



What Does the Bible Say About

DRUGS & STIMULANTS?

A SAVED TO SERVE STUDY GUIDE

Drugs & Stimulants

We let the Bible interpret itself, comparing Scripture with Scripture and rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15). The study runs in one continuous sequence — from Point 1 through Point 17. Read each reference in your Bible and write your answers on the lines provided.

- I. PURPOSE** In this series of doctrinal lessons we will study what the Bible teaches about drugs and stimulants, and the negative effects they have on our bodies.

In This Study

1	Giving glory to God in the body	1 Corinthians 10:31
2	Your body, the temple of God	1 Corinthians 3:16, 17
3	Four reasons to abstain	Romans 6:16; Isaiah 55:2
4	Was every plant made for use?	Genesis 1:31; 3:17, 18
5	Fleshly lusts & artificial stimulants	1 Peter 2:11
6	“Witchcraft” — pharmakeia	Galatians 5:20
7	Do drugs really cure disease?	{2SM 288.3}; {MH 126.3}
8	Hope, victory & N.E.W.S.T.A.R.T.	1 Corinthians 10:13

◆ BEFORE YOU BEGIN

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

1 CORINTHIANS 10:31 (KJV)

Keep your Bible open and let each text speak for itself. Lay aside appetite and tradition alike, weigh every passage in the light of the whole of Scripture, and answer honestly. Ask the Spirit to make you a wise and watchful Berean — from Point 1 to Point 17 — that you may know what the Bible truly teaches about the care of the body that God calls His temple.

2. Based on Revelation 14:7 we are commanded to give glory to God. What is one meaning of giving glory to God?— *Read: 1 Corinthians 10:31*

3. What are we told regarding our bodies?— *Read: 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17*

4. **NOTE** Drugs and stimulants cover a wide range of substances — pharmaceutical drugs, street drugs, cannabis, tobacco, cigarettes, caffeinated teas, as well as coffee. Here are four reasons from Scripture why we should avoid their use.

a) **REASON** Addictive — Romans 6:16; Romans 7:19, 20, 23; Matthew 4:10

b) **REASON** A waste of God's money — Isaiah 55:2; 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2

c) **REASON** Weakens our ability to hear the Holy Spirit — Galatians 5:16, 17; Romans 8:12-14

d) **REASON** Slow death / murder — Exodus 20:13; Galatians 5:21

5. Many justify the use of substances such as cannabis (marijuana) by arguing that God provided everything in nature to be used, and that if He did not want us to use it He would not have created it. What was the condition of the earth prior to sin, and what happened after man sinned?— *Read: Genesis 1:31; Genesis 3:17, 18*

“Christ never planted the seeds of death in the system. Satan planted these seeds when he tempted Adam to eat of the tree of knowledge which meant disobedience to God. Not one noxious plant was placed in the Lord's great garden, but after Adam and Eve sinned, poisonous herbs sprang up.... All tares are sown by the evil one. Every noxious herb is of his sowing, and by his ingenious methods of amalgamation he has corrupted the earth with tares.”

SELECTED MESSAGES, BOOK 2 {2SM 288.2}

6. **STUDY** See also the SAMHSA article which reveals the risks and negative health impacts of marijuana use (see Sources, no. 2).

TEST EVERY HABIT

“All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.”

1 CORINTHIANS 6:12 (KJV)

7. **TRANSITION** We have seen that tobacco, alcohol, tea, and coffee all work by the same principle — an artificial stimulant that excites the nerves, deadens the conscience, and leaves the body weaker than before. That same principle reaches much further. The strong drugs of the pharmacy and the illegal drugs of the street operate on the identical plan, only with greater force and swifter ruin. Prescription narcotics, marijuana, methamphetamine, cocaine, opioids, and the rest do not heal the body; they cloud the mind God claims for Himself and break down the very organs He designed for recovery. So let us now turn from the common stimulants to these stronger substances, and ask what Scripture says about their effect on the body, the mind, and our ability to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.

8. **What are we told about fleshly lusts that war against the soul?— Read: 1 Peter 2:11**

“Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul,’ is the language of the apostle Peter. Many regard this warning as applicable only to the licentious; but it has a broader meaning.... It is a most forcible warning against the use of such stimulants and narcotics as tea, coffee, tobacco, alcohol, and morphine.... The earlier these hurtful habits are formed, the more firmly will they hold their victim in slavery to lust.”

THE REVIEW AND HERALD, JANUARY 25, 1881 {CD 62.5}

9. **“Witchcraft” is mentioned among the works (or lusts) of the flesh in Galatians 5:20. What does the word “witchcraft” mean?— Read: Galatians 5:20**

ANSWER The number for “witchcraft” in Strong’s Greek Concordance is 5331. The word is φαρμακεία (pharmakeia), which means the use or the administering of drugs, medicine, or spells.

 KEY THOUGHT

“Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19 (KJV)

10. **What counsel are we given regarding the use of drugs? In most cases, do they cure disease?**

“Christ’s remedies cleanse the system. But Satan has tempted man to introduce into the system that which weakens the human machinery, clogging and destroying the fine, beautiful arrangements of God. The drugs administered to the sick do not restore, but destroy. Drugs never cure. Instead, they place in the system seeds which bear a very bitter harvest.”

SELECTED MESSAGES, BOOK 2 {2SM 288.3}

“People need to be taught that drugs do not cure disease.... Health is recovered in spite of the drug. But in most cases the drug only changes the form and location of the disease. Often the effect of the poison seems to be overcome for a time, but the results remain in the system and work great harm at some later period.”

