

THE MULTIFACETED FACE OF DENYING CHRIST

To the Philadelphia church: "I know that you have little strength, yet you have **kept my word and have not denied my name**" (Revelation 3:8).

DENYING CHRIST MEANS:

- **FAILURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT JESUS IS OUR SAVIOR:** "Who is the liar but he who **denies that Jesus is the Christ?** That is the antichrist, he who **denies the Father and the Son.** No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also" (1 John 2:22-23).

"**Every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God.** This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world" (1 John 4:3).

"Many deceivers, **who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh,** have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist" (II John:7).

"She will bear a Son; and you shall call **his name Jesus,** for **he will save his people from their sins**" (Matthew 1:21).

"And **there is salvation in no one else;** for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

"We have seen and testify that **the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world**" (I John 4:14).

Many people in the 21st century have taken the position that God does not exist. They conclude that there just isn't enough evidence of a creator God. In searching to understand the existence of man, they have formulated many theories. All of them **deny** that Christ came in the flesh and died to pay the penalty of our sins, then was resurrected back into his former glory. Our enemies, the powers and authorities in heavenly places, work perpetually to deceive mankind because they despise us, the creator God and His Son, Jesus Christ. They will not stop to thwart our union with God and Christ.

- **USING GRACE AS A LICENSE TO CONTINUE IN SIN:** "For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who **pervert the grace of our God** into a **license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ** our **ONLY Sovereign and Lord**" (Jude 1:4).

"For this is the love of God, that **we keep his commandments**" (I John 5:3).

"Hearing the Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 'Teacher, which is the **greatest commandment in the Law?**' Jesus replied, '**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.** This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments'" (Matthew 22:34-40).

There are churches that teach that the law is done away with, nailed to the cross. These teachers fail to understand that by continuing in lawlessness, they cannot love God. To love deeply is to lay down your own life for your friend. To love God deeply is to stand firm by Him and keep His commandments. Those who hate God will brutally and maliciously attack those who seek to live righteously. Backing down is not an option for those who love God because they embrace God's way of peace, kindness, patience, self-control and love. They don't fear the suffering of this physical life or death because they see what God has prepared for them—and it is glorious, wonderful, beyond the wildest imagination! **"That is what the scriptures mean when they say, 'No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.' But GOD HAS REVEALED IT TO US BY THE SPIRIT. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God"** (I Corinthians 2:9-10).

- **FAILURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE JESUS BEFORE OTHERS** "So, everyone who acknowledges me **before men**, I also will acknowledge **before my father** who is in Heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I will also deny before my Father who is in Heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33).
"If we die with him, we will also live with him. If we endure hardship, we will reign with him. **If we deny him, he will deny us**" (II Timothy 2:11-12).

- **Silence when it is time to speak up**

"Because, if you **confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord** and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, **you will be saved**" (Romans 10:9).

"**We destroy arguments** and pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (II Corinthians 10:5).

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, **teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom**, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16).

Remaining silent, when it is time to speak up is a form of denying Christ. Often people remain silent to avoid confrontation and hide their true position. We were commissioned to take the gospel to the whole world. It is our hope and calling. Keeping the gospel pure and accurate is the challenge for 21st century believers. Religious councils over the years have infiltrated the original gospel truth and introduced ancient pagan traditions and lies. Love is correcting error and bringing people back into the pure truth of God, if they will hear you.

- **Ashamed of the message**

"If anyone is **ashamed of me and my message**, the **Son of Man will be ashamed of that person** when he returns in his glory and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels" (Luke 9:25-26).

"I tell you, on the day of judgment **people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned**" (Matthew 12:36-37).

It takes strength and courage to speak up at the right time to the right people, to correct others in love without discouraging them. Often, courageous believers stand alone, professing truth in our world filled with lies and deceit. They are mocked and scoffed at because it isn't cool to be an advocate for righteousness.

