

ABSTINENCE OVER MODERATION

“Complete abstinence is easier than perfect moderation.”

- Saint Augustine

Abstinence is to refrain or avoid from participating; such as “abstaining” from smoking. “Moderation” is to participate or engage on a casual or infrequent basis. The first is to say “no”; the second is to say “maybe” or “not today...but maybe tomorrow”. With more than an enough of an explanation, the real question is why – or expressed another way – what was the saint trying to suggest?



If I do something in moderation – and especially a “vice” (or bad habit) – the tendency is to engage at my leisure or as I deem for my pleasure, etc. The trouble with that approach to life is that you are being driven by your desires – and not your mind. Your mind may say, “Hey dummy, you don’t need to smoke because its going to kill you”; but your desire is there and it tells your mind, “Hey mind, either *mind your own business* or make me think that’s it ok.” And so your desire and your mind go back and forth and, with compromise or moderation, you *go for it*.

The problem with moderation is also that, as with a vice or addiction, you’re appetite, taste or **desire tends to grow** – so what was moderate in the past may be less moderate in the present and, lo and behold, your moderation is now something much more. You may say its ok – and you might even try to convince the old mind that it’s alright – but your body may be saying, “help”. Sometimes it may not be the body that is so affected (or hurt), **but it may be your heart or conscience (mind) that’s taking a hit.**

Smoking is just an example – and may not be a good or relevant example; but consider that a bad habit can be anything that we say, do or think – which we truly know is not good for us. It may be habit of lying, of swearing or telling dirty jokes; or it could be the way you treat or behave toward others. Further, it can even be the *old mind* that lives *in the gutter...*



@BCL@680340F1