

Bring Our Bodily Appetites under Control/Self-Denial

Everyone is free to pursue contentment, peace, security, and happiness in whatever way he or she wishes. God gave each of us free wills. In our effort to find happiness and peace, we will have to listen to the signals and desires of our bodies and souls, as well as the advice being offered to us at almost every moment by either our own bodies, the devil, the world, or by the Holy Spirit.

Our bodily appetites, and the world, and the devil, seem to be shouting at us at all times to indulge ourselves in food, drink, sex, entertainment, or anything else that catches our fancy. We can never have too much of what gives us immediate pleasure, according to this advice. What deceit! This is not the way to happiness and peace. It is the way to sadness, despair, sickness, and a wasted life.

Jesus, on the other hand, teaches, and the Holy Spirit seems to be whispering to us, when we are ready to listen, that we should bring our bodily appetites under control by self-denial. This is the truth. Self-denial is the way we make our bodies serve the Lord, ourselves, and others beneficially in holy discipline. An undisciplined disciple is no disciple at all.

Holy discipline fostering charitable self-denial is the certain, and only way, to acquire the spiritual things (love, truth, hope, strong faith) which produce the greatest happiness and peace in any person's life.