



www.thereflectioncenter.com

DON'T BE DECEIVED

Before we begin to look at deception, I would like to encourage you to read the following Scriptures: Romans 1:16-30; 2 Corinthians 4:4.

Deception literally means the act of causing someone to accept as true or valid what is false or invalid : the act of deceiving.

I want to contend that there are three large areas that have led to an incredible increase in deception in modern Christianity. The result is absolutely dangerous: false Christianity. I pray that you read the following with an open heart so that you can walk away from any areas of deception in your life.

Literacy

What was the last passage you read? Book of the Bible? Book?

What is your average books read per week? Month?

I love to read and learn. My favorite is old books from renowned Christian men and women. The old versions are often a little difficult to read. The English is more complex and requires more focus and a deeper vocabulary. Why?

There has been a sharp decline in reading and self-thinking.

Fall in reading has led to a rise in media consumption.

Are you ready for some shocking statistics?

The average American spends 19 minutes per day reading while the average 15-19 year old spends only 4.2 minutes per day reading.

Contrast that with the average American spending 235 minutes with TV, 203 minutes on a mobile device and 128 minutes on a computer.

In 1978 only 8% of Americans claimed to read no books in a year. In 2011 this number rose to 19%.

80% of families will not buy a new book this year and 70% of Americans claim to not have been in a book store in the last 5 years.

57% of young adults read their Bible less than 3 times a year.

Doctrine

What is the last doctrinal issue you thought through? Doctrine is simply a clarified statement of Christian beliefs. These can range from our fallen nature and salvation to atonement and the

doctrines of grace.

When we talk about a Bible passage and explain the meaning of passages and words, we are doing exegesis! We are talking about doctrinal issues and stating the meaning of the Bible.

A fall in doctrinal clarity leads to rise in deception. What happens when pastors don't understand doctrine or don't teach it because its not easy and catchy? What we end up with is the blind leading the blind.

Ask yourself the following questions to keep from falling into this deception: Do you know more about secularism than Christianity?

Is your view of christianity more reflective of moralism than Jesus' teaching?

Moralism

Teaches that good works or being a good person gets you to Heaven/makes God happy.

Christianity teaches that you can't truly be/do good until salvation has occurred, which means that God is already passing over your sin through Jesus.

Coupled with the moral revolution this leads to subjectivity of morality and the legalization of immorality (Romans 1:30)

.

This deception leads to a few conclusions:

Christianity is outdated, old fashioned, discriminatory and intolerant

.

Universalism is the only alternative. Universalism states that all roads lead to God.

False Christianity is the byproduct of accepting universalism in the church and can look like: the prosperity gospel, false grace, works righteousness

, etc.

Why So Much Deception?

Satan is called the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4).

-
- In 2 Jn 7 and Revelation 12 he is the deceiver.
- In Job 1, Mt. 4 & 16, Acts 5 and 2 Cor. 11 he is satan, the accuser and father of lies.
- In Eph 6, 1 Jn 3 and Revelation 20 he is the devil, leader of sin.
- In Zech. 3 he opposes God's work.
-
- In Mt. 4 he perverts God's Word.
-
- In 1 Thess. 2 he hinders God's servant.
- In 2 Cor. 4 he hinders the Gospel.

- In 1 Timothy 3 he snares the righteous.

-

In 1 John 5 he holds this world in his power.

So why so much deception. He is losing subjects
and is desperate to not lose them.

But in Hebrews 2 and 1 John 3 Jesus came to destroy satan and his works and free those held in bondage.

In Colossians 1 Jesus came to deliver us from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light.

In Romans 16 Jesus will come and completely destroy the enemy

.

Areas of Deception

Entertainment/Amusement - fulfilling God-given desires of: adventure, humor, thrills, challenge, etc. through temporary, limited and immediate satisfactions (movies, tv, games, social media). Leads to worshipainment and feel good sermons to appease worldly Christians

.

Lack of Rest - Sabbath is derided or set aside as an unattainable, lofty aspiration.

Lack of Prayer - Many would say (and believe) that they pray far more than they actually do. The average pastor prays less than 5 minutes a day.

Prayer is an aspiration hardly ever achieved because of a fundamental deception in doctrine: works vs. grace, moralism, sovereignty vs. free will

.

Talking and Doing

John Bunyan's allegory in Pilgrim's Progress
is profound and eye opening.

On the way to the Celestial City Christian and Faithful encounter Talkative

. At first he appears to be a great companion, talking at length with Faithful about religion and its beauty. But its just that...talk. Christian has to instruct Faithful about the deception found in Talkative, mainly that he talks but doesn't do.

Like Faithful we must beware of this great deception.

James 1:22

tells us clearly: Don't be hearers only but doers as well.

Summary

I write this to you today so that you won't be deceived. The most dangerous part of deception is that you don't see it! I hope that by reading this your eyes have been opened to any number of areas of deception surrounding you. But don't stop there. Repent and turn to the truth, Jesus!

I.