

The Vincennes Voice

"...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight..." (Matt. 3:3)

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WHEN MEN ARE DECEIVED

Johnie Edwards

When a person has been led to believe a thing to be true when it is not, the person has been deceived. God warned people in the Old Testament against being deceived. "Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them" (Dte. 11:16). The New Testament contains warnings against being deceived. "Let no man deceive himself . . ." (I Cor. 3:18). "Be not deceived," are the words of Paul in I Corinthians 15:33. Paul warned the Galatians, "Be not deceived . . ." (Gal. 6:7). The Hebrew letter contains a warning about deceit. "But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13).

1) People Are Deceived by False Teachers. When a teacher can persuade a person to believe a false doctrine the person has been deceived. Solomon said, "He that speaketh truth showeth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit" (Prov. 12:17). The Bible warns us against false teachers. John said, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I Jn. 4:1). In describing

such false teachers, Paul said, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (II Cor. 11:13-15).

Jesus said, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matt. 24:24). False teachers are very effective in misleading people many times. The only way to keep from being deceived by false teachers is to be familiar with the truth. Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:32). Another safeguard against being deceived by false teachers is to demand, chapter and verse for everything that is taught religiously. If a teacher cannot produce the scriptural evidence for his teachings, then we must not accept such as being true. These false teachers "serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly: and by good words and fair speeches deceive the

hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:18).

Teachers of the word must use the word of God like Paul did. "For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: But we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts" (I Thess. 2:3-4). The word of God must not be handled deceitfully (II Cor. 4:2).

2) Riches Deceive Folks. No doubt people who have a lot of this world's goods feel a great deal of security in such. But there is a possibility that riches can deceive people and lure them into false security. In the parable of the sower, Jesus warned us against such danger. "He also that received seed among thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Matt. 13:22).

A person may become so concerned over gaining material wealth that he will be led away from the truth and become a man of sorrows. Paul told Timothy, "For the love of money is the root of all evil;

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which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (I Tim. 6:10). If a person has been deceived into believing, that if he is rich, he does not need the Lord and the Lord's church, he needs to read what Jesus said. "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16: 26).

3) Strong Drink

Deceives. Solomon said, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). A drinking man thinks he can "drown his sorrows." Not really, he is just being deceived. I recently read a beer ad, which told how a particular beer was sparkling, tasteful and delightful. I thought that it could have read, sparkling, tasteful, and deceitful!

4) Satan Is a Deceiver.

From the time Satan made his appearance on the scene of time to this hour, he has been busy trying to deceive folks. Paul warned the Corinthians about this. "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (II Cor. 11:3). Satan is so sly that he "himself is transformed into an angel of

light" (II Cor. 11:14). John described Satan in this language: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Rev. 12:9). Now let's take a look at some ways in which people are deceived:

If a Person Believes He Lives Above Sin He Is Being Deceived.

"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (I John 1:8-10). When every responsible person reaches the age of accountability he becomes guilty of sin. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). After a person has obeyed the gospel, been pardoned from his past sins, he can still be guilty of sinning. The passage in I John was directed to Christians. Yet in spite of this teaching, there are those who believe they cannot sin. Really, they are just being deceived.

Man Deceives Himself When He Believes He Can Sow One Thing And Reap Something Else.

It has always been a law of God that we reap what we sow. Paul expressed it this way: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7) When you hear, "Go ahead and

sow your wild oats, everyone has to do that," you remember this law of God, "you will reap what you sow." If you believe otherwise, you are being deceived.

One May Be Deceived by a Misuse Of His Tongue.

James said, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (Jam. 1:26).

One may render his service to God as vain because he has been deceived into believing that he can use his tongue as he pleases.

Many Are Deceived by Placing Their Faith in Tomorrow.

Too many people plan to do that which they know to do tomorrow! Someone well said, "Tomorrow is the thief of time." Solomon said, "Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. 27:1). We all need to learn to live each day as if it were the last, for one of these days will be. Listen to James: "Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil" (James 4:13-16). We need to learn to be obedient and faithful to the Lord today. ". . . Behold, now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:3).

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm