

Assurance of Salvation
 Part 59
 Self-Denial
 > and SELF-LOVE <

"Self-Denial"
 Self-LOVE & Values



I love myself!

I wash myself and brush my teeth!

I wash my clothes!

I feed myself!

After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, ...
 Ephes. 5:29a (NIV)

* (with help from another family member!)

Does this kind of "self-love" contradict "self-denial"?

- **NO!**
 - It is not always sinful.
 - You don't need to "self-deny" it out of existence...
- **UNLESS** you make it more important than "love for God" and "love for other people."

Many types of self-love are sinful, and must be "self-denied" out of existence.

The three most important people... **Me, Myself and I**

- When we put ourselves and our interests *ahead of* love for God and neighbor, our interests become *sin*.

- Claiming* to love God and neighbor, while *NOT doing it*, **doesn't remove your guilt.**
- Nor does it remove your future judgment.**

- Claiming to "*not believe the Bible*" **doesn't remove your guilt.**
- Nor does it remove your future judgment.**

(Atheist *CLAIMS* don't change *REALITY*...)

CLAIM:
It *stops* being true when I choose to *not believe it!*

REALITY:
It doesn't *stop* being true... **you** just *start* being a **fool!**

The **fool*** says in his heart, "There is no God."
Psalm 14:1a (ESV)

* (Refers to *moral* folly, not just stupidity.)

Take this little quiz

QUESTION:
Which is more important to you?

God's honor AND your neighbor's good (including his *eternal* good)

Your own life and interests

Take this little quiz

ANSWER: If you chose: "**Your own life and interests,**" your self-love is *sinful*.

God's honor AND your neighbor's good (including his *eternal* good)

Your own life and interests

THE PROBLEM

- Though some types of "self love" can be good and proper...
 - We tend to go beyond what is "good and proper."
 - We tend to place more value and importance on **self**, than on **God** and **neighbor**.

> OUR VALUES TEND TO BE CORRUPT <

So how can we fix the problem?

- **UNDERSTAND** that all choices are a reflection of VALUES.
 - Our values are the reason we choose one thing over another.
- **OBEY** what Scripture teaches about values.
 - Certain values take priority over others.

Priority of Values: A basic summary

#1 LOVE FOR **GOD**

#2 LOVE FOR **NEIGHBOR**

#3 LOVE FOR **SELF**

(& for other good things – personal preferences, religious activities, love for creation, etc.)

#1 – priority over #2 and #3

#2 – priority over #3

(BY THE WAY...)

"LOVE FOR **SIN**" is NOT an option...

Not
ever.



For more in-depth understanding of values...

- **Go to the BIBLE!**

- You will find commands, examples, warnings, etc.

I already knew that!



- **Some Scripture passages**

that focus specifically on the topic of self-love vs. self-denial:



There are commands!

Your attitude about yourself

Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

Romans 12:3b (NIV)

Your attitude about others

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

Philip. 2:3 (NIV)

Examples of people! (1)

His #1 value: Finishing the task that Jesus gave him

However, *I consider my life worth nothing to me*, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

Acts 20:24 (NIV)

- More important than life itself!

Examples of people! (2)

**Their #1 value:
Living for Jesus even when it means dying for him**

They overcame [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

Rev. 12:11 (NIV)

- It's not just a "theoretical" situation; this is prophecy. This event is coming. These people will actually be getting killed. (And it could include some of us.)

Jesus' lived the way he commands us to live! (1)

He did not cling to his "rights"

Although he was in very nature God, *he did not cling to his right* to be treated as equal with God. Instead, he *made himself nothing*. He chose to take on the very nature of a slave, and was born as a human being.

Considered by others to be merely human, he *humbled himself* even further by being *obedient to the point of death*, death on a cross!

Philip. 2:6-8 (DHT)

Jesus' lived the way he commands us to live! (2)

His #1 value: The will of his Father (God)

- In life

For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

John 6:38 (NIV)

- In death

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

Luke 22:42 (NIV)

Our conclusion?

- Self-denial and self-love do not always contradict ...

★ **UNLESS self-love has become our supreme value in life.** ★

- Self-love is always sin, when it takes priority over love for God and neighbor.

All people have a "#1" value:

- That value will be either:
 - **God**, who in Scripture shows us how to live and what to value. (And tells us why.)
 - **Self**, who chooses to invent our own values, based on ourselves.

All people have a "#1" value:

- That value will influence:
 - All we do
 - All we consider important
 - What interests we have
 - Our use of "free time"
 - Etc.



Even our "free time"? Of course!

- *Even when we choose to do only "good" things!*
- Of all the "good" things we could possibly do in our "free time," our #1 value will determine which ones we choose.

> *More about this next week.* <

YOUR MISSION

- **CONSIDER** your choices and how they *demonstrate* your values.
- **EVALUATE:** Do they honor God?
(Remember that *some* types of self-love may reflect godly values; many types don't.)
- **REPENT** and change (where necessary).

Credits (1)

SCRIPTURE

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Credits (2)

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