

# Chapter 11

*"Be Not  
Deceived"*

Faith is defined as trusting in God that He will do what He said He would do. Some people do not have faith because they are being deceived that their finite human mind can comprehend what the infinite mind of God created. Consequently, when they cannot understand something, they say there is no God, or it's God fault about whatever tragedy happened. Ironically, few people understand the process and the mechanics of an engine starting when the key is turned, yet they have more faith in that the engine will start than they do about trusting their futures and lives in the hands of the creator.

Dr. David Reagan explains that there are three primary areas of deception that Jesus, Peter, and Paul's lists fall under namely materialism, humanism, and hedonism.

- Materialism is the belief that fulfillment or joy can be found, bought or otherwise obtained from the accumulation of inanimate tangible objects. There is a popular bumper sticker that said "he who dies with the most toys wins!", which is the polar opposite of Jesus' message found in [Mark 8:36](#) "For what will it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and loses his own soul?" The allure of working towards the capture of a prize will ring hollow once it is achieved since those inanimate things offer no reciprocal sense of love. Then, it's on to the next shiny bauble. [Matthew 6:19-21](#) "19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." It's not a sin to have money, but it is a sin to lust or make it the god of your life. [1 Timothy 6:10 \(NKJV\)](#) "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." [Matthew 6:24](#) "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "Mammon," according to Strong's #G3126, the word "*mamōnas*" means love of money in English. [Luke 12:15 \(NIV\)](#) "Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions." The sense of fulfillment or joy can only be found in the source of love, God the Father Himself, and by extension, His Son Jesus Christ. [John 15:9-11 \(NKJV\)](#) "9 As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full." [John 16:33](#) "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."
- Humanism is the belief that mankind alone can solve any problem if we work hard or long enough for it. Atheism and Agnosticism fall under this category. King David warns us in [Psalm 14:1](#) "The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good." We do not realize that sooner or later there are so many things we cannot control, especially when one gains a few years of life experience. We cannot control what happens to us, but we can control how we react. The 19<sup>th</sup> century philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche made the claim that "God is dead." He died in 1900 and let me assure you, he knows now that God certainly is not dead. Self-deception is included in this category. It is in our nature to deceive ourselves into thinking that we can hide anything from God. [Jeremiah 17:9](#) "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" God can! There are a few ideas that are now commonly accepted but are biblically contradictory. In no particular order, God is known by many different names. Some say that Allah and Yahweh/Jehovah are the same God, sometimes referred to as Chrislam. Another is

God is a God of love only, He really doesn't mean it when He says He will judge me. Still another, a prominent tv host has mistakenly announced that there are many paths to God where Jesus clearly said when we looked the new covenant, He is the ONLY way to God. [John 14:6 \(NIV\)](#) "Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." [Isaiah 19:3 \(NKJV\)](#) "The spirit of Egypt will fail in its midst; I will destroy their counsel, and they will consult the idols and the charmers, the mediums, and the sorcerers." Ideas like psychics or mediums, palm readers, astrology, crystal power, the mother earth goddess, karma, fate, or chance are all types of false religions. Satan has deceived many others by planting thoughts like heaven and hell do not exist. All of these concepts are paving the way for acceptance of a one world religion and false prophet. [1 John 4:1 \(NIV\)](#) "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world." Before the dam bursts, it starts with a trickle, then a crack, then destruction.

- Hedonism is the outlook of anything that feels good goes, so long as it doesn't hurt anybody else. It's a belief system that is based on feelings, in particular pleasure, which, as we all know, are unreliable and undependable, particularly in times of crisis, can change dramatically. It's the love of the pleasures of the flesh. [Galatians 5:19-21](#) "19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Having a knowledge of God but not letting His teachings affect one's thought or behavior is another track in this category. Having a sense of spiritualism but not a relationship. It's living by a moral code rather than being transformed by the word of God. True Christianity is based on one recognizing that he/she is a sinner and that only through confession comes forgiveness and through forgiveness comes redemption. Making a resolute choice and being dependent on the strength of God's word rather than our weak imperfections. [Hebrews 11:1](#) "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." We walk by knowledge and trust in God's word over feelings. Paul says it this way. [2 Corinthians 5:7](#) "For we walk by faith, not by sight." I like to think of true happiness or joy is as a glass of water. The water symbolizes our happiness or joy. God's law is like the glass in that it gives us a solid form in which can hold our happiness or joy. When filled we are surrounded by His strength. Without the glass, it is formless and slips through our fingers.

