

LENT DEVOTION

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A believer does not offer parts of his/her body to sin and does not allow sin to reign in the mortal body to obey evil desires (Romans 6:12). Because a believer knows that his/her body is an "Instrument of God's Righteousness" (Romans 6:13) and that it is the temple of the living God. "Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not of your own. You were bought with a price. Therefore honor God with your body" (1 Corinthians 6:19--20). That is one of the reasons why a believer consciously does not yield to the evil desires - of course, with the help of the Holy Spirit. He/she is ever prepared to yield to the control and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

It was Benjamin Franklin who said, "If you fail to prepare then you prepare yourself to fail." It so true in the life of a believer. A believer being "made new in the attitude of mind" deliberately and proactively prepares and decides not to sin at any cost. Such a "preparedness" takes place in the "mind" which is controlled by the Spirit of God. "You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:22-24). That is why a believer does not allow "any hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed... obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking" (Ephesians 4:3--4).

A self-righteous person or an unrighteous person may adhere to the above values because the culture demands so or for some physiological reasons - that such practices are not good for the health. They do not even know that such practices, in fact, the very thought and attitudes in the mind fall under the category of sin. Sin can be broadly defined as "missing the mark" (God's Standard) and it happens out of "Selfishness, Independence (without God), and Not keeping God's standards.

But a believer does not yield to such practices because of his/her "new self" - "created to be like God in righteousness and holiness." A believer reflects God's characters in his/her lifestyle as he/she is being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. The entire lifestyle of a believer is totally different from that of others. A believer's thought and attitude are not the carbon copies of world's selfishness, pride, lust, and power but reflects the humility and self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ.