

**THE FIVE WAYS OF DECEPTION
PART FOUR
THE DECEPTION OF OUR MEMORY**

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.*
- *Previously, we studied the triplet of our spirit, soul, and body senses of hearing, conscience, and faith, and we studied how sin deceives our conscience.*
- *We also studied the triplet of our spirit, soul, and body senses of sight, imagination, and hope, and we studied how we deceive our own imagination.*
- *Last time, we studied the triplet of our spirit, soul, and body senses of touch, affection, and love, and how our affections can be deceived.*
- *Today we are going to study the triplet of our spirit, soul, and body senses of smell, memory, and a reverential fear of God.*
- *Our memory is most intensely triggered by our physical sense of smell.*

- *An adult may not have visited their childhood home for decades. Yet, if they smell something associated with that home, for example, their mother's home-made apple pie, a strong memory of that home will immediately be triggered. In their memory, it will be as if they are right back in that home.*
- *When one encounters a particular smell it can immediately transports us back to an earlier time and to a pleasant or unpleasant memory associated with that scent.*
- *God created the natural world to reveal spiritual truths about the invisible attributes of God which are clearly seen and can be understood through His creation, revealing even His eternal power and Godhead. (Romans 1:20).*
- *Jesus often taught in parables, using examples from the natural world to reveal spiritual truths.*
- *The manner in which God created us physically provides us with many examples and insights into how God created us spiritually.*
- *As we study our physical sense of smell we can derive many insights into our soul sense of memory, and our spirit sense of the fear of the Lord.*
- *There is a physiological reason for this strong connection between smell and memory.*
- *The part of the brain that detects smells, the olfactory bulb, is directly connected to the hippocampus, the part of the brain that processes memory, and also to the amygdala, the part of the brain that processes emotions.*
- *Not only is our physical sense of smell able to trigger memories, it also re-activates the emotions related to those memories.*
- *The fear of the Lord creates strong emotions generated from our reborn spirit which produce both a delight and awe at the reality of God.*
- *Our physical sense of smell has two main functions which help us to understand two of the main purposes for the fear of the Lord.*

- *First, our sense of smell enhances our ability to enjoy life. It not only enables us to enjoy all the fragrances that fill the air, but it also plays a vital role in being able to enjoy a meal.*

Isaiah 11:3 (NKJV)

³His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;

- *This Scripture speaks prophetically about Jesus and clearly states He has the fear of the Lord.*
- *If Jesus has the fear of the Lord and He is the Son of God, how much more do we need the fear of the Lord.*
- *Another important thing we can learn about the fear of the Lord from Isaiah 11:3 is “His delight is in the fear of the Lord.”*
- *The fear of the Lord brings a delight to our souls and enables us to enjoy life to the fullest.*
- *Christians who don’t have the fear of the Lord are generally dissatisfied with their relationship with God. They look for other activities or possessions to fill the void and some of those counterfeits can be very destructive to their lives.*
- *Without the fear of the Lord we will live lukewarm lives at best, or lives filled with dissipation and immorality at worst.*
- *When Christians seek to please the flesh it is because they are either bored or trying to flee from painful circumstances in their life.*
- *The answer to their struggle against temptation is the fear of the Lord, because it produces a deep delight and satisfaction in our hearts. It fills the void, so we no longer need or want to walk in sin.*
- *“His delight is in the fear of the LORD” – The Hebrew word that is translated “delight” literally means “to use the perceptual sense of the nose to distinguish odors or aromas and to respond appropriately,” in other words “to smell.”*
- *The fear of the Lord brings delight, because it enables us to experience God and the sweet aroma of His presence that delights our hearts.*

- *The Hebrew word that is translated “delight” also means “to come close,” in other words “to come very near to an object, so as to virtually meet it, as a figurative extension of placing the nose close to an object to smell it.”*
- *So the fear of the Lord speaks about having an intimate and close relationship with God. We delight to do what pleases God’s heart.*
- *Just as the physical sense of smell enables us to enjoy and experience the physical world in a way that brings us delight, the fear of the Lord enables us to enjoy and experience the delight of the closeness of God’s presence.*
- *Our physical sense of smell not only enhances our ability to enjoy life, it also provides a second and equally important function, that of warning us of something that is either dangerous or unhealthy.*

Proverbs 16:6 (NKJV)

⁶In mercy and truth Atonement is provided for iniquity; And by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.

