

Deception

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[0:00] In Isaiah 21 it talks about a watchman.

The Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, and let him declare what he seeth.! Isaiah 21 verse 6. Go cause his people to be watchmen.

Watchmen and watchwomen, you could say. To see and know what's going on. And God calls preachers to cry aloud, spare not. And I see today a great need for biblical discernment.

There's a spiritual war that's going on. Opposing forces are battling. And human souls are in the balance in this global spiritual conflict.

A warfare is going on. And one of the features of warfare is deception. Deception. It's used in warfare. To deceive it means to delude, to cause to believe what is not true, to believe an untruth.

[1:08] To mislead by false appearance or statement. And we can use deception ourselves. You might even use it tonight when you come to church. You might leave the light on or the radio on or whatever it might be at home to convince burglars to go somewhere else.

It's tricking people, isn't it? It's causing people to believe something that isn't so. And deception is happening today.

And someone has said that deception is basically in two ways. By, number one, hiding the real. So by camouflage.

Or showing the false. Such as using decoys. I was reading how in World War II the Navy would deck out ships to look like destroyers.

And freighters to look like destroyers. There was whole convoys of them. And the captains used to get praise to when they got sunk. Because the enemy had wasted their energy chasing after these old freighters.

[2:16] Thinking they were knocking out destroyers. And they had the guns hurricanes were floating on the water. If they looked carefully they could see that it was all fake. It was a deception.

So deception happens. And they're called decoys. They basically make the opposing force spend their energy chasing things that they could spend their time doing something better about.

So hiding the real and showing the false. In other words, making the real look false. And making the false look real. That's what happens with deception.

Basically those two things. So deception, it misleads by a false appearance, statement or tricks.

You know, it's been said that politicians are masters of the art of deception.

Of course we don't have any politicians like that in Australia, do we? Politicians are the masters of the art of deception. You know, you work in government long enough and you see what goes on.

[3:15] Politicians make an art of deception in how they handle the truth. The truth can be massaged. It can be manipulated and hidden altogether by smoke and mirrors.

And this is going on in the spiritual realm too. Even now, even in our land. Spiritual deception, spiritual conflict that we're part of.

And it affects you. You are involved. Every one of you, of us, are involved in this very thing of this spiritual conflict, this warfare and of this game of deception that is going on.

Now I spent some time yesterday with one of my grandsons and we talked about the game of chess. And in some countries, chess is a subject in school.

They actually get marked and get rewarded for learning to play chess. And sometimes in chess, your opponent tricks you.

[4:13] They play tricks. They deceive you. So you take a piece and you think, wow, I've got that piece. But really they were tricking you so that they could find a weak spot. Bluff you.

To throw you off guard. To take a piece that then leaves you vulnerable. There's a strategy to chess. There's a game of deception sometimes when you're pitted against another. And our committed enemy uses, in this spiritual conflict, deception as one of his techniques. If not his primary technique. And religious deception happens all around us today. We see there's some great, wonderful people going off to the Mormon assembly today. Or the Jehovah's Witness assembly. And great, nice, polite, friendly, kindly, well-meaning people deceive. Deceive. Deceive. Sadly deceive. 2 Timothy 3 from verse 12. It tells us of days of deception. Perilous times. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. [5:19] But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse. Evil men and seducers will become more evident. Deceiving and being deceived.

