

## 1 Peter 3:8-12

1Pe 3:8 (NKJV) **Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; <sup>9</sup> not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. <sup>10</sup> For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. <sup>11</sup> Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. <sup>12</sup> For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."**

In the last study, Peter exhorted us to “**refrain our tongue from evil**”. We saw that we should never find ourselves saying something that we know is not what God would want us to say. It is so easy, something that can almost be effortless, to say something negative, something harmful, and something that hurts someone else. We saw that we must “learn” how to talk in a godly way so that our words are edifying and are always reflecting what God would want us to say. One of the main verses that we drew some of the conclusions from was [Ephesians 4:29](#) which said,

Eph 4:29 (NKJV) **Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.**

Everything that we should be saying to people, to loved ones, to friends, and even to enemies, should be something that is edifying, something that is encouraging and helpful to someone’s life. The tendency in so many Christian’s lives to simply say ugly things, negative things, and to speak down to people – and especially people that we say we love the most. To live that way is simply unbiblical and cannot find God’s favor.

Now, the second thing that Peter says is that we are to refrain from speaking things that are deceitful. The word for “**deceit**” in v10 is “*dolos*” and it refers specifically to something that is a trick, crafty, fraudulent. It is the classical Greek word for bait that is used in fishing. It refers to trickery and deception. It is a word that implies a level of extreme wickedness in what someone is trying to do with their words.<sup>1</sup> It speaks of a deliberate attempt to mislead people or trick someone. It is when someone says something that is dishonest in order to promote something that has no value. It is the idea of replacing something of value with something of inferior value.<sup>2</sup> Culturally, when people do this knowingly, we call it a scam or a rip-off. We say that we have been swindled, cheated, or tricked by someone. The nature of a scam is that it always carries some kind of alluring enticement with it, some kind of benefit and reward if the person will just entertain the offer. If there is no reward and no benefit, then no one would even give consideration to a scam. [Ephesians 4:15](#) speaks of the importance of the believer always choosing truth over deception and dishonesty,

Eph 4:15 (NKJV) **but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ--**

If you truly want your life to be what God wants it to be, then you have to make the very deliberate and intentional decision that you will always speak the truth to people, and do so in ways that build them up

<sup>1</sup> Harris, #1382, *dolos*, ep.

<sup>2</sup> Access, *Definition of Deception*, ep.

and edify their life. So to be deceptive is to misrepresent someone or something. It is the idea that the person is willing to tell a lie in order to gain some advantage or to get something from someone in a dishonest way. There is a modern term in advertising called “bait and switch” where companies deceptively lure someone into their store to buy something.<sup>3</sup> It is actually considered to be a form of fraud because the products are advertised at a bargain price, but when the customer gets to the store, the advertised goods are not available – as if they have been sold out. It is pure deception. We see this on the internet all the time, and with telemarketing that prays on the elderly. I must receive 5 or more emails a week that my credit card has been cancelled and I need to reaffirm my account information. I get one all the time for a Chase Manhattan card that I do not even have.

The worst thing, and obviously this is not Peter’s intent in this context, but so often Christians deceive themselves into thinking that material, carnal, and worldly things and pleasures have more value than the spiritual things found in God’s Word. [James 1:22](#) is a warning to believers who are not serious about their Christian life. It says,

**Jas 1:22 (NKJV) But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.**

A person can sit in church week after week and year after year and it NEVER make an impact on their life. They can hear message after message, but never allow the Scriptures to create needed and biblical changes in their life. It does not matter how much someone actually reads the Word of God. If they are not willing to put into practice what they are taught and what they read, then at best they are simply self-deceived. I know someone right now who is so in bondage to telling “little white lies” that it has actually become their way of life. Everything is exaggerated, overstated, inflated, dramatized, and embellished with things that simply are not true.

It is certainly interesting and notable that the Bible refers to Satan as “**a liar and the father of it**” in [John 8:44](#).

