

Drugs and Drinking

"The Bible does not mention Heroin, Cannabis or LSD, so there is no reason why I shouldn't use them"

It is true that drugs as such are not mentioned in Scripture, but the Bible does lay down several very strong guidelines for Godly living which clearly do apply to drug taking.

The Bible also comments frequently on the condition of drunkenness, and these comments also apply to drugs, as the effects are the same; namely: a loss of self control, a possible addiction to or reliance upon the substance, and a loss of self-esteem and, possibly, physical or mental damage which may be permanent.

Firstly let us be clear about why drugs are taken

Part of the reason that people deliberately choose to start taking drugs is rebellion. Yes, they are looking for 'kicks' or stimulation or escapism, but partly they are rebelling against the authorities and discipline which forbids drug taking.

The Bible makes it clear that God has put authorities over us, that He expects us to live disciplined lives and that rebellion against such authorities is in effect rebellion against God, therefore sinful.

"EVERYONE MUST OBEY THE STATE AUTHORITIES, BECAUSE NO AUTHORITY EXISTS WITHOUT GOD'S PERMISSION, AND THE EXISTING AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN PUT THERE BY GOD. WHOEVER OPPOSES THE EXISTING AUTHORITIES OPPOSES WHAT GOD HAS ORDERED, AND ANYONE WHO DOES SO WILL BRING JUDGEMENT ON HIMSELF"

Romans 13. 1, 2.

"CHILDREN, IT IS YOUR CHRISTIAN DUTY TO OBEY YOUR PARENTS, FOR THIS IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO. 'RESPECT YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER' IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT THAT HAS A PROMISE ADDED: 'SO THAT ALL MAY GO WELL WITH YOU, AND YOU MAY LIVE A LONG TIME IN THE LAND'"

Ephesians 6. 1-3.

These two passages apply to much more than just drug taking, of course, but a good place for any Christian who is involved with drugs to start is: 'Am

I rebelling, against my parents', Church leaders', governments' authority?

If your answer, honestly, is 'yes', then you cannot justify your actions on any grounds.

There are many other reasons given in scripture which show us why we should not take drugs. Hard drugs, like Heroin, LSD, Cocaine and even Glee will be dealt with later, although what follows often applies equally to them as well.

First let us consider what are termed 'Soft' Drugs, and let us also include 'Legal' drugs such as Alcohol, Tobacco and Caffeine.

I have already said the Bible says much about drunkenness, ~~it~~ in particular it refers to 'wine and strong drink' (or beer). What it says applies equally to the other drugs. Caffeine is included here because it is addictive. Are you able to do without a cup of tea or coffee or a bar of chocolate; or are you in a bad mood until you've had your dose?

Whatever it is that we are addicted to, we are its slave because we cannot control it.

Paul warns not to be 'slaves to wine' (TITUS 2.3).
'Church helpers -- must not drink too much wine' (1 TIM 3.8)
We must be in control of our drinking, not the other way round. Other verses also condemn drinking too much so that we get drunk (See Isaiah 28.7,8; Hosea 4.11; Proverbs 31.4-7).

Solomon wrote "It is stupid to get drunk" Proverbs 20.1
Paul wrote "Let us conduct ourselves properly, as people who live in the light of day - no orgies or drunkenness..." Romans 13.13.

That isn't to say that drinking is condemned, after all, Jesus changed water into wine at Cana. Psalm 104.15 talks of 'wine to make ~~man~~ happy', and Paul urged Timothy to drink a little wine for medicinal purposes (1 Tim 5.23)

It is our relationship to the drink that is crucial - can we stop while we are sober or not, can we forget about drink and do happily without it or not? If we can then we are on safe ground,

If we cannot then we have exceeded the guidelines God gives us.

To see how this applies to other substances, we must consider the effects of addiction and drunkenness.

Addiction compels us to take more of the drug; drunkenness robs us of self control and our usual behaviour. We should never allow that to happen.

So is it alright to take Cannabis if we do not become addicted or 'high'? No! Because it goes against the God-given authority of the land, and because of other factors:

God demands the best from us, ask anyone who has given up smoking if they were at their best - physically or mentally - before they gave up. It doesn't matter which weed causes the smoke - it clogs the lungs. It doesn't take much to addict you, either.

"Someone will say 'I am allowed to do anything'. Yes, but not everything is good for you. I could say THAT I AM ALLOWED TO DO ANYTHING, BUT I AM NOT GOING TO LET ANYTHING MAKE ME ITS SLAVE. . . . DON'T YOU KNOW THAT YOUR BODY IS A TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO LIVES IN YOU AND WHO WAS GIVEN TO YOU BY GOD? YOU DO NOT BELONG TO YOURSELVES BUT TO GOD; HE BOUGHT YOU FOR A PRICE. SO USE YOUR BODIES FOR GOD'S GLORY" 1. Corinthians 6. 12, 19, 20.

