

## Assurance of Salvation Part 65

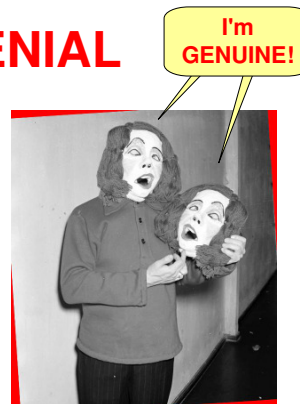
### Self-Denial

> Fakes <

## SELF-DENIAL

&

fakes



**"Counterfeits"** (FAKES) are not the same as **"Opponents"**

**HOW** are they different?

- **OPPONENTS** will tell you to "affirm" yourself.

You need to take care of yourself first!



Self-denial is so "negative." God wants you to have a "positive" outlook!

God's #1 goal is for you to be happy!

- They may even say that "self-affirmation" is the "Christian" way!  
– The false gospel often proclaims this message.



## Counterfeits - FAKES

- **FAKES** will affirm self-denial.  
– Their "self-denial" will be a substitute or some other type of distortion.



Yes, this is the real thing!!

## Jesus responds to fakeness in this passage:

[Jesus] replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:

" 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.' "

Mark 7:6-7 (NIV)

(These leaders wanted others to follow their man-made rules.)


## FAKES may go after **substitutes** of the real thing.

- They may invent their own rules and regulations in place of the commands of Scripture.
- They may blindly follow the rules invented by others.

We live by **rules**.  
**THAT MAKES US**  
**"SPIRITUAL"!**



## FAKES may do the right things for the **wrong reasons**.

- A "show" of self-denial  
... without the "spirit" of self-denial.
- The right "motions"  
... without the right "motivations."
- **WHY might they do this?** 

## #1: Maybe because of **PEER PRESSURE**

- They may obey Scripture.
  - Because it is one of the "rules" that others expect them to follow.
  - Because they want to please others.
- They may obey man-made rules.

## Someone has described **"PEERS"** this way:

**P** – People who  
**E** – encourage  
**E** – errors,  
**R** – rudeness, and  
**S** – stupidity.



- Do you really want such people to rule **YOUR** life?

## #2: Maybe because of **SELF-LOVE**

- They expect to reap benefits from self-denial.
  - Their focus is on personal gain.
- This is the **opposite** of having self-denial for the glory of God and love of neighbor.

Praise NOW...  
Rewards LATER!

I'm so  
wonderful!



## **QUESTION:** Are there personal benefits from self-denial?

- If your ultimate interest is the honor and glory of God...
  - It will benefit you forever (whether or not you see that benefit now).
- If your ultimate interest is in personal gain...
  - You are indulging in "self-idolatry"; and your self-denial will get you nothing good.

(Remember this from last week?)

You CANNOT have your ultimate focus on both God AND self.

That's why it's called "following Jesus," NOT "following both of us!"

I'll focus on GOD & I'll focus on ME!



This is *cheating!*  
(It doesn't work, anyway.)

## \* The Ultimate Reason \*

- The reason for all this fakeness is because the Spirit of God is NOT in them.
- They may have all the "religion" the world can offer; but without repentance, they cannot be saved.

## QUESTION YOURSELF

### An OPPONENT?

- 1) Do you oppose self-denial?  
If so, you simply are NOT following Jesus.

### Inventing SUBSTITUTES?

- 2) Is your self-denial based on the teachings of Scripture? Can you prove it?  
Jesus warns us that many people will be deceived.

## QUESTION YOURSELF

### WRONG MOTIVATION?

- 3) Do you have the wrong reasons for denying self?  
Peer pressure? Love for self? You need to repent!

### GENUINE?

- 4) Do you love God and neighbor more than yourself?  
You're following Jesus; you're pursuing what is genuine.

## Who do you live for?

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

And he died for all, [we are convinced] that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

That's JESUS!

2 Cor. 5:14-15 (NIV)

- Someone may ask:  
"Is 'living for God' a realistic option?"
- Scripture's response:  
"YES, and there are many examples of people who have done so!"

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, ...

From Hebrews 12:1 (ESV)

Scripture is PACKED with examples!

Scripture is packed with  
**PAST EXAMPLES** of self-denial

- **Jesus himself is our #1 example.**

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

2 Cor. 8:9 (ESV)

(But there are so many other examples!)

Here is just one of the many  
other examples:

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.

He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of **greater value** than the treasures of Egypt, because he was **looking ahead** to his reward.

Hebrews 11:24-26 (NIV)

"Forward thinking"!

There are also **FUTURE EXAMPLES** of self-denial!

They overcame him [the devil]  
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)

When God says something about the future, it is simply HISTORY that hasn't yet happened... BUT IT WILL!

How about **PRESENT EXAMPLES** of self-denial?

? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

That is YOUR MISSION!

[Make every effort  
to **become** the example!]

This is YOUR MISSION!

\* \* \* \* \*  
\* **YOU CAN** \*  
\* **DO IT.** \*  
\* \* \* \* \*

(BUT ONLY  
WITH THE POWER  
OF GOD)



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