

**THE FIVE WAYS OF DECEPTION  
PART FIVE  
THE DECEPTION OF OUR REASON**

**Galatians 6:7 (NKJV)**

**7Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.**

- *“Do not be deceived” - The Bible contains many warnings for believers not to be deceived.*
- *The word ἐξαπατάω (exapataō) means “to deceive thoroughly or completely.”*
- *ἐξαπατάω (exapataō) is used only five times in the New Testament and each usage portrays a different type of deception.*
- *To study these five types of deception it is useful to study them in terms of our five senses and in terms of our triune created nature of spirit, soul, and body. (1 Thessalonians 5:23).*
- *Just as we have five physical senses to allow us to perceive the world around us and enable us to be “world conscious,” we have five soul senses to enable us to be “self-conscious” or conscious of the condition of own souls. We also have five spirit senses to enable us to be “God-conscious” or conscious of God and perceive what He is doing and saying to us.*
- *In the previous four weeks we have looked at four of the soul senses and how each one can be deceived and how to protect ourselves from being deceived.*

Body	Soul	Spirit	Deception	Ministry
Hearing	Conscience	Faith	Sin	Apostle
Sight	Imagination	Hope	Self-deception	Prophet
Touch	Affections	Love	Satan	Evangelist
Smell	Memory	Fear of God	False Reports	Pastor
Taste	Reason	Revelation	False Teachings	Teacher

1. Sin deceives our conscience by staining it. What we once knew to be sin no longer causes our conscience to convict us.

The apostolic ministry's primary focus, among other things, is to maintain the apostles' doctrine and to keep the purity of the faith. "They continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine." (Acts 2:42).

2. Self-deception causes our imagination to be deceived. The prophetic ministry gives vision to the church so we can see what God has purposed for our lives. Then hope and not wishful thinking will empower us.
  3. Satan deceives our affections to be drawn to other loves—the things of this world instead of being drawn by the love of God and to respond by loving Him and others. The evangelical ministry awakens the church to God's love for the lost, so they are stirred to lay down their lives in love. In this way, Christ can be glorified and the world can know the love of Christ and the truth of the Gospel.
  4. False reports and distractions deceive our memories so we forget all the wonderful things God has done and we lose the wonder of His salvation. The pastoral ministry reminds the church of God's goodness, love, and holiness so a God-consciousness permeates the church and a reverential fear of God fills each believer.
- *The final soul sense involves the relationship between taste, reason, and revelation knowledge. False teachings deceive our reason, but anointed teaching brings clarity to the Word of God.*

**Psalm 34:8 (NKJV)**

**<sup>8</sup>Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!**

- *The Hebrew word for "taste" is "tā·'ām" and it means, "to taste, experience literal food through the taste buds." Its meaning extends beyond the tasting of food to "discerning, evaluating and reasoning."*
- *The first part of the verse challenges us to discern and determine the nature of God, "Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good."*
- *By employing the word "taste" to determine the nature and character of God, the psalmist shows that to really know who God is requires something more than knowledge acquired by observation.*
- *When the psalmist says, "taste and see that the Lord is good," he clearly shows that the only way we can truly know that God is good is by experiencing His*

*goodness. Otherwise, whatever knowledge one may have of God, if it is devoid of relationship, it is also devoid of power.*

- *To taste food requires putting something in one's mouth and actually eating it.*
- *We might say, "That cake really looks good," but we can never be truly convinced unless we take the plunge and actually taste it.*
- *Food may appear quite tasty, but when sampled, it may be flavorless, rancid, or bitter.*
- *Many people say they believe in God, but their knowledge of God is superficial and purely intellectual. Devoid of any relationship with Christ, it can be rightly said that they believe in God, but they are not believers. They have not received Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and so are not saved.*
- *The second part of Psalm 34:8 says, "Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!"*
- *If one never tastes to see that God is good, that person will never be able to trust in Him. It is one thing to say, "God is good," but quite another thing to actually believe it.*
- *In the midst of the storms and uncertainties of life it is only when we are fully convinced of God's goodness that we are able to "cast all our cares upon Him knowing that He cares for us." (1 Peter 5:7).*
- *"Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!" There is a great blessing when one comes to know that God is good and we can rest in His goodness.*
- *We may not be able to trust our feelings, our intellect, our strength, or our resolve, but it is a comfort that we can trust in Christ to shepherd us through this life.*
- *Sometimes we can even fool ourselves into thinking our motivation is pure when it is not for "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).*
- *How wonderful that we can trust God even when we're struggling with ugly thoughts and feelings.*

- *God is good and faithful and we can trust in Him even when we have failed. When we turn to Him in repentance we know that He not only forgives us, but cleanses us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9).*

**Job 34:3 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup>For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food.

