

# The Mystery of Self-Deceiving

*The Mystery of Self-Deceiving* was first published in 1614, nearly 400 years ago. It was written by Daniel Dyke, a Puritan theologian during the reign of the tyrannical King James I. Republished numerous times in the 1610's and 1620's it is perhaps the greatest work ever written on sin and the workings of the human heart. This highly regarded book was brought over to America on the Mayflower by Elder William Brewster in 1620.

In the work *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism*, Ernest Stoeffler gave a lengthy description of *The Mystery of Self-Deceiving*:

“This frightening book assumes that in order to be able to deal with man’s religious difficulty one must first understand it fully. It then proceeds to dissect the human heart fibre by fibre and cell by cell. No corner is left unexplored, no crevice forgotten, no raw nerve kept mercifully unexposed. Sin’s devious subterfuges and disguises are discovered and labeled, No corner is left unexplored, no crevice forgotten, no raw nerve kept mercifully unexposed. Sin’s devious subterfuges and disguises are discovered and labeled, their specific causes and results catalogued. Various deceits and follies of man are examined minutely both with regard to omission and commission. Dyke’s analyses are perhaps the most acute which can be found among the various diagnosticians of the spiritual life...Protestantism has produced no other treatise in which the psychology of sin was more exhaustively treated than in Dyke’s *Mystery of Self-Deceiving*.”

Early on in the book, Dyke declares: “Our Saviour tells us, that there are but few that shall be saved: And yet if all they should be saved that think they shall be saved, sure then there are but very few that shall be damned, and then the straight and narrow way is that which leadeth to hell, the broad way is heaven-way: for who is there, almost, that persuadeth not himself he shall be saved?...Good reason hast thou then, my brother, to mistrust the judgement of thine own heart concerning thyself, and those so peremptory sentences which it causeth thy mouth to utter, that if there were but one man to be saved, thou art the man. Oh how many sleepers are there, that dream this dream of a strong assurance of their salvation, that both live and die in this dream, and so go down merrily into hell!”

Dyke understood the heart of man and its labyrinths more than most in the history of the church have. Where in our modern churches will you hear a description of the heart like this? “Such litters and swarms are there in our hearts of vain, vile, base, filthy, and dishonorable thoughts, affections, desires. Very thoroughfares are they for Satan’s impure suggestions to walk up and down; in regard of murderous and malicious thoughts, very slaughterhouses; in regard of unclean lusts, very stews and brothel houses; in regard of the heat of boiling concupiscence, very hothouses, and as the prophet speaketh, like a baker’s oven (Hosea 7:4).”

Some of the thirty-one chapters in this book are: *Of the Greatness of the Heart’s Deceitfulness, and of the Cause of her Deceitfulness; Of the Unsearchableness of the Heart, and of Six Notes to Discover it by; Of the Deceit of the Heart in translating the Sin from ourselves upon some other Cause; Of the Deceit whereby we Judge ourselves not to be so Evil, as indeed we are; Of the Deceits of three several Sorts of men, the Rich Worldling, the Civil Justiciary, the Loose Libertine; Of the Deceits of the Temporary Believer’s Faith and Feelings; Of the deceits of the Temporary in the outward Practice of Repentance; Of the Deceitfulness of the Temporary’s Obedience; and Of the Deceit of the Heart in Judging ourselves Better than we are.*

*The Mystery of Self-Deceiving* by Daniel Dyke is now available. It is 324 pages long and clothbound. You may order it by clicking on this link:

<http://ucqyp.mjuea.servertrust.com/product-p/deceiving.htm>

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