God's Word tells us of this. Of a time where men will be deceivers. And deceiving themselves. Blind leaders of the blind. Friends, truly, we are engaged. You are engaged in a spiritual conflict. In a battle for the truth. And so it's needful that we call to action the troops. That we sound the alarm. That we raise the alert. That we join the war effort. That we fight the battle of this time. It's time for us to man the action stations to take our place at the battle front. To be on guard because deceptive messages are all around about. Now, in warfare, opposing forces use deception quite routinely in a campaign of lies or distorted truths. [6:24] You know, Germany had Goebbels as that propaganda mouthpiece. And then he spoke through English speaking people to spread his lies. To wage a campaign of disinformation to mislead the enemy. And friends, today we must open our eyes and see the smoke screens. You know, it's no wonder that they have smoke machines in some churches. Smoke screens. It's all bluff and con. We ourselves are engaged in a propaganda warfare. We've been bombarded day after day. Every time you turn your TV set on, there's a sense where you've got to question, you've got to take precaution. It's happening on a global scale. And history tells us how nations have been poisoned through propaganda, through the minds of the people. We see what happened with Hitler. He must have had a high percentage of the votes of his day to be elected to power. [7:29] And to have masses of people flock to hear him tell his stories. And friends, it's carefully crafted propaganda. We see in North Korea what's going on. That people are actually worshipping a man. Literally worshipping this North Korean leader. The alternative is to get killed. So, you make your choice accordingly, don't you? There's propaganda. There's this deception that people are being enslaved. That liberties are being taken even from us in our land. Liberties are being lost as the populace has been conditioned to accept untruths. And deception is a tactic that's commonly used in warfare. During the Falklands War in 1982, the British bombed the airstrip at Port Stanley with Vulcan bombers that flew from Britain, some enormous transatlantic flight. And these overnight raids, they bombed the runway at Port Stanley. And after the raid, the aerial reconnaissance planes went out and they saw, wow, we really did some good work there. [8:38] The runway was pitted with all these craters. And that's what the photographs showed. So they thought, phew, that's a breeze, sir. We'll just land the troops. So they landed the Royal Marines and the British Army units on the islands. And then the troops heard these strange noises at night. The Argentine C-130s were still operating from the airstrip. Almost all of the Vulcan's bombs have missed. After the raid, the Argentinians had camouflaged the airstrip to make it appear cratered, but it continues to use it at night. They put these fake bomb crater pictures on the runway. And deception is happening in the worldly aspect, but it's also happening in the spiritual aspect too. Because the enemy of our souls wants to deceive us, wants to deceive the people of God. He's waged in a warfare against our kingdom and against our king and against us, his loyal subjects and citizens. So some of the enemy forces opposing God and his kingdom are difficult to detect.

[9:48] They're sneaky, covert, subtle, but committed to deceive you and me by making the real look false and the false look real.

A spirit of deception is at work. 1 John 4, 6 it says, We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us. He that is not of God heareth not us.

Hereby knowe the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. Two spirits in conflict, in contradiction. Spiritual forces committed to fight against you, intent to deceive.

They will try to make the false look real. Sometimes what counts for God gets hijacked and copied by Satan. There's whole churches, there's whole movements carrying on with things that are actually not scriptural.

It sounds good. It looks and sounds spiritual, even biblical, but is actually entirely false. An example of this is the health, wealth, prosperity gospel.

[10:56] People like Joyce Myers, Creflo Dollar, Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland. You can tune in. They're promoting false teaching. But the false is made to look real.

It's made to look real. It's packaged very nicely as a biblical Christianity, but it's far from that. It's toxic teachings. Toxic teachings.

Well packaged, but wrong. And in times of war, this is what happens. Deception happens where the enemy agents masquerade as one of our own.

As one of our own, as being on our side. In 2 John 1 verse 7 it says, For many deceivers are entered into the world. The devil's strategy is deception.

He wants to fool you, to trick you, to con you. The arch deceiver wants the control of hearts and homes. And many know the devil for his work as a tempter.

[12:02] We know we're tempted. The devil is known for his work as an accuser. Makes us want to bad mouth others. But he's got a more subtle work as a deceiver.

A tempter, an accuser and a deceiver. And he wants to undermine, to attack. And he does it in subtle ways. He's a master in his craft.

And multitudes follow him. His chief weapon is to keep the world under deception. He wants to trick you and fool you. And he works to deceive people.

He deceives the lost to stay in their sin. He deceives the careless, the carnal Christians by whatever the new fad of the day is, as far as doctrine goes. And he wants to deceive the spiritual believers. When we get slapped and we don't read our libel's. When we don't see God's face. In subtle schemes he deceives all. It makes me think of the Pied Piper.

[13:08] Who's ever heard the story of the legend of the Pied Piper? Here's this popular person, this popular Piper. Plays his little fancy catchy tune.

Wears his colourful clothing. He made the false look real. And the children thought this was a journey to happiness and joy.

And the children of Hamelin happily were taken away. Following the Pied Piper, never to return. Satan's like that.

Colourful clothes, catchy tune, popular guy. He's popular. If he was a politician he'd be elected. As the Governor of planet Earth. He's such a great guy, he'll give you everything you want.

Except eternal life. Right from his very appearance on planet Earth. Deception was his hallmark. His modus operandi. The father of lies he's called in John 8, 44.

[14:12] His strategy way back in Eden was to deceive him. And he fell for it. His sly subtle craftiness. Genesis 3, verse 4. The serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.

And the Lord warns us that this same tactic happens still now. And we are to be aware. Lest they be led astray.

2 Corinthians 11, verse 3. Beware lest your minds be somehow led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 2 Corinthians 11, verse 14 tells us he's an angel of light.

Beautiful. In his cunning disguise. Will you follow this lovely angel? Oh, an angel.

That's pretty harmless and nice. There's a lot of talk about angels today. There's preachers go on and on and on about angels today. And about trips to heaven, they claim.

