

Remnant Life Church
May 24, 2015
Recognizing the Truth
Part III
The Art of Deception
2 Corinthians 11:3
Genesis 3:1-5

- Review of the first 2 weeks
 1. Introduction to why Paul wrote the letter to the church
 2. The jealous father of the bride (Paul and the church of Corinth; God for His children)
- Paul now shares his concern that the church is being deceived
- **READ – II Cor 11:3**
 1. Eve was an occupant of paradise
 2. Living in physical, emotional, mental, relational, and spiritual perfection
- A challenging aspect of this is we do not know how long Adam and Eve lived this way
 1. Our assumption, because of how it is read in Genesis 2 followed immediately by chapter 3, is that it was a short amount of time (Hi Adam, I'm Eve...what's with the snake?)
 2. In fact we have no idea of the span of time
 3. It could have been a very, very long time – perhaps thousands of years
- Satan introduces his strategy for the first time here; one that has remained unchanged through the ages
 - The first thing we notice is that he speaks to Eve alone (**Gen 3:1**)
 - His method when he attacks is to divide and conquer
 - Why? Because it is contrary to how God made us
 - + *It is not good for man to be alone...* (**Gen 2:18**)
 - + The church was created as a fellowship of believers
 - + His favorite thing is when a church splits
 - + His second favorite is when Christians choose to take an offence and stop speaking to each other
- Let's look at the first words recorded by the “father of lies” (**John 8:44**) in and the blueprint of the art of deception
- **READ Genesis 3:1-5**
- **Four things that Satan does in this first attack:**

He Questions God's Word

- “Did God really say...”
- Jesus in the desert

- Today
 - + Is the Bible really the Word of God?
 - + Who decided these are the right books to include while excluding others?
 - + All the world's religions are basically the same
- **The desire is to bring doubt into our minds to keep us from acting on the truth of God's Word**
- **John 20:27** – (Jesus said) *...stop doubting and believe.*

He Changes God's Word

- “Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden?”
- That was not what God said
- They could eat of ANY tree except one (**Gen 2:15-17**)
- Can we recognize the lies? Can we recognize the liar?
- In the classic "Twilight Zone" episode from 1960 called “The Howling Man”, an American on a walking trip through central Europe gets caught in a raging storm. Staggering through the blinding rain, he chances upon an imposing medieval castle. It is a hermitage for a brotherhood of monks. The reclusive monks reluctantly take him in. Later that night, the American discovers a cell with a man locked inside. An ancient wooden staff bolts the door. The prisoner claims he's being held captive by the "insane" head monk, Brother Jerome. He pleads for the American to release him. The prisoner's kindly face and gentle voice win him over. When the American confronts Brother Jerome, he declares that the prisoner is actually none other than Satan, "the father of lies," held captive by the Staff of Truth, a barrier he cannot pass. This incredible claim convinces the American that Jerome is indeed mad. Later, as soon as he gets the chance, he releases the prisoner—who immediately transforms into a hideous, horned demon and vanishes in a puff of smoke! The stunned American is horrified at the realization of what he has done. Jerome responds sympathetically. "I am sorry for you, my son. All your life you will remember this night and whom you have turned loose upon the world." "I didn't believe you," the American meekly replies. "I saw him and I didn't recognize him"—to which Jerome solemnly observes, "That is man's weakness...and Satan's strength."

He Denies God's Word

- There is a progression in Satan's plot
- He does not call God a liar but he rather plants the seed of doubt
- Once the doubt is created he makes the claim “You will NOT die”
 1. God said they would die
 2. The death was not only the introduction of physical death but also spiritual
 3. When they ate from the tree and disobeyed God they allowed death to enter.
 - They died...
 - + ...instantly in their spirits
 - + ...progressively in the souls
 - + ...eventually in their bodies
- To deny God does not in any way diminish the truth of who He is
- Denial is still present today

1. Much of it is aimed at our young people
 - + Harvard (first university in US) and Yale (issued the first PH.D.) were both originally founded as seminaries training young men for ministry
 - + Today they are the breeding ground for liberal philosophy
 2. Virtually every piece of “entertainment” on TV and in movies in some way eventually comes around to belittling God and those who believe in living according to the Bible
 3. Our “heroes” are those who do things completely on their own
- John, more than any other book in the Bible uses the word “truth”
 - (John 8:32) - *Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*

(Questions/Changes/Denies)

He Replaces God's Word

- He tells Eve that she will be like God if she eats the fruit
- Satan wants nothing more than for us to believe that we don't need God – that we can do it on our own
- Satan did not ask Eve to worship him, but instead placed the thought in her mind that she could worship herself
- Millions of people every day continue to worship at the altar of the mirror
 - Not in physical vanity
 - But in pride of intellect, will, and independence
 - This is why so much is taught in the Bible about avoiding pride and the consequences of allowing it to direct our lives (Proverbs)

Paul warns the church in Corinth about the teachers of “different gospels (v 4)

- There were most often in the form of one of two groups
 - The Judaizers (legalistic law)
 - The Gnostics (mystical, esoteric teachings)
- Today there are many people, many groups, many church-based groups vying for our attention
- Much of it is aimed at our genuine desire to see God move
- Guard against false teaching, false healings, false manifestations
 - The internet has become the super-highway of it all
- How do I guard against the lies?
 - What does God's Word say?
 - Know the plans and schemes of the enemy
 - Desire with all your heart to be faithful to God's truth

Picture titles:

1. The Jealous Father of the Bride
2. The Art of Deception
3. The Masks We Wear (next week)