

God Will Send Upon Them A Deluding Influence by Hendrik Joubert

Many of us received at least one of those impressive e-mails with beautiful pictures and catchy phrases intended to make one feel good. The information is presented in such a way as to create a logic which speaks for itself - until you actually consider the statements in the light of the Scriptures. Some of these stunning illustrations do not contain a single Scriptural reference, but because it is delightfully packaged and harmonizes with the general attitude of love and grace it becomes extremely difficult for someone to disagree with - Not totally unlike Peter's denial you have successfully been manipulated into failing to speak out for the truth.

Some of these illustrations contain conclusions based upon a limited number of Scriptures (often one passage) causing one to have a limited understanding of the subject addressed. However, the challenge is to ***be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.*** (2Timothy 2:15) Notice how Satan employed this limited approach as He tempted the Lord, who promptly replied "***On the other hand, it is written,...***" (Matthew 4:7) Both the passages quoted by Satan and the Lord are true, however each adds to the understanding of the other. The passage quoted by Satan is a stated fact; the Lord would be cared for in a spontaneous way. Jesus did not resort to testing the Father due to doubt setting in, behavior condemned in the passage He quoted. The Lord had a more complete understanding of the Scriptures because He did not choose to ignore a related passage.

Man is specifically warned that he would be tested in order to determine where his faith lies, in God or in man: "***If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, ² and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,' ³ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your God is testing you to find out if you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.***" (Deuteronomy 13:1-3)

The phrase ***let us go after other gods*** may be used to immediately excuse us; we do not have these idols. We fail to apply the principle because we do not consider following the adaptations of men as honoring (serving) them by depending on their words - ***other gods***. Would the following principle not apply here? "***And He will say, 'Where are their gods, The rock in which they sought refuge? ³⁸ 'Who ate the fat of their sacrifices, And drank the wine of their drink offering? Let them rise up and help you, Let them be your hiding place!*** (Deuteronomy 32:37-38) If you follow the teachings and opinions of men, will you not have to depend on them for salvation?

...and the sign or the wonder comes true... These men come with such powerful personal *testimonies*, it must be the Holy Spirit speaking to them and confirming their word. These feelings *I* have must be *a whispering of the Holy Spirit*, in spite of what the Bible says. I must *interpret* the Scriptures to harmonize with my feelings. While condemning Israel for what the Lord

accuses them of in **Matthew 15:9** ("BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.") we fail to see that we participate in the same practice today as we accept the rules made by synods and councils.

The warning is repeated in the New Testament: ***Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.*** (2Thessalonians 2:8-12)

Once again we will concentrate on phrases in order to excuse ourselves; we do not ***take pleasure in wickedness***. We do not consider sinful man adapting the instructions from God as *wickedness*, causing worship to become vain. (**Matthew 15:9**) The popular slogan "*We all worship the same God, each in our own way.*" gives us that feeling of security and piety. We do not consider declaring our feelings, which violate simple statements in Scripture, to be the work of the Holy Spirit as blasphemy against the Spirit of God – crediting Him with the permission to set aside the word of God. God warns through Paul: ***If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment.*** (1Corinthians 14:37)...***in accord with the activity of Satan...*** Just as Satan did. Satan manipulated what God said from the beginning. Adam and Eve did not literally die in the day that they ate of the fruit, and his words: "***For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.***" is confirmed: ***Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil;..."*** (Genesis 3: 5, 22)

Satan did not give them all the information, just what sounded good, appealing to man's ego. Just as convincing me that my feelings are given me by the Holy Spirit – what does that make me? I may accuse others who disagree with me as resisting the Holy Spirit? It takes a love for the truth to deny my own feelings and submit to the faith once for all delivered to the saints. (**Jude 3**)

Would you rather follow your feelings, the *testimony* of another, or that which you actually read in the Bible? OR should we question the validity of the Bible? Trusting in the words of men, rather than the words of God is wickedness. We must have a sincere love for truth. We must not become part of the delusion. Again, the challenge is to ***be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.*** (2Timothy 2:15)