[15:17] Lots and lots of talk about angels today. Will you follow this lovely angel? This angel of light? Or will you rather identify with the one who is the truth?

Let God be true. And every man a liar. We have reference to lies in the prayer time. I know I really got sucked in not that long ago.

When I pre-paid someone to do some work for me. To buy some materials for me. 500 bucks I gave him to buy some materials. And then suddenly his phone didn't answer when I tried to call him. And yeah, you wonder, you know, deception. Liars. Cheats. Frauds. Con artists. Deception. Happens today, doesn't it? Happens with people.

Happens with people. Happens with an angel. Called the angel of light. It's constantly happening all around us. And we're not even aware of it half the time. Because it's so well hidden.

[16:17] It's hidden. Deception is routinely used by the movie makers, isn't it? You see how they make these movies with these masses of armies. It's all, you know, it's all conjured up by computer animation and, you know, green screens that then show a backdrop that had nothing to do with what they're actually doing.

It's deception. The movie makers are great at it. And so is the devil. It's commonly used in warfare, as I say. Deception. It's been a long-standing tactic. I'm told that the ancient Mongols deceived their enemies by using stuffed mannequins to inflate the apparent size of their armies.

So they had all these mannequins looking like their army was ten times bigger than what it was. It was a trick. And the Allies too, they used deception.

In World War II, the Allies deceived the German High Command in respect to the location, timing and size of the D-Day landings at Normandy. So the Germans didn't send their reinforcements to Normandy.

They sent them somewhere else. There's a great power to deceive whole nations that the Bible speaks of. It tells us of deception.

[17:36] Right from Genesis 3. Deception is right through the book. A great power is against us. And we see it in the media.

How they alter images. Mass communication methods that spout the policies or whatever they want to sell us. At one period in World War II, the Allies used decoys.

Decoys, pretend airstrips. And the Germans determinedly bombed these decoy airfields. They attracted, at one time period, they attracted 440 air raids.

Compared with only 430 against the real ones. You know, Satan uses decoys. He wants to distract us. He wants to deviate and detour us.

He wants you to invest your life and your energies in things that are not as wise as they could be. Decoys. Let's be alert to these things.

[18:43] Friends, the Word tells us man's heart is very deceitful.

Desperately wicked. Jeremiah 17 verse 9. Don't let your heart lead you.

You know, it's a common saying, isn't it? What do they say? Follow your heart. Follow your heart. You get these butterflies. Oh, I feel like I'm in love with someone.

Oh! No, I felt like that. I still do actually. No, we don't let your heart lead you.

Your heart is deceitful, desperately wicked. Who can know it? And the problem is man, we do what is right in our own lives. That's where the people of God got into problems, wasn't it?

Sin can harden the heart and it is deceitful. Hebrews 3.13 it says, Exhort one another daily while it's cold today.

[19:40] Lest any of you be hardened, hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Sin is deceitful. And Romans 7.11, Paul says, Sin deceives me.

Sin deceives people. In fact, all the lost are deceived. Anyone outside of Christ is deceived. They've got blinkers on, you know, on their minds.

Their minds are darkened. Their eyes are blinded spiritually that they cannot see. It's the enemy's tactic. The enemy of our soul.

It wants to keep you blind to spiritual truth. And Titus 3.3, Paul says, We ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived. Thank God he's taken the blinkers off for you.

Amen? Can you say amen? That he's taken the blinkers off of your mind so that you can see. But deception is happening on a worldwide scale. It says in 2 Corinthians 4.4, It calls the devil the God

of this world.

[20:43] He's blinded the minds of them which believe not. Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. It's a massive worldwide scale that's going on.

So if you feel like you're outnumbered, you're probably in a good place sometimes. You know, the masses are duped and deluded. You know, look at the, what do you get in your newspaper every week, every day?

The horoscope. Intelligent people actually look at that. And they think their lives are guided by the movement of stars. What a load of hogwash. You know, massive scale of deception.

And there's people that believe in what's called feng shui. Feng shui. They believe that qi affects their prosperity and livelihood. So there's this kind of life force energy called qi, that flows through both living and inanimate objects.

And there's professional people you can engage to come into your office space. I know someone who does this. And they design your office so that the qi energy is somehow properly arranged.

[21:55] And so it can flow creatively through where you're living or working and improve your happiness and health and your professional life. There's rational, intelligent people who believe this trite.

Deception goes on today. And every unregenerate human being is deceived. There's many scriptures that talk about deception. How we can be a hearer and not a doer of the word.

We can say that we have no sin. That's deception. If we think we're something when we're nothing. When we're thinking that we're wise in this world. When we think that what we sow we will not reap. Many scriptures talk about be not deceived. So what of today? As we approach the end of the age. Days of deception are unfolding.