- *The Bible often ties the physical sense of taste with the ability to discern and reason, and to know what is good and what is not good.*

**Proverbs 31:18 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup>She perceives that her merchandise is good, And her lamp does not go out by night.

- *The Hebrew word translated as “perceives” again is “tā·’ām” which means, “to taste.”*
- *We can see the connection between the physical sense of taste and the soul sense of reason, because both require an encounter or experience for them to operate.*
- *Our sense of reason develops and grows through use and the experiences of life.*
- *“How did you get such good judgment? Through experience. How did you get those experiences? Through bad judgment.”*
- *Hopefully we choose to develop our ability to reason not by experiencing failures, but by receiving revelation from God’s Word, the leading of the Holy Spirit, and the counsel of other godly Christians.*
- *The spirit sense that corresponds to taste and reason is revelation knowledge.*
- *Revelation knowledge is when the Holy Spirit takes the truths in God’s Word and makes it alive to us through revelation.*
- *Our soul sense of reason is not to operate by what we see and hear in the natural world, but by what the Holy Spirit reveals to us.*

### 1 Corinthians 2:13–14 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup>These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

<sup>14</sup>But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

- “These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches” – *We are to speak and teach those things that the Holy Spirit has revealed to us.*
- “comparing spiritual things with spiritual” – *Our soul sense of reason is to operate by comparing the things we have learned and experienced through the Holy Spirit.*
- *We are to look at the natural world and make decisions based on the reality of the truths of God's Word and the things God has revealed to us.*
- “But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” – *Decisions which make perfect sense from a spiritual perspective will appear completely foolish to “the natural man,” a person who is unaware of the spiritual realm.*
- *The natural man reasons only from a temporal and worldly perspective and is totally ignorant of the spiritual and eternal perspective.*
- *If you ask a man whose goal in life is to pursue wealth, “How much money do you really need?” he may consider the question weird and senseless. He may even respond in a sarcastic manner, not because the question is stupid, but because if he tries to answer the question it will be apparent what the answer is.*
- *To the natural man who is devoid of revelation knowledge from the spiritual perspective, to be surrendered to do God's will appears unreasonable, foolish, and wasteful.*

### 1 Corinthians 15:30–32 (NKJV)

<sup>30</sup>And why do we stand in jeopardy every hour?

<sup>31</sup>I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

<sup>32</sup>If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!”

- *Paul describes his life as one filled with hardship for the gospel's sake.*
- *He portrays a life of self-sacrifice where "I die daily" to his own selfish ways so he can live a life filled with Christ's purposes.*
- *The Holy Spirit led Paul to travel to places which were sometimes filled with hardship and danger so Jesus Christ could be proclaimed.*
- *Paul then asks this both provocative and rhetorical question: "And why do we stand in jeopardy every hour?"*
- *Paul answers his own question with the statement, "If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"*
- *In other words, if there is no spiritual realm, if Christ really is not risen from the dead, then all we have endured for the sake of the gospel is both useless and foolish. The best life can offer is to eat and drink, because tomorrow we perish anyway and our existence ends in oblivion.*
- *In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul expands on the importance of the truth of the gospel that Christ not only died for our sins but even more importantly that He rose from the dead. His resurrection proves not only that He is the Son of God, but that He overcame death and sin and is victorious.*

#### **1 Corinthians 15:13–20 (NKJV)**

**<sup>13</sup>But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.**

**<sup>14</sup>And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.**

**<sup>15</sup>Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.**

**<sup>16</sup>For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.**

**<sup>17</sup>And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!**

**<sup>18</sup>Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.**

**<sup>19</sup>If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.**

**<sup>20</sup>But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.**

- *If our soul sense of reason operates on the revelation that Jesus Christ is raised from the dead and all the decisions of this life are based on that fact “and if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.”*
- *Even worse for us, if Christ is not risen from the dead, “Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.”*
- *“And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!” – If Christ is not risen from the dead, then we are still in our sins and we have no hope.*
- *If Christ is not risen from the dead, then the horrible truth that “those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished” and no longer exist is true, then we have no hope of ever seeing them again.*
- *If Christ did not rise from the dead and “if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable,” because we are living a lie that will end in a nightmare.*
- *However, Paul concludes his discourse affirming the resurrection with these words of joy and triumph, “But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”*
- *Sometimes unbelievers look at Christians and assess them as deluded and close-minded, as people who follow archaic and foolish superstitions. Their reasoning is totally appropriate from their viewpoint, because to the natural man spiritual things appear foolish.*
- *However, to Christians in tune with the Holy Spirit and the truth of God’s Word, the gospel not only makes perfect sense, it is the only reasonable way to live one’s life.*

### 1 Corinthians 9:16 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup>For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!

