

Holiness and Deception

Scripture Reading — John 8:42-47

Rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit ...
1 Peter 2:1 —

I heard this question recently: “What will the ‘cultural autopsy’ of our generation show?” Could it be that we have succumbed to a spirit of deception? If so, how can we know?

In some ways deception is spiritual. For example, Jesus is treated as one of many equally valid “gods.” Christianity is seen as one of many valid religions. The Bible is considered ill-suited to address issues that we face in our culture today.

Deception can also be personal. For example, I have watched in horror as people use lies and deception to cover up personal insecurities or get ahead at the expense of others. It seems we expect and accept deception as part of human life.

Why are God’s children commanded to rid themselves of all deceit? First, deception honors Satan, the “father of lies.” Second, as habits of deception become more ingrained, we grow increasingly deaf to truth. Finally, deception only produces casualties—such as the abandonment of personal integrity or the betrayal of public trust that leaves a churning wake of shattered lives.

Since the truth sets people free (John 8:32), why engage in something that enslaves and leads to despair? Instead, let’s follow “the way and the truth and the life” (John 14:6).

Prayer

Lord, you have taught that people who guard their lips guard their life. Deliver me from a deceptive heart and unclean lips so that I can testify to your purpose and will. Amen.

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