**Jn 8:44 (NKJV) You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and *does not* stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.**

[Revelation 12:9](#) speaking of the devil in the Tribulation period says,

**Rev 12:9 (NKJV) So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.**

So, whenever someone is caught in a lie and in deception, in essence they are acting just like Satan. It should be more than obvious that when someone is dishonest that their own unwillingness to be honest is leading them away from God. [2 Timothy 2:26](#) says,

**2Ti 2:26 (NKJV) and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.**

A “**snare**” is a trap that is hidden so that a person or an animal does not see the trap. If traps were obvious and out in the open, then no one would be ensnared by them. However, we all know that is not

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<sup>3</sup> Precept, *1 Peter 3:8-12, verse by verse*, ep.

the case at all. In order for a trap to be effective and useful, it has to be hidden and disguised so that it does not appear to be a trap. Now, this is my opinion, so you can take it with a grain of salt if you so choose, but it appears that Satan's greatest weapon against the believer is the lies that he places in a person's mind. There are plenty of times when you probably have thoughts that are not your thoughts. The enemy has simply planted a thought into your mind to see if you will just nibble at it. [John 13:2](#), speaking of Judas Iscariot, says,

**Jn 13:2 (NKJV) And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him,**

He simply puts a thought into your mind, and it is so subtle that you believe it to be your thought and what you are thinking. It may be something you heard on television, or something your good friend said to you. However, what you heard and the advice you were given were simply not in alignment with God's Word. If the enemy can get you to just think wrong, to just evaluate things wrong, then he is just a short step away from getting you to do the wrong thing. This is not spiritual rocket science. This is how the enemy works. Here is the way that Scripture defines the process that the committed believer is to embrace. It comes from [2 Corinthians 10:4-5](#),

**2Co 10:4 (NKJV) For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup> casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,**

Once the enemy is able to establish a mental stronghold in someone's life, it is very difficult to break that stronghold. How do you know if you may have a spiritual "stronghold" in your life? It is when you have thoughts, ideas, lifestyles, feelings, and emotions that are biblically wrong and you are not able to let go of them. It could be your attitude towards someone – something that you continue to hold against them, but what you are doing and how you feel towards them is not in accordance with God's Word. The word for "strongholds" is "*ochyroma*" and it means to fortify and was figuratively used of a castle.<sup>4</sup> In terms of what we are addressing, it is a mental and emotional fortress that the enemy has created in your mind and heart. Spiritually, it is defined as a prison – an area of your life where the enemy has captured you in your thought life and you have become imprisoned in that area of your thinking to something that is not biblical or even godly.

Let us just assume that someone has yielded to pornography and it has become a stronghold in their thought life. They may try as hard as they can to stop, but everytime that they start to do well, the enemy just runs back to that stronghold with a strong temptation and they are defeated. This is a kind of spiritual fortress that the enemy creates in a person's life and he does it to deceive them and to destroy their life. The enemy gets them to believe a lie. He deceives them with a thought that is not right. It may be some deeply emotional issue that he uses in a person's life, and they just succumb to the wrong thoughts and the enemy begins to build a fortress in their minds. This happens all the time in marriages when something does not go the way someone wanted, and before you know it the enemy has created a mental fortress in the person's mind and they cannot let go of that which is obviously unbiblical and unhealthy for the marriage. The problem is that once the enemy is able to establish one stronghold in a person's life, he is able to use that as a beachhead for establishing other strongholds. I have known people who

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<sup>4</sup> Strong, #3794, ep.

had multiple strongholds in their life, and their life eventually became a spiritual wreck. Why? It is because they believed the lie. God's Word is clear that the committed believer, the person who claims to know God and to love God, they must be "**bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ**". This is the only way that we can be successful in the Christian life, and it is how we as believers are to both think and live. It is a discipline thing. If you allow ungodly thoughts and emotions to control your spiritual life and your spiritual decisions, you will not be successful. You must allow the Word of God to ALWAYS be the controlling factor in what you think, how you think, and how you live. [2 Timothy 4:4](#), speaking of a time just like we live in, says,

**2Ti 4:3 (NKJV) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; <sup>4</sup> and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.**

