Bible says about a doctrine not prove it right or wrong.

Legalism makes us easy to deceive. We can use a set of rules instead of applying the teaching to our situation. We might have to learn to think for ourselves if we apply the teaching instead of a set of rules. The people in authority seem to have a desire to make the rules more burdensome until there is a rule to apply to anyone you do not like or agree with and put him in his place. The followers in most cases have not studied the Bible teaching to know if the rule fits the teaching. The rules usually try to follow the letter of the law and not the spirit, which causes some ridiculous rulings. If the person making the rules is deceived, Satan gets the followers also. The rules are passed on from one generation to the next through the education system which usually teaches people what to think not how to think. If people learn how to think, they may see the deceit and get right with God or put pressure on the leader to reform. If we get right with God it will contrast with those around who think they are right with God which seldom wins friends.

Belief worship is close to legalism and a way to keep the ground that Satan has won with earlier deceits. There is a touch of pride in this one. It is my belief and bless God I am going to defend it. The belief may be centuries old, so no need to check with the Bible to see if it is in agreement with the Bible someone should have found the error by now. (Maybe he was punished or martyred to keep him quiet.) Since the belief is our god, we need to defend it at all costs. The disciples were firm believers in "once dead always dead", and could not believe Jesus was alive when told by Jesus that He would rise the third day and the women reported they saw him alive. Satan can deceive Christians into some really unchristian behavior over belief worship.

Going-along-to-get-along is another area where Satan can easily deceive us. It is not that big a deal to eat a little fruit. God will understand our weakness. He certainly wants us wise. If we were gods, we might be better companions for God. God wants me to be at peace with Eve. How can we be companions if we disagree? We are still dealing with problems that came from that line of reasoning. Read **Genesis 3** for more details. The big problem with this method of deceit is the progressive nature of it. Satan did not stop with the forbidden-fruit, he went right on to covering the image of God. Yes, he only covered a small part of the body, but if you look around, you will notice that he did not stop with only loin cloths. Now it is a "sin" to uncover the body if someone can see you naked. Satan has been so successful with that deception that he now has the church as enforcers of his plan!

Materialism is another area of deceit. Achan was deceived into thinking he could get away with a little spoil. Who will miss it? I can say it was from Egypt or another town we destroy. **Jos 7:21 When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.** Like compromise, materialism is progressive. We never have enough stuff. If we are

deceived once that we can gain by a little compromise, we can be sure another temptation will come along to compromise more for another gain or a larger one. If we are not caught, we are still at the mercy of the source of the gain. If we do not do their bidding, then they will expose our compromises where they will cause us the most trouble.

An area that is more a protection for gains made by Satan than a deceit is a closed mind. Chambers calls it the ban of finality. Our beliefs are a way to explain or understand God. Like in science, we never know when new evidence will show that our theories are wrong and no law, model or theory is final. God is far more complicated than His creation and we are not able to understand how He works. Men have never been able to understand women, how do you think we will do trying to understand God who created both man and woman. All biblical doctrine is an attempt to explain God so we can understand Him. Even scripture, God's revelation of Himself, can be misapplied. We all could be wrong about some doctrine and should be willing to take an honest look into what the Bible says about the subject if our doctrine is in conflict with new information. To see the difference between an open and a closed mind read Acts 17 and note how the close-minded Jews of Thessalonica treated Paul's message compared to the open-minded people in Berea. We call this looking for "prepared hearts" when it comes to being a witness for Christ.

If you notice all the problems Paul was writing to the early churches about to keep God's Word pure, you should suspect that the modern church has errors that need addressing. Satan did not stop working just because the Bible was completed. The wolves in sheep's clothing are still around trying to sow error in the church. Many of the errors they were able to start long ago have not been detected because we do not read and study what the Bible says about day to day life. If you can't live a doctrine, something or someone is wrong. If clothing does not cure lust, then maybe that doctrine is wrong regardless of how long it has been tried or how many people believe it. It could be one of Satan's deceptions.

What is the solution, you ask? First make sure you will be in heaven when you leave this life. Trusting your own righteousness to get to heaven is Satan's biggest deceit. You get the Holy Spirit when you get saved. He will make the Bible understandable. Bible study without the Holy Spirit and salvation is a waste of time unless you are seeking salvation. For more information about a secure future in Heaven please check out www.PreciousSeed.com.

Study the Bible, after you are saved. Where do I start? It depends on how much you know about Bible study. If you have never read through the whole Bible, that is the place to start. I would suggest repeating that at least once or twice. That is what helped me better understand what is in the Bible. Our church had a contest with points for reading the chapters for the week on a schedule for reading through the Bible in a year. I started to read through the Bible many times before and failed to get out of the books of Moses. I got through it many times with the help of the contest. Next skill you should gain is how to use a concordance, a topical index, a Bible dictionary and commentaries. These are available on line and it is much easier than handling several large books to find something. I like the Blue Letter Bible site for Bible study. They have commentaries, dictionaries, concordances and more all on one site with links between them. Find a mentor who can help you find answers or even give you answers. Only remember we can all be wrong. If the still small voice is not quieted by what your mentor said, ask him for sources to check for yourself.

We are not expecting you to put all your doctrines up for questioning and study at once. That would be like “college philosophy” I took once as a three weeks summer course. By the end of the three weeks I was not sure I believed anything. We are hoping you will learn what is in the Bible by reading it and study the things that do not line up with your present doctrines. The still small voice will point out areas that need study if you are spending time in your Bible.

Is it all that important? We pay our pastor to do the study for us and report three times a week, why should we spend all that time studying also? Let me ask you a question. Who is more likely to be taken advantage of by a vehicle mechanic...a man or a woman? Why do you say a woman? Because the mechanic assumes that she knows nothing about the mechanical function of a car. Now, replace the mechanic with Satan and the woman with a Christian. Which is easier to deceive, one who knows the Bible from his or her own study or one who goes to church three times a week and forgets the topic of the lesson before he gets home. It will be harder for Satan to deceive someone who studies the Bible for himself and checks the pastor when the sermon does not agree with his study. Two people with different perspectives should find most of Satan's deceptions. The Apostle Paul said it this way, "Follow me as I follow Christ." In other words, make sure that I am following Christ as you follow me.

Our goal with this article is to make it harder for you to be deceived by Satan, not to make you a good deception finder in others. You will have very little success correcting others who are deceived. If you find the deception and make corrections in your own life, you will stop helping Satan spread the deception. That maybe all we can do, but who knows how far God will make it reach.