

Assurance of Salvation
Part 68

A "Mission Moment"
for the Fakes!

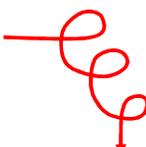
DISCLAIMER This "Mission Moment" is for:

- **The Fakes:** People who are NOT followers of Jesus, even though they may claim they are.
- **The Fearful:** People who fear they might be fake (and don't want to be).

(Others can listen in, if they wish.)

CONGRATULATIONS!

- You get to have your own "MISSION MOMENT"!

• Here goes!!! 



[drum roll to build excitement]

A WORD...

To the FAKES & COUNTERFEITS...

- Are you a **FAKE**?
- Would you rather be **GENUINE**?

To the FEARFUL...

- Do you want to be **GENUINE**, but are afraid you are **FAKE**?

Do you want to  the fakeness

and  for the genuine?

If so, then:
Follow the  "Signs of Change"!

THE "SIGNS OF CHANGE"

-  1. **THINK** - Face the facts and admit them.
-  2. **CHOOSE** – Decide which way you want to go. **IF YOU WANT TO FOLLOW JESUS...** 
-  3. **ACT** - Do what God tells you to do, even if your attempts are weak.
-  4. **RETURN** - Get back up each time you fall.
-  5. **YIELD** - Commit the final results (your eternal destiny) to God.

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1. **THINK** - Face the facts and admit them.

- The starting point for change is a willingness to face the facts, *no matter how ugly they may be.*
- Among other issues, consider the following:



FIRST:

What is God's kingdom worth to you?

The Kingdom of Heaven is like **a treasure hidden in the field,**

when a man found it...

he went and **sold all that he had,** and bought that field.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like **a pearl of great price,**

when a merchant seeking fine pearls found it,

he went and **sold all that he had,** and bought it.

Matthew 13:44-46 (paraphrase)

SECOND:

Are you *willing* to pay attention to God's Word... or *not*?

Therefore, **get rid** of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and **humbly accept** the word planted in you, *which can save you.*

★ Do not **merely listen** to the word, and **so deceive yourselves.** Do what it says. ★

James 1:21-22 (NIV)



Merely listening... deceiving yourself



My people come to you, as they always do. They sit before you and **hear** your words, but they **do not obey** them.

With their **mouths** they express love, but in their **hearts** they chase after selfish gain. To them, you are nothing more than a singer of love songs who has a beautiful voice, or a musician who plays an instrument well.

They **hear** your words but **do not obey** them.

Ezekiel 33:31-32 (DHT)

Caution sign: Woodmanette (CC BY 3.0)

The **real** answer to these questions will influence all that you do.

- The "real" answer...
 - Won't always be the "correct" answer you *choose* to tell yourself.
 - May be unpleasant – but change *cannot* begin unless you're willing to face the truth.



2. **CHOOSE** - Decide which way you want to go.

- This goes back to the issue of: "Are you *willing to pay attention to the Word of God?*"
- **Scripture will instruct you** about replacing wrong conduct with right.
 - *But you must decide if you're going to pay attention to it.*

If you aren't willing to pay attention to God's Word, why pretend?

- You might as well admit you have no interest in God, or in following Jesus.

They went out from us, but they **did not really belong to us.**

For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us;

but their going showed that **none of them belonged to us.**

1 John 2:19 (NIV)

Yes, you could choose to remain a fake.

... having a **form** of godliness but denying its power.

2 Tim. 3:5a (NIV)

They **claim** to know God, but by their actions they deny him.

Titus 1:16a (NIV)

But if you choose to follow Jesus, you need to... 



3. ACT - Do what God tells you to do, even if your attempts are weak.

- Replace wrong conduct with right.
- Remember that even the small changes are expressions of God's power.
 - [Consider it the beginnings of new birth, ...]

Find out what you need to do!

- Scripture teaches us ...



What we should **stop** doing.



What we should **start** doing.

{ It's difficult to **STOP** something, unless you're willing to **START** something else, to replace what you stopped! }

Replace OLD ways with NEW ways.

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephes. 4:22-24 (NIV)

- Examples of conduct to "put off" and "put on" can be found in the nearby verses (beginning at v. 17 and into the next chapter).

