

Eph 5:6 Let No One Deceive You

Let no one deceive you with empty words; for because of these things the wrath of God comes on the sons of disobedience.

Let no one deceive you

Paul warns us as believers: “let no one keep on deceiving you” with empty words. In other words, stop letting this deception happen! Stop listening to their enticements to sin.

Of course, the first place that we see the use of worldly arguments in trying to lead someone astray is in Genesis 3, when Satan picked the most cunning instrument he could, the serpent, and challenged the truthfulness of God. Eve’s first mistake was having a conversation with the enemy. God’s word to her, and to us is truth and life. Deut 32:46-7 **46 he said to them, “Take to your heart all the words with which I am warning you today, which you will command your sons to follow carefully, all the words of this Law. 47 For it is not a trivial matter for you; indeed it is your life.** Following God’s Word in truth IS our life—it’s not possible to have true life outside of it, even if that’s what the world wants you to believe. Any departure from it brings death, as Eve found out. We have to hold on to it, for dear life--eternal. As 2nd Tim 1:13-14 says **13 Hold on to the example of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 14 Protect, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.**

Paul warns us as Christians not to be misled by worldly arguments. Unbelievers can trick believers into sexual immorality or foolish talk, or greediness, or impurity usually by suggesting that there's no real harm in it, and lead them astray. God will make sure that we have a way to endure temptation, without succumbing to sin. 1 Cor 10:13 **13 No temptation has overtaken you except something common to mankind; and God is faithful, so He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.** Eph 5:6 is a poignant warning against the allure of empty words and the dire consequences of disobedience. This deceit refers to both unbelievers and believers who falsely think that worldly living has no consequences. But remember, **as a man sows, so shall he also reap.** There are always spiritual consequences for wrong living. And we, as Believers can be influenced by our culture so that what is acceptable in the world becomes acceptable in the church, if we are not very careful.

with empty words

The word *kenos* κενός means “empty” and so “empty words” are void of content or without truth. David speaks of the harm that these unrighteous, empty words do in Psalm 41, saying in verses 5-6 **5 My enemies speak evil against me, “When will he die, and his name perish?” 6 And when he comes to see me, he speaks empty words; His heart gathers wickedness to itself; When he goes outside, he tells it.** This kind of plotting behind people’s back, and gossiping against them when they are not around causes many problems for the people of God. And as those who will **give an answer for every idle word** when we stand before Jesus, we need to be very careful not to practice such things. Being able to control our tongues is a mark of spiritual maturity.

Jesus warned in Matthew 7:15 to watch out for those who would twist God’s Word for their own advantage, saying **15 “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? 17 So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.** You will know them by the chaos and harm that surrounds their lives—the bad fruit of bad living.

The truth is found only in God’s Word, in Christ. Col 2:8-10 **8 See to it that there is no one who takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception in accordance with human tradition, in accordance with the elementary principles of the world, rather than in accordance with Christ. 9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over every ruler and authority;** Only God has the Word of Truth, and Christ has revealed

it to us. When many disciples were turning away from Christ, because of His hard teaching, Jesus asked them if they were going to turn away too. And John 6:68-69 **68 Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. 69 And we have already believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God."**

for because of these things the wrath of God comes on the sons of disobedience.

This verse emphasizes that the wrath of God comes upon those who are disobedient due to these misleading influences. It is the reason one must not be deceived with empty words. There are always those who would try to convince believers that everyone has an inheritance and that there is no judgment on those who practice evil. Because these people do not believe that God judges, they try to persuade all people of this, including believers. That is why Paul warns believers not to believe their words, which are void of content. Instead, we are to believe the truth which is in Jesus.

Paul considers this empty speech, a lie. He also tells the saints not to participate in useless or unwholesome talk, which is so characteristic of unbelievers Eph (4:29).

Paul reminds us of the future of those who seek to deceive them: the judgment of God. The "wrath of God", and the need for obedience was highlighted by Jesus in John 3:36 **36 The one who believes in the Son has eternal life; but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."**, and often by Paul. Rom 1:18 **18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.**

There's no getting away with anything—it's an illusion, a deception. We see this clearly in our verses today, and in the parallel verse in Col 3:5-6 **5 Therefore, treat the parts of your earthly body as dead to sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,** And it is only through putting our trust, our faith in Jesus that we can be saved. Rom 5:8-9 **8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.**

Remember that we are a New Creation in Christ, and should not be living according to our old dead selves, like we used to live.

We follow Paul's exhortation to be imitators of God and to walk in love. Our conduct and speech is not to be destructive but constructive for the purpose of building one another up in the faith. And we, as believers are sons of God, living in obedience or faith, having accepted the truth in Jesus. We are children of light and our walk must demonstrate this fact. We refuse to participate with unbelievers in their acts of disobedience.

And we can avoid being deceived by empty words by staying rooted in the truth. Empty words are often used to manipulate and deceive others, leading them astray from the truth. We can recognize and reject empty words that do not align with the principles of God by being firmly grounded in the truth of God's Word and seeking discernment from the Holy Spirit. We can guard our hearts and minds against deception by testing everything against the truth. We should safeguard our hearts and minds by filtering all words and messages through the lens of God's truth, just as we protect valuable treasures in a safe. We can prevent ourselves from being swayed by deceptive and empty words that seek to lead us away from God's will by constantly aligning our thoughts and actions with the truth.