- *“And by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.” - Our sense of smell alerts us when food has spoiled, and the smell of smoke warns us when there is a fire. Similarly, the fear of the Lord alerts us when something is evil or dangerous, providing protection for us if we heed God’s warning.*
- *“And by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.” – The Hebrew word that is translated as “departs” means “to change direction, to leave off, to turn away, avoid.”*
- *When we smell rotting food or excrement we are instinctively repulsed. When we have the fear of the Lord we will immediately recognize when something is evil or defiling and we turn away in disgust.*

Proverbs 8:13 (NKJV)

¹³The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.

- *Just as a foul smell immediately produces a strong negative emotional response, the fear of the Lord will cause us to hate evil and we will be unable to tolerate the stench of sin.*

- *The fear of the Lord enables us to detect the foul smell of pride, arrogance, and the disgusting odor of perverse words.*
- *I am not talking about the arrogance, or pride, or foul words of others. I am speaking about our own “body odor” from our fleshly ways of acting and thinking.*
- *God hasn’t called us to judge others, but to judge ourselves and immediately recognize when we need a spiritual bath or a spiritual shot of mouthwash.*
- *The sinful human condition causes us to see other’s faults, but blinds us to those same faults hidden in our own hearts. Jesus gave us the word picture of seeing the speck in another’s eye, while ignoring the log in our own eye.(Matthew 7:3-4).*
- *The fear of the Lord enables us to focus on the reality of Jesus. As we do, we become aware of the log in our own eye, and see our need to repent.*
- *When we lack the fear of the Lord we are judgmental and critical of others.*
- *When we have the fear of the Lord we are merciful and patient with the failures and weaknesses of others.*
- *The fear of the Lord awakens us to the ever-present reality of God in our lives. As a result, we will seek to please Him, not out of dread, but out of love.*
- *When the Holy Spirit reveals an area of un-confessed sin, the fear of the Lord causes us to repent. Our desire is always to experience the fragrant aroma of the presence of God, and for our lives to be “an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.” (Ephesians 5:2).*
- *When our lives are defiled by sin, God still loves us as His children, but the stench of our sinful actions grieves His heart, just as a loving parent is grieved when he or she sees their child making destructive choices.*
- *What the fear of the Lord is not.*

James 2:19–20 (NKJV)

¹⁹You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

²⁰But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

- *The Greek word for “tremble” is φρίσσω phrissō and it means, “to be extremely afraid, to shiver with fear,” signifying terror.*
- *Do demons have the fear of the Lord?*
- *Demons do not fear the Lord, but they do experience the terror of God.*
- *Demons do not experience any delight when they are confronted by the presence of God, only an overwhelming terror.*
- *If we have the fear of the Lord, we will love God so much that our greatest desire will be to do His will.*
- *God wants believers to have the fear of the Lord, but He does not want us to be afraid of Him.*
- *If we are afraid of God, there is something wrong with our perception of God and, by extension, our relationship with Him.*
- *Either we have failed to perceive God’s love, or there are things in our lives we refuse to relinquish, which hinder our relationship with Him.*

Revelation 6:14–16 (NKJV)

¹⁴Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

¹⁵And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,

¹⁶and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

- *Revelation 6:14-16 describes what unbelievers will experience when Christ returns, and how they will react to His presence.*
- *This is not the fear of the Lord, but the terror a rebellious sinner experiences when confronted by the holiness of God and His ensuing judgment.*

- *Compare the response of a believer to Christ's appearing to that of an unbeliever.*

1 Thessalonians 1:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

¹⁰and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

- *“and to wait for His Son from heaven” – The Greek word for “wait” is ἀναμένω anamenō and it means “to wait with expectation.” It signifies the anticipation and excitement of those who have been redeemed by Jesus Christ.*
- *“who delivers us from the wrath to come” – What takes the terror of God and transforms it into the fear of the Lord? It is knowing we have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ and that He loves us and has delivered from the wrath to come.*

Psalm 130:4 (NKJV)

⁴But there is forgiveness with You, That You may be feared.