- *Paul’s assessment of the purpose of life is summed up with the words, “Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!”*

- *Paul wasn't preaching the gospel because he was afraid of God punishing him, but because he knew the true meaning of life. He had such a clear revelation of Jesus Christ that to do anything else would fill him with deep dissatisfaction and intense emptiness.*
- *For Paul, to do anything but serve God and preach the gospel would be a totally unreasonable way to live his life.*

**Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup>“Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

- *The Lord draws us near to Himself with the statement, “Come now, and let us reason together.” He prepares to reveal His plan of salvation and give us a new way of evaluating and reasoning, and a new way of how we see ourselves and our relationship with Him.*
- *God offers us an invitation to “come and reason” with Him, to come over to His way of thinking, to see ourselves as we really are—sinners. This reasoning on our part precedes all other reason.*
- *Of all the prophetic books in the Old Testament, Isaiah provides some of the most amazing Messianic prophecies detailing Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection. Isaiah begins this book with the words, “Come now, and let us reason together.”*
- *Then the Lord gives a revelation which goes against the natural understanding of life, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.”*
- *Although we have transgressed His laws and caused much harm to ourselves and others and are burdened by guilt and condemnation, He is saying we shall be as white as snow and as pure as wool.*
- *The crimson blood of Jesus cleanses us and makes us white as snow and the sacrifice of the spotless Lamb of God makes us as pure as His spotless wool.*

- *Through the revelation of Jesus Christ's sacrifice we can reason that our sins have been washed away and our shame has been removed.*
- *In the eyes of the world Jesus Christ's suffering has nothing to do with freeing people from their evil and sinful nature. What seems unreasonable and irrelevant in the eyes of the world is totally reasonable and wonderful in our eyes.*
- *The fifth and final time the Greek word ἐξαπατάω (exapataō), "to thoroughly deceive," is found in the New Testament in relationship to our soul sense of reason is found in Romans 16:18.*

**Romans 16:16–18 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup>Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you.

<sup>17</sup>Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

<sup>18</sup>For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

- *Each type of deception leads to a specific problem.*
- *When one's conscience is deceived it leads to sin remaining unchecked in our lives.*
- *When one's imagination is deceived it leads to hopelessness.*
- *When one's affection is deceived it leads to loving the things of the world instead of God.*
- *When one's memory is deceived it leads to complacency and taking our salvation for granted.*
- *When one's reason is deceived it leads to division and conflict among believers.*
- *The warning against the deception of our soul sense of reason is introduced with a word to encourage unity and love for one another, "Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you."*

- ***“Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.” Paul warns believers to avoid those whose wrong doctrine brings divisions and offenses.***
- ***Two characteristics that false doctrine can produce are division and offenses.***
- ***The Greek word for “division” means to divide into opposing groups, generally two groups with opposing ideas, generally with an attitude to cause people to be angry at one another, or to cause people not to like one another, or to view the opposing side as enemies.***
- ***The Greek word for offense is σκάνδαλον skandalon and it means, “to cause to stumble.” It is used to describe the trigger on a trap which closes in order to trap something.***
- ***From the Greek word σκάνδαλον skandalon we get our English word scandal.***
- ***When someone is offended something within them is set off resulting in that person being trapped through unforgiveness, pride, or some other character flaw.***
- ***The character flaw is in the person who is offended, but the one who offends triggered that trap, either purposely or unintentionally.***
- ***In the case of Paul’s warning in Romans 16, those trying to cause division are doing so both purposely and strategically.***
- ***So these people spread false teachings deliberately with the intention of bringing division and causing Christians to see one another as enemies, and to cause people to be offended with each other.***
- ***Paul instructs the church on how to deal those who are trying to cause division and offenses: “note them” and “avoid them.”***
- ***Paul warns us to be watchful of those who are divisive.***
- ***We are not to become angry or view them as enemies, but at the same time we are not to get entangled in arguments which can cause us to stumble. We are to avoid them, shun them, and have nothing to do with them.***

- *Paul's concern for the church's wellbeing is so great that he "urges" them to heed his warning.*
- *The people who Paul is warning us about are not just people who have different doctrine, but those who intentionally try to bring division for their own selfish gain. "For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly."*
- *The next part of verse 18 is the key on how our reason can be deceived, "by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple."*
- *The Greek word for "smooth words" means "eloquent and attractive speech involving pleasing rhetorical devices, fine language."*
- *The Greek word translated as "flattering speech" is εὐλογία eulogia and it means, "blessing, fair speech, fine or noble speech" and it is used in the New Testament many times in a positive way. From it our English word "eulogize" is derived.*
- *So how do good words and fair speech cause the simple to be deceived and result in divisions and offenses?*
- *If someone speaks directly against someone else it can be quickly discerned that the person is trying to cause division through slander and gossip, but it is much more subtle when their words sound lofty and noble.*

#### **Genesis 3:6 (NKJV)**

**6So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.**

- *The first example in the Bible where division and offenses were caused by good words and fair speech is found in Eve's encounter with the serpent.*
- *The serpent didn't speak directly against God. He began to speak words which caused Eve to be discontent with God's provision by telling her how wonderful the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was.*

