



The 3D's of Failure: Deception, Doubt, Discouragement

²²And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. ²³And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. ²⁴But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. ²⁵And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. ²⁶And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. ²⁷But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. ²⁸And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. ²⁹And he said, COME. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, HE WALKED ON THE WATER, to go to Jesus. ³⁰But WHEN HE SAW the wind boisterous, HE WAS AFRAID; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. ³¹And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, WHEREFORE DIDST THOU DOUBT?

Matthew 14:22-31 (emphasis added)

In the scriptures above, we find the story of Jesus walking on the water, and Peter asking if he might come to Him. Jesus spoke one word, Come. That word carried faith, and it also demanded action. In other words, it demanded a change from Peter's present state or position. As Peter acted on the word that Jesus spoke, it brought results; he was a success because he walked on the water.

At this point, I would like to ask you a very important question: What caused Peter to act on the Word that Jesus spoke? We all know that the natural laws would prove to Peter that he could not walk on the water; he had never attempted to do this before. Why was he so confident that it would work? God's Word has the ability of creating an inner image in your heart. It will always cause YOU to see yourself as a success and a winner instead of a failure.

Jesus spoke the word come and it created an image of success in Peter's heart. He could see himself walking on the water regardless of all other evidence. The Word had been spoken, he believed it and acted on it. As long as he followed the inner image in his heart, he was a success.

Jesus taught in Mark 4:14-20 that Satan comes immediately to steal the Word out of the heart. For what reason? As I said previously, the Word will create an inner image of the way God sees you through the blood of Jesus. This inner image will cause you to begin to see yourself as God sees you. As this image is perfected, it will cause you to be a success. Therefore, Satan will attempt to distort that image and thus cause you to fail. How does he distort your inner image? Through deception.

Deception is the mightiest weapon of Satan. He uses it against Christians and successfully robs them of God's best for their lives. Deception can be defined as that which gives a false impression or image. Deception comes in three major forms: appearance, statement, or influence.



In the story we read about Peter walking on the water and, we find deception taking place in the form of appearance. You remember that as long as Peter followed the inner image produced by the word Come, he was a success. Notice what happened when he began to look at the wind and waves: his image became distorted. He no longer saw himself a success, but now (through appearance) he saw himself sinking – a failure. He was deceived. Deception then produced doubt. In the literal Greek this means to stand in two ways, uncertain of which way to take. Peter now had a choice; he could continue to follow his original inner image or he could follow a distorted image. His doubt caused him to become discouraged, which literally means to be deprived of confidence. He no longer had confidence in the word come but decided to follow the distorted image, and the result was failure.

Some of you may be asking, “Is there any way I can overcome deception, doubt and discouragement?” Yes, there is. In fact, Peter found out how to do this. Let’s look at Luke 5:1-7:

⁵And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, ²and saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. ³And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon’s, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. ⁴Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. ⁵And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: NEVERTHELESS, AT THY WORD I will let down the net. ⁶And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their net brake. ⁷And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink (emphasis added).

Notice that Peter was almost deceived by leaning to the influence of past experiences. If he had not followed Jesus’ instructions he would have failed. The words that Jesus spoke created an inner image in Peter’s heart. If he had not acted on it, his inner image would have become distorted. However, Peter spoke very powerful words that changed the whole course of the day, Nevertheless at thy word. He went back to the words that Jesus spoke and allowed them to perfect his inner image. He then acted on it and was a success.

Always go to the Word of God when you are facing failure or defeat. God’s Word will act as a mirror and will reflect a perfect image in your heart of the way God sees you. The more of the Word you put into your heart, the more perfected your inner image will become. You will begin to see yourself as God sees you: free from sin, sickness, poverty, failure, and even Satan himself. Thank God, Satan is limited, but the weapons of our warfare are mighty.



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Review Questions

1. Deception, doubt and discouragement are the 3 D's of _____.
2. The story of Jesus and Peter walking on the water shows us that
 - a. a Word from God carries His _____
 - b. and that Word demands _____
 - c. and when Peter acted it brought successful _____ as he walked on the water.
3. When Jesus spoke Come it created an _____ of success in Peter's heart giving him _____ that it would work.
4. Jesus taught in Mark 4: 14-20 that Satan always comes _____ to steal the Word given to you out of the heart which is exactly what he did with Peter to _____ the image of success in his heart and cause failure.
5. Peter had a _____ to follow his original inner image given from the Word or to follow a distorted image given from the enemy and so do we.
6. Satan will try to distort your inner image through _____ which is his _____ weapon, robbing you of God's _____ in your life.
7. The definition of deception is that which gives a _____ impression or image.
8. Deception comes in three major forms: _____, _____ or _____.
9. He deceived Peter through _____ when he looked at the wind and waves and his inner image was distorted – he saw himself - a failure.
10. Once he chose deception that choice then produced _____ which means to stand in _____ ways, _____ of which way to take.
11. Peter's doubt caused him to become _____ which literally means to be deprived of _____.
12. We can overcome deception, doubt and discouragement when we do what Peter did in Luke 5: 1-7 and say like Peter did Nevertheless at Your _____ Lord.



13. Like Peter did in that story - go back to the words that Jesus spoke to you and allow them to ___ your inner image and then _____ on them and you will be a success.
14. _____ go to the Word of God when you are facing failure or defeat, and it will act as a mirror _____ a perfect image in your heart the way God sees you.
15. God's Word will always cause you to see yourself as a _____ and a _____ instead of a failure.
16. Satan is _____, but our weapons of warfare are _____ through God.



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Review Questions - 3 points per blank

1. (failure)
2.
 - a. (faith)
 - b. (action)
 - c. (results)
3. (image, confidence)
4. (immediately, distort)
5. (choice)
6. (deception, mightiest, best)
7. (false)
8. (appearance, statement, influence)
9. (appearance, sinking)
10. (doubt, two, uncertain)
11. (discouraged, confidence)
12. (Word)
13. (perfect, act)
14. (Always, reflecting)
15. (success, winner)
16. (limited, mighty)