The point is, it's not up to you. You've given your life to God. Sold it, in fact; the price was the Death of Jesus. It's up to Him now to say what goes. Repeatedly, He tells us "drunkards . . . (will not) possess God's Kingdom" (1 Cor. 6. 10, see also Phillipians 3. 19, 2 Timothy 3. 1-5)

Anything which we make important in our lives, and elevate to a position which we will not - or cannot - remove it from, is a form of idolatry. We are worshipping it because we build our lives around it. If drug taking, even occasionally, is so important to you that you will not give it up then you are breaking the first two commandments! It's a direct result of allowing your human nature, rebellious as it is, to rule your life:

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'WHAT I SAY IS THIS: LET THE SPIRIT DIRECT YOUR LIVES, AND YOU WILL NOT SATISFY THE DESIRES OF HUMAN NATURE. FOR WHAT OUR HUMAN NATURE WANTS IS OPPOSED TO WHAT THE SPIRIT WANTS, AND WHAT THE SPIRIT WANTS IS OPPOSED TO WHAT OUR HUMAN NATURE WANTS... WHAT HUMAN NATURE DOES IS QUITE PLAIN. IT SHOWS ITSELF IN IMMORAL, FILTHY, AND INDECENT ACTIONS; IN WORSHIP OF IDOLS... PEOPLE BECOME ENEMIES AND THEY FIGHT... THEY ARE ENVIOUS, GET DRUNK, HAVE ORGIES, AND DO OTHER THINGS LIKE THESE. I WARN YOU NOW AS I HAVE BEFORE: THOSE WHO DO THESE THINGS WILL NOT POSSESS THE KINGDOM OF GOD" Galatians 5.16,17,19,20,21

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit in the next few verses (22-25) are well worth receiving!

Hopefully by now you can see that God does not want you messing around with drugs. Perhaps you are prepared to take the risk and carry on, knowing that you are opposing the Most High God. Apart from the seriousness of your own situation, have you stopped to consider the effect on others?

Someone might see you drunk, or buying from a pusher, and think "If that Christian is doing it, so can I!". They might not be able to control their 'habit' as well as you. They might end up on the hard drugs, or ~~add~~ dying from alcoholism. What would you feel like then?

"THE RIGHT THING TO DO IS TO KEEP FROM ~~EATING~~... DRINKING WINE, OR DOING ANYTHING ELSE THAT WILL MAKE YOUR BROTHER FALL" Romans 14.21

Paul contrives:

IF SOMEONE... DOUBTS ABOUT WHAT HE EATS (OR TAKES), GOD CONDEMNS HIM WHEN HE EATS IT, BECAUSE HIS ACTION IS NOT BASED ON FAITH, AND ANYTHING THAT IS NOT BASED ON FAITH IS SIN" (v.23)

As Christians we have a responsibility to each other, as well as to God. Others rely on you just as you do on them. God's standard is perfection. Read 1 Timothy 3.1-13 to see what He expects of Leaders and Helpers in the Church, from whom we take our example and like whom we should aim to be!

Everything that has been said applies to the 'hard' drugs. Here there is no 'dabbling'. One dose makes you 'high', and only a few doses of the addictive drugs are needed to enslave you.

If you read a book like Brian Greenaway's "Hell's Angel" you will see how readily the Devil uses the psycho-trips of LSD. Demons are waiting to pounce as soon as we're spaced out. It is extremely dangerous to start playing with these drugs spiritually, let alone mentally and physically.

The world's resources are wasted by drugs. Land which ought to be producing food is given over to the evil weeds which yearly slaughter, cripple or enslave millions of people. The Christian's response should be to help the addicts and work against the menace, not to encourage it by (even rarely) buying or using illegal drugs. We should be praying for our friends who take drugs or regularly get drunk, and presenting them with the viable alternative of a 'Spirit-filled' life.

"BE ALERT, BE ON THE WATCH! YOUR ENEMY, THE DEVIL, ROAMS AROUND LIKE A ROARING LION, LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO DEVOUR!" 1 Peter 5.8

Older translations start this verse with "BE SOBER, BE WATCHFUL".

It's a command, not an option.

"YOU MUST BE SELF-CONTROLLED AND ALERT, TO BE ABLE TO PRAY" 1 Peter 4.7