

The Origin of Self-Deception

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Scriptures:

- James 4:17
- James 4:17, *NLT*
- James 1:8, 22-24
- 1 John 1:5-8

Summary:

*The most dangerous thing about self-deception is that when we're operating in it, we don't even know that we're being deceived. Failing to be true to what we believe is right causes us to rationalize and make excuses. Being true to our sense of what the right thing is relieves us from having to explain our actions; if we are **false** to our belief, then our excuses make the wrong thing that we're doing appear right. Deceiving ourselves causes a disturbance in us that we can't reconcile because deep down inside, we know exactly what we should do. Fooling ourselves in this manner results in spiritual blindness to the truth. This type of thinking is something we must beware of because it's built into the world's norms and values. The best way to avoid this trap is to follow through and live the Word of grace after hearing it; this powerfully internalizes the truth as it is now.*

Notes:

1. Self-deception causes wrong thinking; we rationalize and make excuses to convince ourselves.
2. There will always be situations where we sense in our hearts the right thing to do, but we refuse to do it. As free moral agents, we have the right to make our own decisions; we're capable of living true or false to our sense of what is right.
3. We operate in self-deception when we try to live under the old covenant of the law; we're now under the new covenant of grace, and should live accordingly. This applies to the church, to our relationships and marriages, and everything else that concerns us.
4. Deceiving ourselves blinds us to what is true.
5. Self-deception keeps us in the dark so that we no longer see, experience, or understand the truth of God's grace. People who are deceived do not even *want* the truth.
6. Self-deception comes from fear, pride, social conditioning and cultural expectations, a lack of confidence, fear of judgment from others, wanting to please and impress others, wanting to avoid painful thoughts and experiences after we've endured the hardship of trauma, and preferring the convenience of an easy delusion over a hard truth.

Category: spiritual growth

Keywords: self-deception, deceived, rationalize, excuses, false, wrong, deceiving, fooling