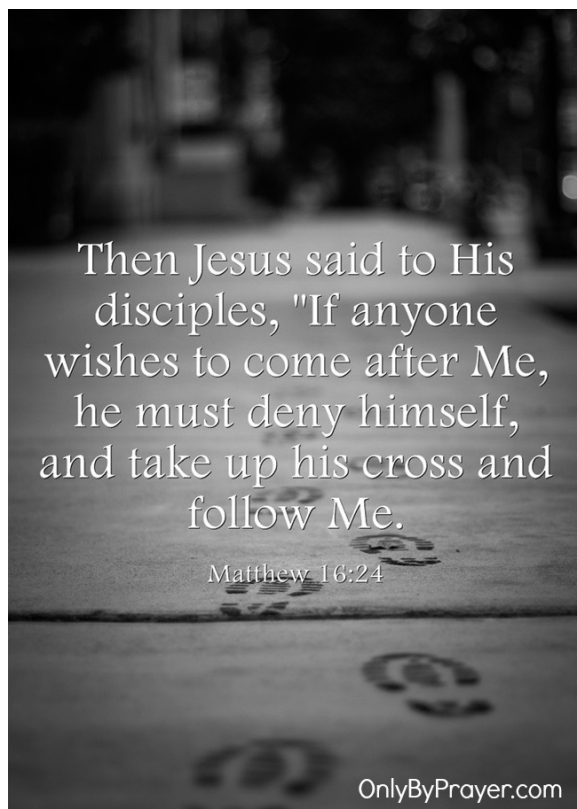


Lent Week 2: Self-denial

As a child, the season of Lent often began with a battle royal for me.



You see, my parents always encouraged my sisters and me to give up something for Lent. More often than not, I usually gave up candy. Every week a good portion of my weekly allowance quickly found it's way from my pocket to the coffers of Krajci's Drugstore a few blocks from my house. In the small town where I lived, Krajci's was one of the few places that had a huge selection of five- and ten-cent candy. Bub's Daddy Bubble Gum, Paydays, Wonka Bottle Caps, Snickers Bars, and cherry Colas were a few of the items I splurged on. Forty days seemed an awfully long time to go without a treat from Krajci's.

Self-denial

I didn't totally understand at the time the purpose for giving up something during Lent. I would have been happy to have given up brussel sprouts or tuna noodle casserole, but I understood enough to realize that what I gave up needed to be something that I actually *liked*.

Today I realize that one of the purposes of **self-denial** is that it is part of the process of **spiritual formation**. I need to cooperate with the Holy Spirit so that He continues to transform my life to make me more like Christ.

In that spirit, this year during Lent I am going to work on "giving up" a sin pattern in my life – and hopefully this will be something that continues for the rest of the year too. I think I know just what bad habit I want to be rid of this year: lateness.

Tardiness has been a habit that has plagued me since childhood. It worsened during my teen years (just ask my best friend Pam who drove me to school most mornings). I was always rushing around stressing myself out and anyone else that had the misfortune of being around me. I've since made some changes but still have plenty of room for more. I know this won't be an easy fix for me, but I'm expecting progress!

If you'd like to join me in giving something up for **Lent**, tell me about it in the comment section below. I'd love to hear from a few fellow bad-habit breakers.

Pray on!

Jane