



The Five Stages of Deception

Pastor Brad Howard - February 4, 2024

The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?" "Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. "It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'" "You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil." The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

Genesis 3:1-7 NLT

STAGE 1 DECEPTION:

YOU SHOULD TWIST GOD'S WORD TO JUSTIFY YOUR PERSONAL DESIRES.

The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?"

Genesis 3:1 NLT

For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths.

2 Timothy 4:3-4 NLT

STAGE 2 DECEPTION:

YOU SHOULD DISREGARD THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN.

"Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. "It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'" "You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman.

Genesis 3:2-4 NLT

There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.

Proverbs 14:12 NIV



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STAGE 3 DECEPTION: GOD IS KEEPING YOU FROM THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE.

"God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil." The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her.

Genesis 3:5-6a NLT

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.

1 John 2:15-16 NIV

"Human history is the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy."

~ C.S. Lewis

STAGE 4 DECEPTION: THE ONLY PERSON I'M HURTING IS MYSELF.

So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too.

Genesis 3:6b NLT

A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

Galatians 5:9 NKJV

STAGE 5 DECEPTION: THE BEST WAY TO DEAL WITH THE CYCLE OF SHAME IS TO COVER AND HIDE.

At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

Genesis 3:7 NLT

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to Him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.

Romans 8:1-2 NLT