

# THE REAL DEAL

In the 1990s, the FBI launched an investigation called Operation Bullpen to uncover a \$100 million scam that made its riches off the forged autographs of sports stars and celebrities.

The culprits had a never-ending supply, forging the signatures of Babe Ruth, Mickey Mantle, Michael Jordan and others because they cranked out fresh ones as fast as they could possibly sell them.

Neil Armstrong, the first person to walk on the moon, was one of the most famous people of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He freely signed autographs for years, but beginning in 1994, he politely refused every request. That led to countless forgeries of his signature, to the point where the vast majority offered for sale are considered fakes.



And take the new \$100 bill. It's a sight to behold, with a blue 3-D security ribbon with images of bells, the number 100, and a color-changing bell in an inkwell. Other features remain in place from previous versions of the script, including a watermark. It's all a part of a serious attempt to ward off counterfeiters.

Forgeries are often quite difficult to spot, and the cost of accepting one at face value can be extreme. Here's the one thing that you can always count on: Jesus is the real deal, the one and only Son of God. He was, is, and always will be exactly who He said He is – and you can take that to the bank!

With that in mind, it's important for those around us to see that we're authentically following Jesus. We're never going to be able to achieve perfection in our walk with Him, but we should attempt to follow Him as closely as we can.

Don't just talk a good game of Christianity. Walk it out!

*And I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me (Galatians 2:20).*

– Beecher Hunter