- **HYPOCRISY:** "They profess to know God, but they **DENY HIM by their works**" (Titus 1:16).

- **A watered-down, compromised obedience to God:**

"Not everyone that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that **does the will of my Father** which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, **ye that work lawlessness** (Matthew 7:21-23).

There are people who genuinely think they are obeying God, but they do not do the will of God. **They do not keep His commandments all TEN.** They may keep some of them, but **they have excused themselves from keeping them ALL.** They compromise the pure truth by thinking:

"It's only a little mistake."

"It's for the children; they love it."

"God understands; they are deceived. Who am I to correct them?"

- **Choosing to remain ignorant:**

"If we **claim to have fellowship with him** and yet **walk in the darkness**, we lie and **do not LIVE out the truth**" (1 John 1:6).

"They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God **because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart**" (Ephesians 4:18).

"The **times of ignorance God overlooked**, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30).

"Always **be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope** that you have" (1 Peter 3:15).

"The simple inherit folly, but the prudent are crowned with knowledge" (Proverbs 14:18).

"Ignorance is bliss" is the motto of these people. They don't want to deal with confrontation or correction. Some fear knowledge lest they may have to change, others have not humbled themselves before God, while some are seeking the easiest way to God and that, if they repent, will result in being considered the least in the kingdom.

- **Seeking to be like the crowd:**

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the **friendship of the world is enmity with God**? whosoever therefore will be a **friend of the world is the enemy of God**” (James 4:4).

“**Do not be conformed to this present world**, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may test and approve what is the will of God—what is good and well-pleasing and perfect” (Romans 12:2).

“**Don’t love this evil world or the things in it. If you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you.** This is all there is in the world: wanting to please our sinful selves, wanting the sinful things we see, and being too proud of what we have. But none of these comes from the Father. They come from the world. The world is passing away, and all the things that people want in the world are passing away. But whoever **does** what God wants, will live forever” (1 John 2:15-17).

“As obedient children, **do not be conformed to the former lusts** which were yours in your ignorance” (1 Peter 1:14).

“You shall **not follow the masses in doing evil**, nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after a multitude in order to pervert justice” (Exodus 23:2).

Our enemies divide and conquer by singling out people because they don’t conform to the traditions of men and the ways of this world. It will take strength and courage for believers to be individuals standing against the pull of the world. Paul urges believers to put on the whole armour of God with the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, feet fitted to run swiftly to peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sharp two-edged sword of God’s word, and prayers talking constantly to God asking always for direction and guidance, protection and strength (Ephesians 6:14-18).

- **God is not their highest priority:**

“But **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness**, and all these things will be provided for you” (Matthew 6:33).

“Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, **keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above**, not on the things that are on earth” (Colossians 3:1-2).

“**Set your minds on things above**, not on earthly things” (Colossians 3:2).

Our life in this busy world can consume our every minute. Our enemy works tirelessly to distract us from the reality—our calling as sons of God. Bills to pay, mouths to feed, families to care for, home to fix and maintain, activities to attend, work, and demands in every area of our life are relentless. If God’s day of rest is not kept carefully, busyness will steal God away from you. You will deny Him because you became too busy to remember Him.

- **Refusing the Truth:**

“They perish because **they refused to love the truth** and so be saved. For this reason, God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie so that all will be

condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness” (II Thessalonians 2:10-11).

“Don't be fooled by what they say. For that day will not come until there is a **great rebellion against God** and the man of lawlessness is revealed—the one who brings destruction” (II Thessalonians 2:3).

“**Though they know God’s righteous** decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, **they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them**” (Romans 1:32).

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, **who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth**” (Romans 1:18).

Christ through the seven churches has called believers to overcome our misunderstandings, misconceptions, misinformation and disinformation. It takes a humble person to stand back and release your allegiance from your church to self-reflect honestly.