- *Eve responded to Satan’s words by having her attention drawn away from God’s provision to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil . She saw it was good for food, pleasant to look at, and desirable to make one wise.*
- *Eve was no longer satisfied with all that God had provided for her or her relationship with God. Her discontentment resulted in her being offended at God, thinking He was withholding the best from her which resulted in a division between her and God.*
- *Absalom is another example of how by good words and fair speech the simple are deceived. Through good works and fair speech, Absalom caused the people to rebel against King David, his father.*

## 2 Samuel 15:1–6 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup>After this it happened that Absalom provided himself with chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

<sup>2</sup>Now Absalom would rise early and stand beside the way to the gate. So it was, whenever anyone who had a lawsuit came to the king for a decision, that Absalom would call to him and say, “What city are you from?” And he would say, “Your servant is from such and such a tribe of Israel.”

<sup>3</sup>Then Absalom would say to him, “Look, your case is good and right; but there is no deputy of the king to hear you.”

<sup>4</sup>Moreover Absalom would say, “Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice.”

<sup>5</sup>And so it was, whenever anyone came near to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him.

<sup>6</sup>In this manner Absalom acted toward all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

- *Absalom offered the people utopia with the words, “Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice.”*
- *Absalom never spoke directly against King David. He simply painted a picture of what a perfect kingdom would look like in a perfect world and that produced discontentment.*
- *Absalom offered them utopia, but delivered a bloody civil war that cost many lives and destruction.*

- *Another way of describing good words and fair speech is called ideology.*
- *Lenin spread the ideology of communism, a perfect world where everyone would be equal and there would be no lack. However, in reality, it resulted in multiple millions of people being killed, imprisoned, starved, and oppressed.*
- *Communist ideology carries with it some aspects of what Heaven is like, but Lenin tried to create a type of heaven on earth. However, Lenin's heaven had something that Heaven does not have and that is sin. And Lenin's heaven was missing something that Heaven does have and that is the Saviour, Jesus Christ.*
- *One of the characteristics of false teaching is that it moves the focus away from the centrality of Jesus Christ on to some other principle or ideal.*
- *The source of contentment and joy is Jesus Christ and once we look to something or someone else or some special teaching that does not focus on the centrality of Jesus Christ it leads to discontentment, division, and offenses.*
- *If people have a wrong expectation they can become discontent, offended, or upset when they come to a church and not everyone is friendly.*
- *If people have a wrong expectation they may leave a church because they don't feel loved by everyone.*
- *The root of their discontentment is they have an ideology that does not reflect the reality of what the Bible teaches.*
- *Our desire of course is to have a church where everyone is loved, accepted, and no one is hurt or offended. However, the reality is that while we are still on this earth there will be misunderstandings and hurt feelings. God will use all these things to produce the character of Christ in us if we will focus on Jesus through those experiences.*

**Hebrews 13:17 (NKJV)**

**<sup>17</sup>Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.**

- *Ideology would contradict Hebrews 13:17 if we would imagine that an elder or a pastor should always be joyful and never discouraged.*
- *However, in reality we can all grow weary and we all need to encourage and pray for everyone, even those who are ministers in the church, including the pastor and elders.*
- *The best way to cause discontentment in a marriage is not to tell a wife how bad her husband is, but to describe a perfect husband, one who doesn't and never will exist.*
- *Many marriages have been damaged by ideology and unrealistic expectations of one another.*
- *Unrealistic expectations of one another produces discontentment.*
- *Humility, patience, and forgiveness go a long way in making a marriage reflect what God really meant marriage to be.*
- *Sometime Christians become discontent with God because they have a wrong expectation of their relationship with God. Sometimes they think that once they receive Christ they will no longer experience trials, difficulties, or adversity.*
- *They are confusing Heaven with our temporal lives now. In Heaven it will be more wonderful than we can imagine, but in this world we will have tribulations. However, we can be of good cheer because Jesus Christ has overcome the world. (John 16:33.)*

**Romans 8:5–7 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup>For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

<sup>6</sup>For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

<sup>7</sup>Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

- *The carnal mind produces death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.*
- *When we are carnally minded we can easily become discontent and unthankful and become both divisive and offended.*

**Colossians 1:16 (NKJV)**

**<sup>16</sup>For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.**

- *The way we protect our reason from being deceived is to continually seek the revelation of Jesus Christ to flow from our spirit into our souls and to remember He created all things. They were created for Him and that revelation alone will keep us from being deceived.*
- *We don't need ideology when we have Jesus.*
- *Our contentment is not to be based on having the perfect job, the perfect spouse, the perfect parents or children or the perfect church but we are to be fully content because we have the Perfect Saviour.*