- *The fear of the Lord is founded on the very fact that forgiveness has been extended to us.*
- *The difference between the fear of the Lord and the terror of God is that the first elicits hope and the second hopelessness.*
- *The fear of the Lord is based on love; God's love for us and our love for Him.*
- *The fear of the Lord can only be correctly understood in the context of love.*
- *When we really love God we will not want to cause Him sorrow or bring shame to His name. That single motivation will encourage us to live a holy life.*
- *God does chasten His children when they are rebellious, but His chastening is borne out of His love for us. He desires to see us live fruitful, productive lives free from the destructive effects of sin.*
- *Some believers are motivated out of fear of being chastised. This motivation reflects a very immature level of spiritual growth, like a young child who is still self-willed.*

1 John 4:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

- *A mature son or daughter obeys their parents not out of fear they are going to be chastened, but because they love their parents and want to bless them.*
- *The fear of the Lord is vital and without it we will live defeated and unfruitful lives.*
- *Without the fear of the Lord we will serve God only at our convenience and compromise will permeate our lives.*

Proverbs 9:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

- *Three words that run throughout the Book of Proverbs are knowledge, understanding, and wisdom.*
- *Knowledge is having information or truth about something or someone.*
- *We can receive knowledge about God by reading the Bible, listening to sermons, or having discussions with fellow believers.*
- *Understanding is being able to grasp the significance of the knowledge one has received or possesses.*
- *Understanding takes the knowledge of God to a deeper level.*
- *We receive understanding by meditating and prayerfully seeking God about the things we already know about Him.*
- *Wisdom is the insight in how to apply the things we have learned and the motivation to actually do so.*
- *Wisdom is the application of those things we understand so that our lives are actually transformed and become fruitful.*
- *Wisdom is where we begin to walk the talk.*

- *The fear of the Lord makes God so real to us that it changes the way we think, speak, and act.*
- *The fear of the Lord empowers us to take the things we know and have learned and begin to live them.*
- *Most Christians know we need to devote time to prayer and Bible study, but few actually do it.*
- *The fear of the Lord brings the reality of God into our lives so we want to pray and study His Word—not because we are afraid of Him, but because He is so awesome we can't get enough of Him.*

Psalm 111:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever.

- *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, because it motivates us to obey God's commandments and to keep His Word.*

Isaiah 33:6 (NKJV)

⁶Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, And the strength of salvation; The fear of the LORD is His treasure.

- *The fear of the LORD is His treasure – The Hebrew word for “treasure” means, “treasure, storehouse, treasury,” and can be translated as “the fear of the Lord is the treasury.”*
- *Salvation is much more than escaping Hell and getting to Heaven. It includes inheriting all the promises of God and living an abundant life.*
- *Many Christians do not know how to guard the treasures that God has given them through His Word and the many wonderful experiences they have received.*
- *The fear of the Lord is described as a storehouse or treasury where we can safely store all the treasures God has given us.*
- *How does the fear of the Lord relate to memory?*
- *The fear of the Lord is being conscious of the reality of God. When we remember all that God has done for us and all His mighty deeds we are filled with awe.*

Psalm 77:11–14 (NKJV)

¹¹I will remember the works of the LORD; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old.

¹²I will also meditate on all Your work, And talk of Your deeds.

¹³Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary; Who is so great a God as our God?

¹⁴You are the God who does wonders; You have declared Your strength among the peoples.

- *The reality of God fills our hearts as we remember His mighty works, meditate on all He has done, and speak about His deeds and how wonderful He is.*
- *Believers who constantly speak about God, spend time in prayer, and read the Bible are filled with awe and the fear of the Lord is their delight.*
- *The fourth time the Greek word ἐξαπατάω (exapataō), “to thoroughly deceive” is found in the New Testament in relationship to our soul sense of memory is in 2 Thessalonians 2:3.*

2 Thessalonians 2:1–5 (NKJV)

¹Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you,

²not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.

³Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

⁴who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?

- *Paul warns the church at Thessalonica, “Let no one deceive you by any means.” He told them how to be protected from the type of deception with which they were confronted, “do you not remember” the things I taught you?”*
- *This type of deception attacks our ability to remember the things we have already learned or experienced with God.*
- *The result of being deceived in the area of memory is that it produces fear and causes us “to be shaken in mind or troubled.”*

- *“The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God you fear everything else.” Oswald Chambers*

Proverbs 14:26 (NKJV)

²⁶In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, And His children will have a place of refuge.

