



A light to my path. Psalm 119:105

Deny Yourself???

What are we to deny ourselves? Some say we are to deny whatever substance is the source of our addiction. Many have experienced that self-will has its limits when trying to stop smoking, drinking excessively, overeating, or anything else because our minds give in to the desire of our addiction. Someone may say, “Well, Jesus told us to deny ourselves or we cannot follow him.” Matthew 16:24 (NKJV) records that statement, but often the quote is incomplete. Verse 24 begins with the word “Then,” so we should read what came before it. Peter had taken Jesus aside and told him he should not let the elders, chief priests and scribes kill him. Jesus told Peter not to allow Satan to use him. Instead, he is to deny it. Then, Jesus confirms this situation in verses 25 and 26, where we learn that saving our life results in losing it, or gaining whatever we want, could cause losing our soul. Denying something is to disown it. Therefore, when we disown our lives or lose our lives, we will save it (Matthew 16:25).

Beloved, Jesus is not commanding us to deny ourselves anything. He knows our weaknesses (Hebrews 4:15). Instead, he told us we cannot do anything successful apart from him (John 15:5). If your life is a mess because of an addiction, you cannot walk away from it on your own. You cannot break your addiction, but Jesus can and

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wants to. When you stop trying and turn to Jesus, you come into agreement with Matthew 16:24. Turning to Jesus is a positive action toward disowning Satan, who is destroying your life. Because the problem is in your face daily, it is difficult to trust Jesus, but do not cast away your confidence in him (Hebrews 10:35-36). Endure to trust and he will give you an abundant life (John 10:10).
Shalom

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