21st century believers are without excuse. We have access to more information than any other time in our recorded history. Finding truth is not difficult, accepting truth is the problem because it takes a teachable spirit, a willing mind, and a humble spirit to accept correction. Removing the ugly spots, wrinkles, and blemishes of falsehood will perfect you, so that you are made ready for the return of Christ when he will invite his bride—made ready, to rule with him.

- **Simply accepting without testing and proving:**

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that **by testing you may discern what is the will of God**, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2).

“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits** to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (I John 4:1).

Lazy believers don’t want to research. These people love God superficially. They are just like the house of Israel and Judah. “What can I do with you, Ephraim? What can I do with you, Judah? Your love is like the morning mist, like the early dew that **disappears**” (Hosea 6:4). God is seeking a depth of conviction that is unbreakable and unbendable. Set your belief into concrete by studying and proving all things. Disdain laziness; it will deny Christ at the drop of a hat.

- **Sharing in a wicked work:**

“But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse!” (Galatians 1:8)

“Anyone who welcomes him [those who do not continue in the teaching of Christ] shares in his wicked work” (II John:11).

Every day we fellowship with people with differing beliefs. In order to avoid in “sharing in wicked work,” it is important for believers to ensure that their position is clearly understood. This should be done with “gentleness, respect, and keeping a clear conscience so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed on their slander (I Peter 3:15-16).

When addressing a conflict, Proverbs 27:5 states, “Better is open rebuke than hidden love.” Letgodbettrue.com explains this well. Open rebuke is “telling a man his fault personally and directly, whether against you, others, or God. It is open, for you do it to his face, **rather than pretending all is well**; and it is rebuke, for you reprove his error, **rather than flatter with compliments**.” Secret love is “**showing affection, friendship, and service without the courage or commitment to correct another’s faults**. It is secret, for **the real character of love – correction – is missing**; it is called love sarcastically, for **only outward flattery and superficial kindness** exist in such a relationship.” http://www.letgodbettrue.com/proverbs/commentaries/27_05.php

○ **No longer interested in God and His word**

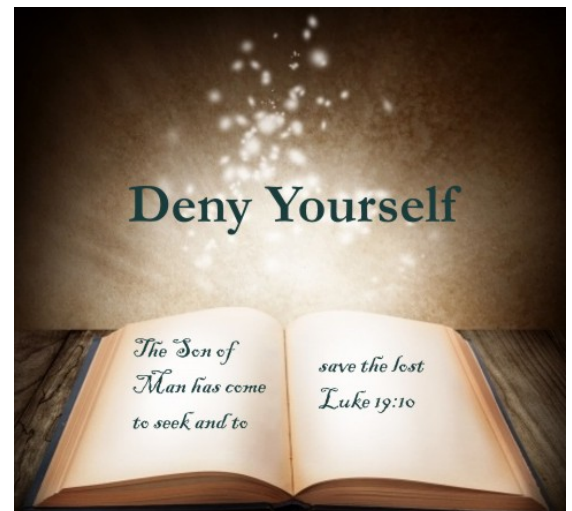
“For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their **own passions**, and will **turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths**” (II Timothy 4:3-4).

The most unfortunate state of all is to fall into disinterest. The lost passion and joy of discovering the precious truths of God, who He is, what He plans for us, and His deep secrets are a diseased spiritual state. Who can rescue this believer?

As we enter the crazy sci-fi end-time period, with the arrival of the ‘gods’ who perform wonders and miracles, make every effort to keep from denying Christ, **but rather deny yourself**.

“And he said to them all, if any man will come after me, **let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me**” (Luke 9:23).

Give up **ALL** that hinders your relationship with God. The world will notice and hate you, but despite their judging eyes, their attacking words, in some cases physical beatings some to death, continue to follow Christ and deny yourself the comfort of acceptance and respect that all people deserve. Instead, keep your love for God and Christ burning. Be forever grateful for Christ’s sacrifice. Who can possibly understand their great love for us? Who is man that they are mindful of us?



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