- *One of the wonderful things about the fear of the Lord is that it actually delivers and frees us from fear, because it provides us with a strong confidence in God.*
- *Christians who do not have the fear of the Lord often struggle with worries and the uncertainties of this life.*
- *“Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.” Corrie Ten Boom*
- *Remembering God’s faithfulness provides us with a peace that passes all understanding. (Philippians 4:7).*
- *As we studied previously, sin deceives our conscience, we deceive our own imagination, and Satan deceives our affections. Our memories are deceived by fictitious reports or information.*
- *Paul warned them “not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter as if from us,” but instead to remember what he had taught them.*
- *Fictitious reports can take of the form of spirit, word (logos), or letter (epistle).*
- *We are not to be shaken by false spirits—false prophecy or false revelations that people fabricate.*
- *We are not to be shaken by false words (logos)—false teachings that are contrary to sound doctrine.*
- *We are not to be shaken by false letters—false reports and rumors, and all sorts of news.*

- *Not only can false revelations, false teachings, and rumors and news bring confusion to the truth, they produce distractions that hinder us from focusing on the wonder of God.*
- *Some Christians get so caught up in studying about end time events that their relationship with God gets sidelined.*
- *The best way to get someone to forget something is to redirect his or her mind to something else.*

There is one more unique characteristic about the physical sense of smell that gives us spiritual insights into how our memories can be deceived.

- *Smell is the only physical sense that can quickly become desensitized to its environment.*
- *The sense of smell grows accustomed to a certain odor or scent and no longer detects it, such as the fragrance of the perfume one is wearing or the scent of one's own house.*
- *One air freshener manufacturer coined the term "nose-blindness" referring to this physiological phenomenon.*
- *Memory can be deceived in a similar fashion when we remember a certain experience, but it no longer has any impact on us.*
- *For those who have come to know Christ as their Lord and Saviour there are times when we experience the joy and wonder of God.*
- *The times when God supernaturally and instantaneously healed people.*
- *The times when God answered prayers in amazing and totally unexpected ways.*
- *The times when we were in such difficult and seemingly impossible situations and God transformed our circumstances into a blessing.*
- *In each one of those times when God intervened or invaded our lives in a very tangible way, we were filled with such joy, peace, and love we felt we would always be thankful and joyful. However, the impact of those memories faded*

and we succumbed to “nose-blindness.” We lost the wonderful fragrance of those experiences and memories.

- *No matter how much God does for us, no matter how many miracles we experience or people He heals, we will never benefit from the long lasting impact of those memories until we learn how to keep those memories fresh within our hearts.*
- *Often, people have a supernatural encounter with God that was truly amazing, but then the impact of that encounter faded as they failed to cultivate their experience with thanksgiving, praise, and obedience.*
- *The supernatural experience does not mean they have arrived at a vibrant relationship with God. It is an invitation for them to respond to God so they can develop a more vibrant relationship with Him.*
- *If a person has an encounter with God, but they fail to act on that experience with God, then soon the impact of that encounter will fade and the window of opportunity will close.*
- *God doesn't close the window of opportunity, they close it by neglecting to pursue God and the memory of that experience fades.*
- *However, if when we experience God, we use that experience as a springboard to pursue Him in a greater way, then that memory and its impact will stay fresh within our hearts and minds.*
- *As we remember what God has done, our hearts will continue to be filled with the reality of God and that really defines the fear of the Lord.*
- *Lukewarmness or losing our first love is a sign that our memories have been deceived by distractions, false reports, or worldly pursuits and the initial excitement of encountering God has faded. We have left our vibrant relationship with God to simply go through the motions of being religious.*

Malachi 3:16–17 (NKJV)

¹⁶Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name.

¹⁷“They shall be Mine,” says the LORD of hosts, “On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him.”

- “Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them” – *This is beautiful picture of fellowship in the fear of the Lord. It is so sweet that the Lord delights to listen and hear our conversations and notes what we are saying.*
- *When the fear of the Lord is a reality, fellowship is no longer a time where people complain or gossip, but a time when we share the wonders of His name and as we do, our memories of His faithfulness grow more vivid.*
- *The fear of Lord will lead us into a deeper and deeper commitment to serve Christ until we are fully consecrated to Him.*
- *The fear of the Lord will bring delight into our hearts and give us the eternal perspective so joy will fill us no matter what circumstances we face.*
- *“Don’t lose in the darkness what you have gained in the light.” Continue to keep in remembrance all the wonderful things that God has done and has promised to do.*
- *The fear of the Lord can be summed up in three words:*
- ***GOD IS REAL!!!!!!!!!!!!***