Remember that growth can be painful

- **There is no such thing as an "instant perfection" pill!**
 - It takes take time and effort to find out what the Bible says and to apply it to your life!
- **You'll quickly learn: You are weak and you constantly need to return to God.**
 - But in God, you have strength to keep going (though you won't always feel like going).

I feel bruised and battered by sin!

Jesus won't "push" you beyond the ability he gives you! *

I'll be gentle!

"A bruised reed he will *not break*, and a smoldering wick he will *not snuff out*, till he leads justice to *victory*. In his name the nations will put their *hope*." Matthew 12:20-21 (NIV)

* (But he won't let you *cling* to your sin.)

 * **4. RETURN** - Get back up each time you fall.

- **When you fail**, you can give yourself credit. I know that **nothing good** lives *in me*, that is, in my sinful nature. Romans 7:18a (NIV)
- **When you succeed**, give credit to the one who made it possible! I can do **everything** *through Christ* who strengthens me. Philip. 4:13 (GW)

* (Before you begin following Jesus, this sign points the other direction!)

Discouraged?

- Remember that "baby steps" *are* steps! – You can't grow unless you start somewhere!
- It's how we live *in the long-run* that shows us our condition.
 - **Make this your goal:** Have a life characterized by "*returning to God*," rather than by "*staying in sin*."

We can help each other!

- Prayer and encouragement are a *necessary* part of following Jesus. *And it works both ways!*

... that is, that you and I may be *mutually encouraged* by each other's faith. ... Romans 1:12 (NIV)
- You are *not alone* in your struggles!

We *all* stumble in many ways. ... James 3:2a (NIV)

 **5. YIELD** - Commit the final results (your eternal destiny) to God.

- Trusting *your own abilities* to save yourself won't work!
- *Other people* can't save you, and *the devil* sure won't help!
- **Why not trust your future to the one who *always* proves trustworthy?**

"Surrender" your eternal destiny

 to the One who can be trusted!

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; *great is your faithfulness.* Lament. 3:22-23 (NIV)

O Lord God Almighty, who is like you? You are mighty, O Lord, and *your faithfulness surrounds you.* Psalm 89:8 (NIV)

Rest in God's sovereign guarantee!

{ In the past, we've seen that "God's sovereignty" and "human responsibility" always work together. }

- **YOUR JOB:** You need to decide what YOU want to do about following Jesus!
- **GOD'S GUARANTEE:** You can rest assured that the eternal consequences will be appropriate for your choice.

YOUR MISSION (to the fakes & the fearful)

God is giving you ...

the opportunity ...

right now ...

...to RESPOND!

- Like a spiritually **DEAD** person?
 - You can remain a FAKE.
 - You can openly turn away from God.
- Like a spiritually **ALIVE** person?
 - You can begin a life of repentance and trust in God, and growth in Christ.

If you choose to remain a FAKE

- You may sometimes look "alive," though you aren't.

(Dead people are dead, even if they have temporary "movements of life.")

I saw some movement... that proves he's alive!



Jakub Hasek (CC-BY-SA 3.0)

If you choose to become GENUINE

- You may sometimes look "dead," though you aren't.

(Living people are alive, even if they have temporary "absence of movement.")



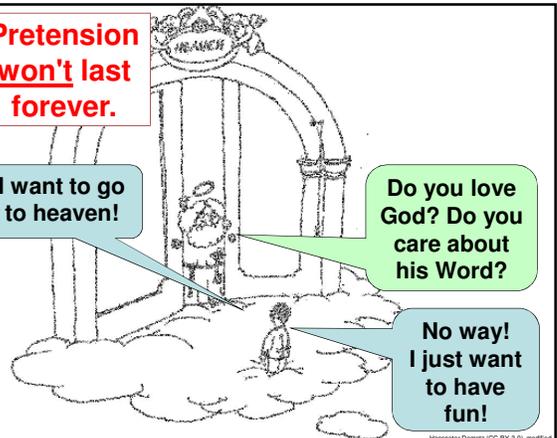
Obviously dead... why else would they be so still?

Pretension won't last forever.

I want to go to heaven!

Do you love God? Do you care about his Word?

No way! I just want to have fun!



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Pay attention to the signs!



Credits (1)

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