

How to Deny Yourself

Arthur Barry

The LORD said to Moses, "The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves, and present an offering made to the LORD by fire. Do no work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement, when atonement is made for you before the LORD your God. Anyone who does not deny himself on that day must be cut off from his people. I will destroy from among his people anyone who does any work on that day.

This passage is quite enlightening as to the understanding behind self-denial, which is a basic Christian teaching. (*Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."*) Self-denial is not a New Testament idea; it has always been God's will for His people. The principle of Sabbath rest is linked with self-denial as we see in God's instructions to the Israelites on Mount Sinai. Hard work is a good thing and our society always rewards those who work hard. We hope that our children will develop a strong work ethic so that they will "get ahead" in the world. God's Word also encourages this sort of diligence but for a different reason.

Ephesians 4:28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.

Too many Christians find devotion to success is an easier path than devotion to the Lord. It may even result in such persons being able to financially support the work of the Church to a greater level. That is not a bad thing is it? Well, if worldly success is the main priority then God will never be pleased with such offerings. The idea of taking time off from worldly pursuits is especially important for a person's relationship with God. That means putting the assembly or fellowship first. When God gave these instructions to Moses for the Israelites to follow, He made a direct link between self-denial and doing no work.

We might think that work is a form of self-denial, but God plainly teaches us that unless we put Him first, even in work, we are only denying Him. This puts decisions about whether to be with the saints when they meet instead of pursuing a livelihood in a different light. Here is the formula from Leviticus 23:26-32:

ASSEMBLY = OFFERING = DENY YOURSELF = DO NO WORK

The early church understood this formula. As we read the accounts (E.g., Acts 2:41-47) we see that it was unthinkable to stay away from any church activity simply because of worldly pursuits. Making a living in the world should never come before making an offering to the Lord.



That meets at 701 South Wilbur, Sayre, PA 18840
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February 14, 2021

WELCOME!

Sunday

Bible Class- 9:30 a.m.

Worship- 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Study-6:30 p.m.

All the churches of Christ greet you.

Romans 16:16

Today's Sermon: *Moses: Pt 2*

Sermons are recorded and are available for listening on the church website.

Bulletins are archived on the website.

valleycitieschurchofchrist.org

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www.facebook.com/valleycitiescoc

Headphones are available for the hearing impaired.

Scripture Reading: Acts 7:35-38

ANNOUNCEMENTS / UPCOMING EVENTS...

- **Sunday Morning Bible Class:** No class this morning.
- **Wednesday Evening Bible Class: February 17th at 6:30pm-** we will continue studying Zechariah
- **Sojourners: Mike and Nadine Huddleston, Larry and Kay Little, Doug and Sandy Zimmerman and Dave and Kristy Bell** hope to be here the last week in June and the first two weeks in July.



NEWS

Join our **daily Bible reading** group! Use the internet or your Bible. Ask Arthur to be invited online or for a printed-out schedule.



Paul and Dawn will be attending worship at Wetzel Rd. in Liverpool, NY this morning.

Arthur will be preaching today.

PRAYERS

- **Arthur's older brother Chris** who lives in Yorkshire, England has been diagnosed with early onset dementia. He has been cleared to begin taking medication to slow progression of his condition.
- **Pat Guthrie** who many of us know from the church in Kittanning, has had lung cancer reoccur in his left lung. He has recently begun chemo. Please pray that he can go into remission once more.
- Pray for **Don Myers** of Elmore, AL. He is in constant pain from a back injury and reactions to the pain medication has caused him to have to give up his preaching duties.
- **José Rivera**, Molly's husband, has been laid off work until he can stabilize his blood sugar levels. Pray for him.
- Pray that **Darlene** and **Doug Elsbree** get feeling better soon. Also, **Jerry**. **All three have been sick with Covid.**
- Pray for **spiritual growth** (increased Bible class attendance and greater participation in Bible reading programs) and more people in the area who want to worship with us here in Sayre.
- Pray that **Dan Rowe**, who lives at Elderwood in Waverly, can receive visitors and leave the facility for visits soon so Arthur can continue studying the Bible with him and he can join us in worship. Also pray that Arthur can study the gospel with **Rick Stapleton** who lives near the church building and has actually joined in one of our Thanksgiving dinners.

If you have any PRAYERS or NEWS that you would like included in the bulletin, please contact Sandy at barncat7237@gmail.com or text or call (607) 261-0911.