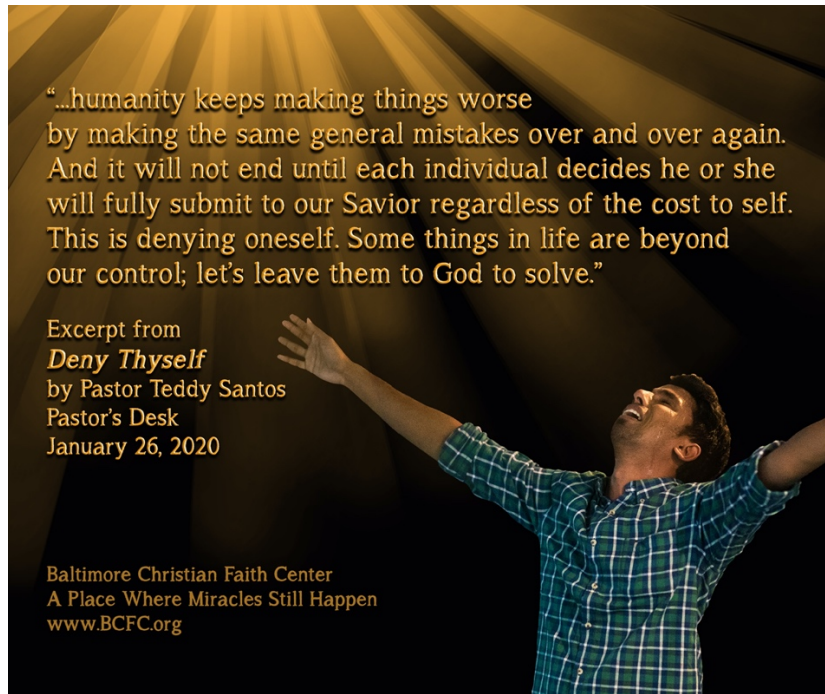


Deny Thyself

Pastor's Desk – January 26, 2020



Mat 16:24-25 *Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."*

Like the Messiah, we must deny ourselves.

Put the enemy into this picture: What is he going to do to us? Through attitude targeting and false info, he will lead us toward self-satisfaction, not self-denial, because complacency is the essence of sin. When we sin, we bring upon ourselves the death penalty.

Our Lord taught that the way to the Kingdom of God is through self-denial, not self-satisfaction. Satan will try to persuade us not to deny ourselves but to fulfill ourselves at the expense of others.

Another thing this can teach us is that great temptations can come through well-meaning friends. Peter meant well. It must have shocked Peter right out of his sandals when our Lord turned and said, "**Get behind Me, Satan!**" right in Peter's face. The Lord Jesus was probably not angry, just urgent so that Peter would grasp what had happened.

Certainly, God would not want us to face this kind of a trial, would He? Yes, it could happen if the temptation comes through well-meaning people. We are particularly vulnerable when we can be led to believe that we are not being treated as we deserve.

Satan used this strategy against Adam and Eve: "Oh, has God said so? He's withholding from you." Such was his implication. "Why, if you do things the way you want, you can have much more. You can be like God." We always want more; it is part of human nature.

Unfortunately, humanity keeps making things worse by making the same general mistakes over and over again. And it will not end until each individual decides he or she will fully submit to our Savior regardless of the cost to self. This is denying oneself. Some things in life are beyond our control; let's leave them to God to solve.

At His service,
Pr. Teddy Santos