

Lesson 5 – How Deception is Substituted for Facts and Reasoning

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Introduction: We must learn how to reason and also discern when it has not occurred!

- A. It is impossible to be a follower of Christ without being able to reason.
 1. We must choose to fear God! (**Prov 1:7, 29**)
 2. Based upon the heart that fears God we receive instruction on how to choose other things. (**Prov 3:31; 12:26**)
 3. If one is not able to reason they are not accountable to God. (**Rom 7:9**)

B. Each of us have a strong tendency for self-deception. (**2 Cor 13:5**)

1. The most powerful deception we can face comes from within – self-deception! “We’re all very good at making ourselves feel good about what God says is bad. We’re all very skilled at recasting what we’ve done so what was wrong doesn’t look so wrong to us. I’ll tell myself that I didn’t really lash out in anger; no, I was speaking as one of God’s prophets. I’ll tell myself that that second look wasn’t lust; I am simply a man who enjoys beauty.” - Paul Tripp

I. How our lusts can be substituted for facts and reason

A. God has plainly shown us Satan’s battle plan for deception. (**1 Jn 2:14-17**)

1. The lusts of our heart can shape our reality. Consider the danger of wealth!
2. One of the worst things that could happen to us is a life of ease and prosperity.
3. Because of wealth Israel changed their view of reality. (**Deut 8:17-18**)
4. We tend to take the path of least resistance. Without suffering and uncertainty we tend to be lazy thinkers which is the essence of worldliness. (**Mt 13:22**)

B. The ultimate goal of Satan is to destroy the heart. (**Eph 4:17-20**)

1. If Satan can destroy the conscience then he has removed a significant part of our mind or heart. In pride we may want to run and hide rather than open our eyes!
2. The naïve try to linearly reason the consequences of a single sin. How we handle a single sin can create an erosion in the mind that in time will lead to blindness.
3. Do not try to “play chess” with the wicked one. We must abhor sin and seek wisdom to stay as far away as possible from sin. (**Prov 1:7; 5:21-23**)

C. When you chose to enter a world of lies you may never come out. Consider the lure of sexual sins. (**Prov 7:9-14**)

1. Any sin that must be done in the dark and hidden can destroy the heart.
2. Wisdom is one of sin's first casualties. It's hard to admit, but true none the less: sin reduces all of us to fools. Consider King David’s adultery.

You read the story of David's sin, and you say to yourself, "What was he thinking? Did he really believe that he'd get away with this? Did he completely forget who he was? Did he think that God was going to stand idly by and let this happen?" But David is not some extreme case of foolishness gone wild; you see evidence of the same foolishness in each of our lives daily. People could say of us again and again, "What was he thinking? What was she thinking?" - Paul Tripp

3. The guilt and fear will wear you down and separate you from the faithful even though you may have hidden it! (**Prov 28:1**)

D. When we have a fear of sin then we can turn to seek wisdom. (**Prov 7:22-27**)

1. Many laugh at such restrictions. “All consequences can be avoided by modern medicine!” Others say boldly “it is not wrong!” (**Prov 30:20**)
2. By design the sexual bond carries very strong emotional forces with it.
3. One can lose control of their heart to the powerful thoughts of lust and infatuation. It can be as powerful as drugs and alcohol.

II. How humor and peer-pressure can be substituted for facts and reason

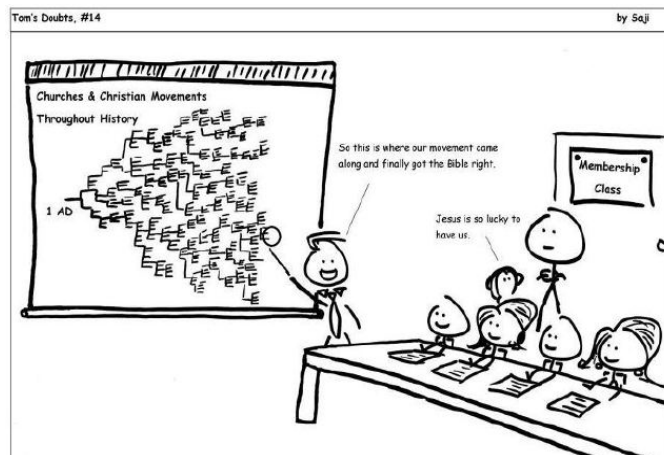
A. What some call humor the Bible calls scoffing. (Lk 16:14)

Scoff - ἐκμυκτηρίζω - strictly turn one's nose up at someone; hence *ridicule, sneer at, scoff at*

1. There is a place to show inconsistencies *that can be humorous*. Does my humor fairly represent another and *help others reason from scripture*? (Isa 44:14-18)
2. Humor can also deceive and misrepresent. It can be *a form of cursing another*.
3. Many out of *fear of being scoffed at* shut down their minds.

B. The proud *are often angry and dismissive* resorting to punishing others by ridicule.

1. The scoffer *does not seek knowledge*. (Prov 21:24; 9:7-10; 14:6-8)
2. This kind of pride and bitterness *can be shared*. It closes the mind to reason!
3. What is implied in these pictures? Discuss what *may be true and false*!



C. Please do not be overcome by those who seem to possess “greater wisdom” and are praised as “theologians”. (Col 2:6-8)

"I consulted the philosophers ... I found them all alike proud, assertive, dogmatic; professing - even in their so-called skepticism - to know everything; proving nothing, scoffing at one another. This last trait ... struck me as the only point in which they were right. Braggarts in attack, they are weaklings in defense. Weigh their arguments, they are all destructive; count their voices, each speaks for himself alone ... There is not one of them who, if he chanced to discover the difference between falsehood and truth, would not prefer his own lie to the truth which another had discovered. Where is the philosopher who would not deceive the whole world for his own glory?" - 18th century philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau

III. Our only hope of overcoming self-deception is the wisdom of God

A. When we fear God we will *seek to be honest and principled*. (Prov 1:7)

1. When our hearts stay open and tender to God we will always reason to discern His will. We *want to open our Bibles*! (Rom 12:2; 2:28-29; Deut 10:16-17)
2. We will not allow our pride to keep us from admitting when we do not know how to answer or when we were wrong!

B. Remembering that we are saved by grace will be *the first step* to keeping a “sound mind”! (2 Pt 1:9)

1. We will always be open to examine God’s word *wherever it leads us*!
2. Let us pray for God’s help to *overcome the wicked one*. (1 Jn 5:19-21)