The deception of denial of His existence and attempts to displace God from His throne is working its way into the general population and churches across the world. There are some churches that preach a message of things other than the Gospel of Jesus' death and resurrection to pay for the forgiveness of sins and of His return. Paul warned us of them in [2 Timothy 4:3-4 \(NIV\)](#) "3 For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths." [1 Timothy 6:20-21 \(NIV\)](#) "20 Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, 21 which some have professed and in so doing have departed from the faith. Grace be with you all." Additionally, Paul wrote about A Great Falling Away or Apostasy that must take place before Christ returns. [2 Thessalonians 2:1-4](#) "1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day

of Christ is at hand. <sup>3</sup> Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; <sup>4</sup> Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” The original word for “falling away” in Greek is Strong’s #G646 “apostasia” or Anglicized Apostasy. This point is on our chart. The definition of Apostasy is not just falling way but also a defection. Satan’s influence in the church is both subtle and blatant. When he is subtle, things like promoting unsound doctrine or practices expressly forbidden by God worms its way into a church. Satan’s tempting of Adam and Eve is the first example of his subtleness. Isaiah writes [Isaiah 1:16-17 \(NKJV\)](#) “<sup>16</sup> Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, <sup>17</sup> Learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow.” [Micah 6:8 \(NASB\)](#) “He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.” Some churches are so involved with programs, membership drives, or social justice issues, and they are all important, but not to the exclusion of preaching the gospel. An example of blatant deception is anything from cults to Satan worship. It is reported that there are approximately over 2,500 cults in America. Those who are immersed or assimilated into a cult are often victimized. The leader has complete authority, usually paired with mind control (sometimes achieved through illegal drug use) and/or sexual dominance. Some also persuade their followers that the end of the world is at hand and they can assure their place in heaven by mass suicide. David Koresh and Jim Jones are more notable. Satan is also behind the increase of the occult or Satanic religion. September 2016 was a busy month as two events were touted for the promotion of Satan. A new Satanic temple world headquarters opened in Salem, MA, and a replica of the ‘Harbinger of Baal’ Arch was erected in New York City. Wicca and witchcraft are all now considered to be acceptable “religions.” However, the Bible says they are sins. [1 Samuel 15:23](#) “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, He hath also rejected thee from being king.” There is also a rise in occult themed entertainment. Paul encourages the faithful not to waiver in the faith because the things listed must happen before Christ returns. As Daniel prophesized, it does seem as though the more knowledge we humans acquire, the more ignorant we become and less dependent on or concerned about the things of God. Satan knows that his time is short and he is working overtime to cause as much damage as possible. [Revelation 12:12](#) “Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

These lists above from Peter and Paul corroborates Jesus’ warning of being deceived by false Christs or teachers. The dictionary defines deception as “to make someone believe something that is not true.” The Bible says that Satan is the father of lies. [John 8:44 \(NIV\)](#) “You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” Satan’s most effective weapons are not a sickness or severe troubles, although they are disastrous, they are lying and deception. He crafts it so close to the truth it is common for good people to misunderstand and be led astray. He deceived Adam and Eve and it cost them everything. Satan persuaded King David to obey him, and it was not some lustful desire, it was to take a census. The sin was not in the activity it was putting another god above God. [1 Chronicles 21:1](#) “And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel.” Satan doesn’t always use titillating flagrant temptations of taboo, sometimes his tricks are subtle and flattering. Delivered not in a shout but in a whisper. God’s nature is to create something good but Satan’s nature is to take that creation and twist it ever so slightly to pervert it. He knows the Bible better than you and me. He

