

# PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Letter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

*For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 NKJV)*

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## Seduced & Deceived

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### Introduction

I would like to pick up part of the theme from last month's issue. We concluded that the New Covenant includes both the cross and Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is a necessary component of the New Covenant and leads us into the fullness of the provision of Jesus. He shows us the things of Jesus; He leads us into all truth; He brings to our remembrance the words of Jesus; He leads us to maturity and conformity to His image. He provides us His gifts, which include "discernment of spirits". Neglecting the Holy Spirit will decrease our ability to discern which spirits are operating in any given situation.

The last issue talked about "Demonized Flesh" where the natural path is followed leading us to earthly, natural thinking, which eventually results in demonic influence and manifestations. In this issue I want to look at the way in which we get there.

### Affirmations?

Psychology has informed us that we need to be affirmed, that our real problem is low self esteem. They tell us that we don't have a high enough opinion of ourselves and our ability to succeed. Their solution is "positive affirmations". Anyone who has read any of the pop psychology books, personal development or success books or even business books has been indoctrinated with the "self development" concept of positive affirmations. Usually this means that you write down several positive things about yourself and what you want to accomplish and repeat these out loud each morning as you look at yourself in the mirror. During the day you repeat these when anything threatens your self esteem.

This indoctrination has come full blown into the Church where we now have many "ministers" who preach and teach a goal oriented, self affirming gospel of success that is devoid of repentance and ignores the scriptural imperative of dying to self.

The first record we have in the Bible of what modern psychologists would call "positive affirmations" is in Isaiah and speaks of the goals and motivations of Lucifer.

"But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' (Isaiah 14:13-14 NASB)

There are five “I will” affirmations in these verses. Maybe Lucifer had these on index cards and read them to himself in the mirror each morning. HmMMM.

It did not matter how strong Satan's affirmations were, the next verse tells us the outcome:

"Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit. (Isaiah 14:15 NASB)

Satan's affirmations were worthless in relation to God's intentions.

Maybe we don't discern the type of spirit operating behind the pop psychology. This whole idea is certainly in conflict with Paul's words about himself:

For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good *is* not. (Romans 7:18 NASB)

That certainly doesn't sound like a positive affirmation, does it?

But HE WHO BOASTS IS TO BOAST IN THE LORD. For it is not he who commends himself that is approved, but he whom the Lord commends. (2 Corinthians 10:17-18 NASB)

All of our affirmations are in the Lord and His work on our behalf. There is nothing in our self that is attractive to the Lord.

## Imaginations

The self affirmation philosophy leads to “visualization”; that is, seeing yourself as you have affirmed yourself to be. This engages our imagination; the “if you can dream it, you can do it” philosophy. However, we forget one of the primary reasons that God wiped out mankind, except for Noah, in the flood.

And Jehovah saw that the evil of man *was* great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil all the day long. (Genesis 6:5 LITV)

Paul gives us more detail about their condition:

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, (Romans 1:21-22 KJV)

In their imaginations they professed, affirmed themselves to be wise. But it didn't do them any good—they became fools. Our imaginations can become our enemy, even to the point that they exalt themselves against the knowledge of God.

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; (2 Corinthians 10:5 KJV)

I am sure that Satan saw himself in his imagination as accomplishing his “I will” goals. I am sure that he visualized himself sitting on his throne in the assembly like God. Yet, the scriptures say, “Nevertheless...”. Neither his nor our imaginations change reality.

## If We Say

The word/faith, positive confession “ministers” have taken what the scriptures say about believing and proclaiming the Word of God to an extreme whereby simply “confessing” or saying the desires of our heart in biblical terms will bring it to pass. However, they leave out the necessity of a heart change that gives us new motivations that are not based in self but in the purposes of God. If our hearts are filled with our self—our desires, ambitions, needs—then what we say has no value in the things of God “for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.” (Luke 6:45 NASB)

John made it clear that our affirmations, what we say is a form of self-deception if we are not walking in obedience to the Lord.

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; (1 John 1:6 NASB)

If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.(1 John 1:8 NASB)

If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. (1 John 1:10 NASB)

Affirming things that are false in terms of what we practice in our life is lying. Doing this leads to deceiving ourselves and then to making God a liar. That is the progression of effect in John's word listed above.

## Deception

It is a serious situation when we start deceiving ourselves, which destroys our ability to discern and confuses our understanding of what is true and false. We should remember that the New Testament has many warnings concerning the end times and the prevalence of deception that is accompanied by false signs and wonders. There is a time of global deception that will come upon the world and it will prey upon the people of God.

But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, (1 Timothy 4:1 NASB)

It is clear that during the end times some believers will fall away from the faith; that is, they will become apostate. This happens because they gave attention to doctrines of demons and the seducing spirits associated with them. In other words—they they will be deceived.

Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, (2 Thessalonians 2:3 NASB)

Paul speaks clearly that before the Lord returns there will be a great apostasy, a falling away from the faith. This apparently ushers in the time of the man of lawlessness that we call the Antichrist.

*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. (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10 NASB)

The global deception is powered by the activity of Satan with all power, signs, and false wonders and will in some way be orchestrated by the man of lawlessness so that some will leave the faith and be joined to this deception.

We need to examine ourselves and make sure that we are walking in the Spirit, operating in discernment and becoming obedient to the requirements of the Lord. There are many “ministering” in the name of the Lord that we should be wary of as deceivers.

But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these. (2 Timothy 3:1-5 NASB)

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