**Truth-Based Belief Beats Self-Deception** ©2011 Thomas Alberti Truthbase.net

*Prv 14:12 There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

**I. The Path**

**A. God is the good Guide who is leading us to the best destination ever.** Dt 8 7For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land … 9a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing … 10When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD Jer 42 3That the LORD thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do ... 6Whether it is pleasing or displeasing, we will obey the voice of the LORD ... that it may be well with us Mt 7 14Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Heb 4 8For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. 9There remains therefore a rest for the people of God ... 11Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

**B. During this journey, we will encounter different ways, and to us not all ways are as they seem.** Prv 16 25There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Mt 7 13Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. Prv 14 8The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, But the folly of fools is deceit.

**C. There is an enemy who schemes against us with disguises and diversions that exploit our weaknesses.** 2Cor 11 14And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 2Cor 11 3the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty 2Cor 2 11in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes Rev 2 10Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days Re 12 11And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

**II. Belief: Self-Deception vs. Truth**

**A. Why would the DEATH-way seem like LIFE-way to you? If the standard for your beliefs about the right/wrong path is anything other than the truth, then you are self-deceived.** Jer 43 1When Jeremiah had finished telling the people all the words of the LORD their God—everything the LORD had sent him to tell them— 2 ... all the arrogant men said to Jeremiah, “You are lying! The LORD our God has not sent you to say, ‘You must not go to Egypt to settle there.’ Nu 13 31But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” 1Co 3:18 Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a “fool” so that he may become wise. 19For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God ... 20no more boasting about men! Jas 1 22Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

**B. *Your* *own* non-truth values are chinks in your belief-making system where Satan can sow lies.** Jas 1 14But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Tit 3 3For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures Job 21 14Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

*So, some paths seem right to a person (when they’re actually wrong/lead to death) because that person is biased towards believing that it’s the right way.*

**III. HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE RIGHT PATH**

**A. Our Guide gave us a guide book that provides accurate information about reality.** Ps 119 105Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Pr 4 2For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law. Jn 8 31Then Jesus said ... “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

 **B. When you come to a fork in the road, compare the ways to your guide.** 1Th 5 21Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Dt 17 16But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall not return that way again.’ Ps 34 13Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit … Seek peace and pursue it. Lu 12 29And seek not ye what ye shall eat … 31But rather seek ye the kingdom of God 1Co 14 12seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. 1Ti 6 11 ... flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. 2Ti 2 22Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Php 2 21For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s. Ro 16 17Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

**C. “The END thereof is death”—consider the destination, the result of taking the path.** Jer 42 15 ‘If you are determined to go to Egypt and you do go to settle there, 16then the sword you fear will overtake you there Prv 7 23Till an arrow struck his liver As a bird hastens to the snare, He did not know it would cost his life. Php 3 19Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. Heb 6 8But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.
2Ti 2 12If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us

**IV. How to Become the Person to Whom the Death-way Seems Like the Death-way—mediate on God’s word so that it changes your values.** Jos 1 8This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it Ps 19 7The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. Ps 1 2But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. Ps 119 11Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Ps 119 99I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. Prv 2 10When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; 11Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee 12To deliver thee from the way of the evil man 1Ti 4 15Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them Col 3 16Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Nu 14 24But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land

**Questions for Reflection/Discussion/Response:**

1. Does a deceived person know they're deceived? How can we prevent ourselves from going the wrong way?

2. Why do we view the world as we do? How do people develop their world-view and value system?

3. What are some of the common ways we can be deceived?

4. What are some things you could/will do this week to help yourself (and others) keep on track until the destination?

5. Why do we believe what we believe? What is the means by which we come to believe X?

6. What does God want you to do today, and how could Satan & Co possibly trip you up? What weaknesses could he exploit, and how can you safeguard yourself?