tried to trick Jesus in the desert by quoting scriptures. [Matthew 4:7](#) “Jesus said unto him, “It is written again, ‘thou shalt not tempt the LORD thy God.’” [Luke 4:12 \(NKJV\)](#) “And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the LORD your God.’” The scripture Jesus was referring to was most likely [Deuteronomy 6:16 \(NKJV\)](#) “You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted Him in Massah.” Moreover, the prophet [Isaiah](#) warned about calling good evil and evil good. [Isaiah 5:20](#) “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” Signs of this point everywhere. In a country that was founded on the basis of an individual’s indisputable right to worship God, the unrelenting secular progressive agenda of removing any reference or acknowledgment of God is as strong now as it ever has been and is gaining ground. There is the erosion of civil discourse. If you have an opposite opinion of the prevailing agenda, it is branded as hate speech and legal action can be taken. With God’s hand of protection being pushed aside, it provides Satan a temporary advantage to press his influence in the world. Then, when bad things do happen, people blame God for allowing the tragedy to happen, when all He did was give mankind what he wanted. Under the banner of “tolerance,” this agenda has silently infiltrated the general subconscious promoting the acceptance of “alternative lifestyles,” not to mention that laws have been passed at the highest level that clearly goes against God’s law. The name or word of God has been removed from the school house, the court house, and main street. Anyone who expresses and promotes a Christian lifestyle is ridiculed and branded a nut job. Just ask Tim Tebow, Kim Davis, Roy Moore, Aaron and Melissa Klein, Tim Allen, David and Jason Benham, Christian Mingle, or Chip and Joanna Gaines. While the world does not understand why these people put their relationship to Jesus first, God does. The very idea of man thinking he can make God change his views on issues instead of us learning and following His path is pure deception. [Galatians 6:7](#) “Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that he will also reap.” Persecution is alive and well. In an effort to deflect or discredit the message, the messengers are targeted, make no mistake, Christianity is under attack. In the Middle East, people literally, put their lives in jeopardy when they publicly convert to Christ. If found out, they would be arrested and executed, usually by beheading. Yet, in Egypt, Iran, and Iraq people are coming to Christ in droves. On Palm Sunday 2017, Egyptian Christians were singled out and executed. Here in America in Houston TX, five pastors were subpoenaed to submit their sermons to city hall for approval in case they contradicted the LGBT agenda. In 2016, the California Senate Bill 1146 was introduced. It purports that Christian colleges who adhere to their interpretation of the Bible, and as such, have an opposite view on the LGBT agenda, may have their grants or government backed financial support be cut off. Professing Christians are thought of being less intelligent or having a mental illness. Sadly, the fear of offending someone is more prevalent than the fear of offending God. It causes some to remain silent when we are called to be salt and light. [Matthew 5:13-16 \(NIV\)](#) “<sup>13</sup> You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. <sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” [Mark 4:21-23 \(NKJV\)](#) “<sup>21</sup> Also He said to them, “Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand? <sup>22</sup> For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light. <sup>23</sup> If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.” [Luke 8:16-18 \(NKJV\)](#) “<sup>16</sup> No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. <sup>17</sup> For nothing is a secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. <sup>18</sup> Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him.”

Paul commands us to hold fast to the true way and to keep the good fight so that we may be counted worthy to ascend. [2 Thessalonians 1:4-6 \(NIV\)](#) “<sup>4</sup> Therefore, among God’s churches we boast about

your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring. <sup>5</sup> All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. <sup>6</sup> God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you." [2 Thessalonians 2:13-15](#) <sup>13</sup> But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: <sup>14</sup> Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>15</sup> Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." [1 Timothy 6:12 \(NKJV\)](#) "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." The Gospel of Jesus does set the bar high, but it is reachable. [Matthew 7:14](#) "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Those who are faithful are rewarded with life with Jesus in heaven for eternity. Paul also says accepting to follow Christ is a life changing experience. [2 Corinthians 5:17](#) "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."