



Following Jesus in an Age of Deception

Every generation faces challenges to its understanding of reality. Yet our moment seems uniquely disorienting. We live in an age of social media algorithms, artificial intelligence, political tribalism, deepfakes, robots, claims of non-human intelligence, and an endless stream of information competing for our attention. Many people are asking a simple but profound question: **What is True?**

The Apostle Paul anticipated a time when deception would become a defining feature of human society. In 2 Thessalonians 2:9–12 he writes of a coming rebellion marked by “all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing.” Paul is not merely describing false doctrine. **He is describing a culture in which deception itself becomes a way of life.**

The Lord issued a similar warning in His Olivet Discourse. When His disciples asked about the signs of the end of the age, His first caution was, “See that no one leads you astray” (Matt. 24:4). He went on to warn that many false prophets would arise, that false Christs would appear, and that some would perform great signs and wonders in an effort to deceive, if possible, even the chosen (Matt. 24:5,

11, 24). The emphasis is striking. Before speaking of wars, disasters, and global upheaval, *Jesus highlighted deception as one of the defining dangers of the last days.*

What is striking is that the problem is not a lack of information. Rather, it is **a rejection of truth**. Paul says people perish “because they refused to love the truth and so be saved” (2 Thess. 2:10). The issue is not intellectual capacity but *spiritual allegiance* and “*first loves*.” We humans often believe what we *want* to believe. We embrace narratives that reinforce our desires, fears, and identities - whether they are true or not. Who or what we truly love guides who or what we truly worship.

Consider the modern landscape. Social media allows misinformation to travel faster than ever before. Political movements increasingly cultivate loyalty not merely to ideas but to personalities. Public figures are sometimes treated as saviors, while opponents are viewed as enemies beyond redemption. In such an environment, **political allegiance can subtly replace allegiance to Christ.**

At the same time, rapid advances in artificial intelligence and robotics are reshaping long-held assumptions about what it means to be human. Reports of UAPs (Unidenti-

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Save the Date! - October 1

Please mark your calendars for **October 1** this year. We are planning to host a dinner for our students and supporters as a way to say THANKS for all the many ways you have supported us over the years. We will have more information as the date gets closer, but go ahead and mark the day. We look forward to seeing many of you then!

REJOICE always,
PRAY without ceasing,
GIVE THANKS in all circumstances;
for this is God's desire in Christ Jesus for you.
1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

Summer Study: On To Maturity

This Summer, I am teaching in the newly formed Legacy class at First Evan. The topic of the study is **On To Maturity: Following Jesus in Troubling Times**. We will be looking at some of Jesus' fundamental teachings and how they are repeated, amplified, applied in the New Testament letters. We will be focusing on those topics which intersect key issues in our current culture. These lessons are being recorded and we will make them available on our website in our **Podcast: Follow**. You can scan the QR code to go directly to study page.



fied Anomalous Phenomena—formerly called UFOs) and discussions of non-human intelligence from other worlds or dimensions have further unsettled many people’s understanding of reality. Whether every claim proves true is an important issue, but almost beside the point. The cumulative effect is a growing sense that the world is stranger, less stable, and more difficult to interpret than many imagined.

Yet we who follow Christ should not respond with fear. Scripture has long taught that we inhabit a world where spiritual realities exist alongside visible, physical ones. The Bible never presents reality as merely material. Angels, demons, signs, wonders, powers, and principalities are woven throughout the biblical story. *The emergence of new mysteries does not threaten the gospel.*

Instead, these developments remind us of the importance of discernment. Followers of Jesus are called neither to gullibility nor cynicism. We are called to love the truth. We are exhorted to learn discernment through eating the “solid food” of the Word of God and practicing it constantly (Hebrews 5:14). We test every claim. We refuse to worship political leaders. We resist the temptation to build our identities around ideological tribes. We remember that no government, technology, movement, or charismatic figure can accomplish what only Christ can do. *Only He is Lord.*

The answer to an age of deception is not panic but faithful allegiance to Jesus. The One who declared, “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life” (John 14:6) remains the sure foundation in a world filled with competing voices. As confusion grows, the church’s calling becomes increasingly clear: to be a people who love the truth, walk in the truth, and bear witness to The Truth Himself. [ST]

Have you been to the TSF website lately?

www.tsfmemphis.org is the best place to keep in touch with us and find all of our available resources.

In June—July this year, we will be posting the recordings for the study On To Maturity: Following Jesus in Troubling Times. We also have an incredible collection of our previous studies covering books of the Bible.

All of our online resources are available for free! Scan the QR code on the right to go to the site. **Please check in with us there and keep in touch!**



Please PRAY for us as We PRAY for You!

As we have said many times and cannot say enough, **we are so thankful for each and every one of you** who support the ministry of TSF in so many different ways. Your prayers, your attendance in our classes, your financial contributions all work together to keep us alive and moving forward.

I think of Paul’s prayer: “**I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now**” (Philippians 1:3–5). TSF is a partnership in which you are a vital part. We could not do what we do without you!

Prayer is so important! Please pray for us - asking the Lord to provide for our needs and to give us the wisdom we need to do the things that are pleasing to Him.

As you are praying for us, know that we are praying for you, that the Lord would supply all your needs from His limitless riches. We are also constantly **giving thanks** and **rejoicing** that our Heavenly Father allows us to partner together to show people the Way of Jesus while teaching His Truth and living His Life.

This past year has been a difficult one for our family. Jill’s brother Jim suffered a life altering stroke. My father has been dealing with kidney failure and the difficult regimen of dialysis. And we are not alone. We know so many others who have dealt with difficult realities of life - sickness and death.

In all of this, we have been constantly reminded of the importance of prayer. We know that the LORD hears and provides and He constantly “shows up” - not always according to our requests, but always according to His goodness. The LORD is continually teaching us to trust Him more and more deeply. That means taking us through circumstances in which He is the ONLY ONE we can place our hope in.

Often, as I pray, I ask the Lord to hear my prayers not because I am worthy or deserving, but because He is Good and Merciful and we are his beloved children. Let’s continue to pray for one another in these difficult days.

**When the righteous cry for help,
the Lord hears and delivers them
out of all their troubles.
The Lord is near to the brokenhearted
and saves the crushed in spirit.
[Psalm 34:17–18]**