And our Lord foretells us of such a time where there will be war on an undreamt of scale. War by the dragon. War against the lamb. War against the church.

[23:02] Angelic powers conflicting. Darkness and light. We are already at war today. And our Lord promises ultimate victory to his people.

The end days are marked by total deception. Global deception of nations and peoples. Where the deceiver has virtually complete control of the earth.

1 John 5.19 it says, We are of God and the whole world lieth in wickedness. The Bible speaks of the end days.

And often the word deceive is there. In Matthew 24 for example. Most people on this earth will be deceived by the devil. It's told that this will happen.

The majority will be deceived and will be lost. And our Lord foretells us of this. In Matthew 24 it says, Verse 4. Jesus says, Take heed that no man deceive you.

[24:09] He says, Many will come in my name saying, I am Christ and shall deceive many. Verse 11 of Matthew 24. Many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many.

Matthew 24.24 it says, False Christ, false prophets, great signs and wonders. Inasmuch as it were possible they shall deceive the very elect. If it were possible.

People are going to see supernatural signs from heaven. In Revelation 13 verse 11 it talks about a counterfeit lamb. He will show great signs in heaven.

Make fire come down. So that people will follow the ultimate dictator. Friends, we're seeing abounding today various teachings and manifestations.

Manifestations that are latter day things. It's not in church history. It's some latter day introduction.

[25:12] And we ought to be very cautious of that. 2 Thessalonians 2 tells us of the wicked will come. His working will be the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.

And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. And then they perish because they receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And God shall send them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie.

That's telling stuff isn't it? That they should be damned who believe not the truth. It's important to get it right. Deceiving spirits.

Various signs and wonders. 1 Timothy 4 tells us how the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith. Giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.

Deceiving spirits. They'll draw people away. We need to give heed. Not to these spirits but to God. And so friends I urge you today as we think about these days in which we live.

[26:20] These are the days I believe very much my personal view is that we are in these days. If not at the threshold of these days.

Friends these days are seducing spirits. It's covert. It's hidden. It's sneaky. Tricky. And it's happening today.

And the doctrine and the deception will be doctrinal. These doctrines of devils. We've got to be careful about what teaching we listen to.

And this teaching will be delivered with hypocrisy. So it will be palmed off as the real thing. As if it's true. We've got to question everything.

Question everything. Seducing spirits will try to bring teachings that are not true. These spirits will falsely use the word of God like Satan did. Neither corrupting it.

[27:17] Twisting it. Casting doubt on it. Or outright denying it. Seducing spirits will play upon the bent of people to be religious. To have a mind to the supernatural.

To listen to, oh God told me this and God told me that. Go off in some crazy world of someone's mind. Instead of the word. Spirits like this will create chaos.

And take people away from the truth. Every believer must measure. Must test. Must search the scriptures for himself.

The truth of God must be our foundation. Now someone has said all thought and belief come from two sources. Basically two. Either the realm of truth or the realm of falsehood.

Which is the source? We've got a question now. Is it contrary to truth? Or is it in accord with truth? If it's in accord with truth.

[28:17] Our mind will be renewed by God. And receptive to the truth. If it's of the enemy. Our mind will be darkened. And swallowed up in unbelief.

Friends, many believers are at risk today as deceivers are at work. Paul talks of perils. Perils of false brethren. The enemy.

Just as in World War II and many wars. As a kid I used to read a lot of war books and such things. And read about spies. And some people are very good at being spies.

Many wars have been fought with the use of spies. Coming in and acting like they're on your side when they're really not.

And that can happen in churches too. You know we see. I've heard stories about witches and warlocks and things. Coming into churches and causing pastors to fall. And just causing chaos and such things as that.

[29:21] So we've got to be very alert to such things. It could happen. It could happen. And it says in the word of some who will come in the name of Christ. They'll preach.

They'll do many wonderful works in his name. And he'll say I never knew you. Matthew 7, 22, 23. So have you noticed today the rise of false prophets in the churches today?

Seems like you know when you explore what's going on in Christianity, popularly today. That there's prophet this and apostle that and you name it.

It's like wow. What's going on? It's very evident. Jesus says beware of false prophets who come in sheep's clothing. But inwardly they're ravening wolves.

You know they've got fangs these sheep. That look like sheep. They wear sheep's clothing so they look like they're followers of Christ. These are the big name preachers.

[30:21] Not all of them. But the mega church pastors. Not all of them necessarily. The worldwide evangelists. The bible teachers. They could be part of the enemy's plan of deception.

