

Reading: 1 Timothy 4

***“Reject profane and old wives’ fables,  
and exercise yourself rather to godliness” (1 Tim 4:7)***

Deception is the most undiagnosed disease in the Church. The worst thing about deception is that the deceived persons will not know that they are deceived. The number of the deceived is increasing at an alarming rate as we approach the end of the age. When the disciples asked Jesus, “What will be the sign of Your coming, and the end of the age?,” His very first statement in reply was, “Take care that no one **deceives** you!” (Mt 24:3,4). He added that even the very elect might be deceived (v 24). Recovery from deception is extremely difficult. Prevention is better than cure. That’s why Jesus said, “See, I have told you *beforehand!*” (v 25). Let me suggest here a few safeguards against deception—

□ Give top priority to Bible meditation among the other disciplines of devotional life. The Bible admonishes us to go to the presence of God “to hear rather than to speak” (Eccl 5:1). God has magnified His Word above all things — even above His Name (Psa 138:2). If your quiet time before God is for one hour, spend 40 minutes for Bible meditation and 20 for praise and prayer. This is not the 11th Commandment to be obeyed legalistically, but I just want to stress the importance of Scripture in protecting yourself from deception.

□ Be balanced. Don’t overemphasize any one truth at the cost of other truths. Deception is mostly due to eccentric emphasis of any one aspect of divine truth. That’s why God has gifted the Church with a variety of ministers. You must connect yourself to apostolic vision, prophetic insight, evangelistic passion, pastoral burden and teachers’ knowledge. If you don’t grow up thus “in all things,” you are sure to be deceived by the trickery and cunning craftiness of the devil (Eph 4:11-15). He commonly stops the ear from hearing sound doctrine before he opens it to embrace corrupt.

□ Avoid interest in extra-Biblical revelations and experiences. What is plainly revealed in the Bible is more than enough for us to live a life that’s pleasing to God. Secret things belong to God (Dt 29:29). Digging into extra-Biblical stuff will land you in the “depths of Satan” and not the “deep things of God” (Rev 2:24; 1 Cor 2:10). We are not obliged to embrace so-called spiritual experiences which are not taught in the Scriptures by precept and practice. “Whoever breaks the hedge will be bitten by a serpent” (Eccl 10:8). Stay clear of all occult practices. Evil spirits lie behind them (Dt 18:9-12; Isa 8:19).

**OCTOBER 28**

**PRAYER**

**Subject: Satan**

*Reading: 1 Tim 4*

*Memorising: 1 Tim 4:7*

Gracious Heavenly Father, we worship You as the God of Truth. Thank You for warning us that the devil is a liar and the father of lies. We worship You as the God of revelation. Thank You for Your Spirit who teaches us Your deep things. Safeguard us, O God, from the depths of Satan. Thank You for Jesus who is our Good Shepherd. Thank You for the protection He gives us against ravenous wolves. Thank You for the Holy Spirit whom You have sent as the Spirit of Truth to lead us into all truth. Shield us to escape deceiving spirits. Grant us discernment to identify Satan's agents who appear as angels of light.

Dear Lord, we thank You for Your Word which enlightens our mind to identify the tricks of the devil. Help us, O God, to accept all Your commandments as our safeguards. We pray that we would overcome our interest in extra-Biblical revelations and experiences. Stop us from going after novelties and sensational stuff. Help us turn a deaf ear to the serpent which tempts us to taste the forbidden. Sorry, Lord, we do not spend enough time in meditating Your Word. Help us stay within the Biblical boundary.

Father God, we thank You for Christ's ascension gifts of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. Oh, how much You are concerned about our growth and safety! Help us respect these ministers and their teaching. Thank You for the protection we have under their leadership and the fellowship of Your children. Help each of us to grow in the art of discernment. We pray for the operation of the gifts of speaking forth the Word of Wisdom and the Word of Knowledge. Grant us the humility to learn from other ministries. Help us towards attaining the unity of faith.

Father God, we pray for the new believers in remote areas. Most of them do not have the Bible in their languages. How easily they can be deceived by sorcerers, magicians and witchdoctors! We remember the prayer Jesus offered to You on behalf of these people who have believed on Him through us. We pray for practical wisdom for the pioneer Missionaries who penetrate into territories to deliver those chained by superstitious beliefs and tormented by fear. We pray that these people would have the Bible in their languages soon lest the enemy grows his tares fast in their hearts.

Dear Lord, we seek Your help to withstand the winds of false doctrines blowing against us. We commit ourselves to the Word of Your grace that's able to build us up and give us the eternal inheritance. Amen!

*(Dt 29:29; 32:4; Jn 8:44; 10:11-14; 16:13; 17:15,20; 2 Cor 11:13-15; Rev 2:24;  
1 Tim 4:1; 1 Cor 2:10; 12:7,8; Eph 4:11-13; Acts 20:32; 26:17,18)*