Please appreciate that one of the lies that Satan will plant in a person's mind is multiple options for them to consider for what is bothering them – a kind of information overload if you would. The more options that you keep open that are not Scriptural, the much more likely you will be to become overwhelmed with thoughts that will lead you away from God's truth. If as a believer you are not grounded in God's truth, mark it down that you will succumb to the enemy's lies, deceit, and deception. You have no defense against Him if you reject God's perfect will for your life. Just shut the door on all of the ridiculous, worldly, carnal options that he keeps providing for you, and simply choose God. Simply choose to do what is right and what you know the Scriptures say is the right thing to do. [John 8:31-32](#) is how Jesus expressed this principle when He said,

**Jn 8:31 (NKJV) Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. <sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."**

If you are serious about your Christian life, and if you are serious about being a genuine follower of Christ, then you must pay attention to what Jesus said and completely discard every thought and every false notion that does not align itself with the Word of God – every single thought. [2 Corinthians 10:4-5](#) said to "**bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ**" – "**every thought**". That means every wrong thought, every undermining thought, every destructive thought, and every thought that is not aligned with God's Word. Let them go or they will destroy your life! If the enemy can just get you to think wrong, then he will create a stronghold in your life and it will be very difficult to break. Part of the nuance of the definition of the word "**deceit**" is that it means to cause someone to wander or roam from safety and from truth and godly virtue, and that is exactly how the enemy will build a stronghold in your life

In [Romans 1:29](#), the word "**deceit**" is used to speak specifically of people who are very lost.

**Ro 1:29 (NKJV) being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers,**

[1 Peter 2:1](#), speaking to believers, says,

**1Pe 2:1 (NKJV) Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,**

In [Mark 7:20-23](#), Jesus is speaking about what defiles a man and He says this,

Mk 7:20 (NKJV) **And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. <sup>21</sup> For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, <sup>22</sup> thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within and defile a man."**

The reason I chose these three verses is because the word “**deceit**” is in each one and each one is a list where there is not one good attribute in any of them. So it should be apparent that this word seems to frequently be used with very wicked sins that dishonor God and His Word. “**Deceit**” is just one of many “**evil things**”. [1 Peter 1:22](#) speaking of Jesus said this,

1Pe 2:22 (NKJV) *"Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth";*

Not one word of deceit or deceitfulness was ever found in Jesus’ mouth – not one word. The same should be true of us. Jesus never tried to coerce or manipulate someone with His words. He never tried to intimidate or bully someone with His words. Everything He said was designed to edify people with the truth and with spiritual encouragement. So, whatever you say to someone, make sure that it is the truth, that it is honest, and that you never try and manipulate or coerce someone with deceptive words. Avoid it like the plague if you want God’s blessings on your life.

Thirdly, the believer is to “**turn away from evil**”. The word for “**evil**” is the same word “*kakos*” that we looked at previously. It is an ugly word with very sinful nuances to it. The word for “**turn away**” simply means to shun and to avoid that which is evil in its character and nature. It is the Greek word “*ekklino*” where the root word “*klino*” means to bend and the prefix “*ek*” means out, or literally to bend out from, to turn away from, to turn aside from something.<sup>5</sup> [Romans 16:17](#) says,

Ro 16:17 (NKJV) **Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid (*ekklino*) them.**

[Romans 3:23](#), speaking of the sinful condition of men without Christ says this,

Ro 3:12 (NKJV) *They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one."*

We are surrounded by evil at every level, but God simply says that we are to shun it, to avoid it, and to turn away from it. Refuse to watch something that you know is corrupt. Refuse to go somewhere that you know is ungodly. When someone or something begins to tempt you to do evil things, God’s design for your life is to simply walk away from and turn away from that which you know is evil. It could be something ethical, something immoral and depraved, something deceitful, something that you know is dishonest, something that dishonors God, or something that is simply worthless and of no value for your life. Just turn away, walk away, leave, remove yourself, run from it. This really is an easy thing to do, but once again it is critical that you intentionally make these kinds of decisions before they ever happen.

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<sup>5</sup> Strong, 1068.

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