So even the big names. The big, big names. Question them. Question what they're wrong about. Where are they taking people? We could say that for example the popular contemporary Christian music artists, Christian TV producers, Bible publishers, Christian bookstores, Christian radio stations.

The enemy wants to infiltrate all of these things. Just as the worldly enemies infiltrate and if you can't beat them, join them. But you know, really you're not really on board.

They make the false appear real and the real appear false. In the last days the deceivers will deceive. How many? Many. Matthew 24 verse 11.

So God's word warns us of deceitful workers. 2 Corinthians 11 verse 13. Of ministers of Satan really, transformed as the ministers of righteousness.

[31:33] They'll say a lot of the right things. They might use a good Bible. They might give you a good message that makes you feel good. You go home with a spring in your step. But you've been lied to.

Let's be aware of such things. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. Satan masquerades as an angel of life. And we ought to be as the children of God awake to such things.

Many counterfeits abound today. And brothers and sisters, I urge you, I plead with you, to be very alert, very aware of such things.

Because false teachings give admission to evil spirits. We want to be very careful about what we are learning, what we're teaching, what doctrine we believe and practice.

We want to make sure it's right. I want to make sure it's right. Absolutely. So how can we avoid deception in these days? Just a couple of things to close. Prove all things.

[32:37] Prove all things. 1 Thessalonians 5, 21. Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good. Test everything. Absolutely everything. Test everything.

Hold on to what's right and true. Make sure it's the faith once delivered to the saints. Some will say, oh, you can't deny my experience.

You can't deny my experience. People today, don't rely on your experience. Please don't rely on your experience. Challenge everything. Challenge it. Hold fast that which is good.

And lastly, continue in the word. Jesus says if you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed.

You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. Continue in the word. We don't need a fresh word. You know, some people go to church and they actually want to hear God speak to them first person through some human mouthpiece as they lay hands on them and impart to them some first person word.

[33:47] Thus saith the Lord. You're going to Nigeria. Or whatever it be. Now someone said that to me when I was in that movement. They said, thus saith the Lord. You're going to go to Mount Gambier the Lord. Hasn't happened yet.

But we don't need to rest in the words of men. Continue in my word. We don't need some fresh word from so-called human prophets and latter-day biblical revelations.

We need the more sure word. This is the word that we need. The more sure word of prophecy. God's word. Continue in the word. A critical need for discernment today.

It says that our senses should be exercised to discern between good and evil. Hebrews 5.14. Jesus says, I tell you the truth. You believe me not. Here that is of God heareth God's words. That's John 8. Read the context. Friends, there's a dark hour coming but it can become our finest hour.

Our finest hour. In the time of warfare, what was the finest hour? When everything looked grim. Our duty is clear. We're on the victory side. And our Lord's already won. The confidence is not. We're not going to be a good thing. We're not going to be a good thing. We're not going to be a good thing. We're not going to be a good thing.

[34:45] We're not going to be a good thing. We're not going to be a good thing. We're not going to be a good thing. Friends, we're subject to a campaign of propaganda. The refuge of lies. Will we run to the shore refuge for our soul? The refuge of lies. Will we run to the shore refuge for our soul? Will we run to the shore refuge of lies? Will we run to the shore refuge of our soul? Will we run to the shore refuge of our soul?

Will we run to the shore refuge of our soul? Will we run to the shore of our soul? till he comes again. Friends, we're subject meantime to a campaign of propaganda. These are the last days, I believe.

Will we run to the refuge of lies? The Bible speaks of a refuge of lies. Or will we run to the sure refuge for our soul? The refuge of his truth. To close, to recap, we need discernment.

We need it, absolutely need it today. We need discernment. Why? Because deception abounds it makes the real appear false and the true appear...

Sorry, it makes the true appear false and it makes the false appear true. So don't go by the first impressions of something.

[35:45] There's a veneer of truth over the lies. It's a battle and the enemy uses the strategy of deception. We're in days of deception.

We ought to be alert. Be not deceived. Watch out for false prophets, false teachers and teachings, deceiving spirits, deceitful workers. How can we avoid deception? Prove all things.

Hold fast that which is good. Continue in his word. Be encouraged today. I've been preaching to Christians tonight, Dave. If you're outside of Christ, you are deceived right now.

You don't have the basic dream of life worth living, which is to know him. To know him as your saviour. I urge you today. Trust him. In these days of darkening deception, we need Christ.

We need Christ and him crucified. We need his life. We need his salvation. I urge you today. When deception abounds, when you don't know who to trust, or what to tune into, tune into God.

[36:47] Tune into God. Get a hold of him. Get a hold of him today. Let us pray. Let us pray.