

## “DECEIVING AND BEING DECEIVED”

Bryan Matthew Dockens

“*Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived*” (2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:13). According to the apostle Paul, it is evil to be either a deceiver or to be one who is deceived.

It should be obvious that anyone who leads others into error stands to be blamed, as Peter warned, “*There will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction*” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 2:1). Faithful Christians must take decisive action in shunning those who promote falsehood, as Paul urged, “*Note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple*” (Romans 16:17-18).

It is perhaps less obvious that, not only the deceivers, but also those who have accepted and obeyed their doctrines are guilty, as well. Paul asserted that it is “*evil*” to be “*deceived*” and that fact must not be overlooked.

Remember that “*the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness*” (2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11:3), and also that “*the woman being deceived, fell into transgression*” (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:14). Jehovah cursed them both: the deceiver and the deceived (Genesis 3:14-16).

Scripture repeatedly commands, “*Do not be deceived*” (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:9; 15:33; Galatians 6:7; James 1:16). It is, therefore, incumbent upon every soul to investigate each doctrine in the light of God’s word to ascertain truth and reject falsehood.

Believing deception, one disbelieves truth and “*unbelief*” faces severe and eternal consequences (Romans 11:20; Hebrews 3:12, 19).

## A BEAUTY CONTEST

Robert Hines

It is obvious from America’s beauty contests with swimsuit and evening wear competitions that most people think of beauty in terms of shape and size. If there is a talent competition the winner is the one who is the most entertaining.

So, it really interested me to hear of the “Miss Senegal” contest in Africa. It was decided not to have a swimsuit competition because such dress was immodest. And the talent competition required each contestant to demonstrate some agricultural skill! Several of the entrants showed their ability at plucking chickens. And the woman who won did so by killing and skinning and butchering a goat!

What do you think makes a woman beautiful? Surely it is more than just physical appearance. Haven’t you at some time suddenly forgotten how pretty a woman was when she started talking? It is like the Proverb, “*As a ring of gold in a swine’s snout, so is a beautiful woman who lacks discretion*” (Proverbs 11:22).

But perhaps you agree more with the conclusion of a long section about a woman’s beauty found in Proverbs 31... “*Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord she shall be praised*” (Proverbs 31:30)!

The apostle Peter speaks of those women who are good examples (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:1-6). Paul talks about women being respectful (Ephesians 5:22-33). He says the women who are loving and kind bring honor to the word of God (Titus 2:3-5). Those who work and are not idle (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 5:11-15) give the enemy no occasion for reproach.

You can tell what will make a young woman beautiful by seeing what is admired in an older woman: “*a reputation for good works, has brought up children, shown hospitality to strangers, washed the saints’ feet, assisted those in distress, devoted herself to every good work*” (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 5:10).

God’s woman knows that real beauty has to do with how she lives. And godly men everywhere admire that beauty above all.

**"WHAT MUST I DO  
TO BE SAVED?"**

**ACTS 16:30**

**LEARN THE GOSPEL**

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

**BELIEVE IN CHRIST**

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

**CONFESS CHRIST**

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

**REPENT OF SIN**

Acts 3:19; 17:30

**BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST**

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

**REMAIN STEADFAST**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF  
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

**HEBREWS 10:24-25**

**SUNDAY**

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

**WEDNESDAY**

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard  
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.  
Members Expected.

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN  
ANY TRESPASS...  
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

**GALATIANS 6:1**

**CONFESS TRESPASSES**

James 5:16; 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9

**REPENT OF SIN**

Acts 8:22

**PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS**

Acts 8:22

**REMAIN STEADFAST**

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS  
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN  
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

**PROVERBS 25:11**

"Temptations are the empty  
promises that sin will never  
fulfill."

**"WHOLE COUNSEL"**

**ACTS 20:27**

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**MARRIAGE IS BESIDE THE POINT**

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Jorge Mario Bergoglio, known to Catholics as their "Pope Francis," declared on Monday that priests are now permitted to "bless" homosexual unions, although they are forbidden from officiating any same-sex marriages. This announcement directly communicates the Roman Catholic Church's approval of homosexual behavior, provided the couples refrain from marrying.

The inspired word of God never mentions marriage relative to homosexual couples because the Scripture undermines any possibility that God could approve such relationships when it directly condemns homosexuality itself.

In the New Testament alone, homosexuality is directly forbidden in three instances (Romans 1:26-27; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:9-11; 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 1:10). It is implicitly condemned in nine references to Sodom (Matthew 10:15; 11:23-24; Mark 6:11; Luke 10:12; 17:29; Romans 9:29; 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 2:6; Jude 7; Revelation 11:8). Furthermore, homosexuality is included as one variety of "fornication" or "sexual immorality" every time those terms appear, which happens to be dozens in the New Testament.

There would be no point in the Holy Spirit chastising same-sex marriages if homosexuality itself is already expressly and indirectly verboten, which it is.

The papacy is playing pointless games in this latest announcement and nothing about it honors God in the least.

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