THE MINISTRY OF HEALING {MH 126.3}

II. What are we told lays the foundation for the use of liquor, opium, and other such destructive substances?

“By the use of poisonous drugs, many bring upon themselves lifelong illness.... Many of the popular nostrums called patent medicines, and even some of the drugs dispensed by physicians, act a part in laying the foundation of the liquor habit, the opium habit, the morphine habit, that are so terrible a curse to society.”

THE MINISTRY OF HEALING {MH 126.4}

“Drug medication, as it is generally practiced, is a curse. Educate away from drugs. Use them less and less, and depend more upon hygienic agencies; then nature will respond to God’s physicians — pure air, pure water, proper exercise, a clear conscience.... Drugs need seldom be used.”

COUNSELS ON HEALTH {CH 261.2}

12. NOTE Notice that Sister White says “drugs need seldom be used.” There are times when pharmaceutical drugs can be used — surgery is one example. However, the overarching theme is that we should rely upon God’s natural remedies and faith in Him to preserve our bodies in good physical, mental, and spiritual health.

13. NOTE Two of the most commonly used stimulants, even among Seventh-day Adventists, are caffeinated teas and coffee. Many see no harm in their use, but they are destroying both body and mind. (Disclaimer: these counsels do not refer to non-caffeinated herbal teas such as peppermint, ginger, lemongrass, or chamomile.)

“Tea, coffee, and tobacco, as well as alcoholic drinks, are different degrees in the scale of artificial stimulants.... The effect of tea and coffee, as heretofore shown, tends in the same direction as that of wine and cider, liquor and tobacco.”

CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE & BIBLE HYGIENE {CTBH 34.1, 34.2}

“Tea is a stimulant, and to a certain extent produces intoxication. It gradually impairs the energy of body and mind. Its first effect is exhilarating.... But this is a mistake. When its influence is gone, the unnatural force abates, and the result is languor and debility.... The second effect of tea drinking is headache, wakefulness, palpitation of the heart, indigestion, trembling, and many other evils.”

CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE & BIBLE HYGIENE {CTBH 34.3}

“Coffee is a hurtful indulgence. It temporarily excites the mind to unwonted action, but the after-effect is exhaustion, prostration, paralysis of the mental, moral, and physical powers. The mind becomes enervated, and unless through determined effort the habit is overcome, the activity of the brain is permanently lessened.”

CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE & BIBLE HYGIENE {CTBH 34.4}

“All these nerve irritants are wearing away the life-forces.... In some cases it is as difficult to break up the tea-and-coffee habit as it is for the inebriate to discontinue the use of liquor. The money expended for tea and coffee is worse than wasted. They do the user only harm, and that continually.”

CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE & BIBLE HYGIENE {CTBH 34.5}; FURTHER COUNSEL, PP. 34-40

TEMPERANCE

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

GALATIANS 5:22, 23 (KJV)

14. **NOTE** According to science, caffeine is consumed by 80-90% of Americans in some form on a daily basis. Caffeine is categorized in a group of psychoactive drugs called stimulants. Although it is a lower-level stimulant, notice what other drugs it is grouped with: caffeine, nicotine, amphetamines, and cocaine (see Sources, no. 3).
15. **STUDY** In what forms is caffeine consumed? • *Coffea arabica* (coffee) • *Thea sinensis* (tea) • *Cola acuminata* (nut, tea, or soft drinks) • *Theobroma cacao* (cocoa and chocolate) • *Paullinia cupana* (guarana in snack bars and energy drinks). “There is no safe level of drug use” (see Sources, no. 4).
16. **STUDY** The documented effects of caffeine on the body include: rapid heartbeat • increased blood pressure • muscle aches • diarrhea • heartburn • nausea and vomiting • fertility and pregnancy issues • confusion • headaches • irritability • jitters • increased urination • and the prevention of calcium absorption in the bones (see Sources, no. 5).
17. **As we close, what hope does God leave with us, and what practical things can someone do to overcome the use of drugs and their addiction to stimulants?—** *Read: Matthew 17:21; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Mark 10:27; Philippians 4:13*
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- a) **STEP** Change your daily routine. In the morning, drink some lemon water to help detoxify your body and to give you a boost of Vitamin C.
- b) **STEP** For an energy boost, substitute caffeinated beverages and food products with fruit smoothies. A cold shower is also beneficial to wake you up in the morning and slowly release dopamine over the next few hours.
- c) **STEP** Uphold God's eight laws of health — N.E.W.S.T.A.R.T.: Nutrition • Exercise • Water • Sunlight • Temperance • Air • Rest • Trust in God.

Notes



A Temple Reclaimed, An Appetite Redeemed

Every stimulant borrows tomorrow's strength to pay for today. God does not ask us to surrender these habits in our own strength — He offers the power of His Spirit, the simple remedies of His creation, and a promise that no temptation is beyond escape.

Temperance is not deprivation; it is the restoration of the body He calls His temple.

1 CORINTHIANS 10:13 (KJV)

“God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

Will you make a covenant with God by sacrifice, and let Him cleanse the appetite He created?

REFERENCES

Sources & Notes

EVERY VICTORY A SEED SOWN

“Temptation once resisted will give power to more firmly resist the second time; every new victory gained over self will smooth the way for higher and nobler triumphs. Every victory is a seed sown to eternal life.”

TESTIMONIES FOR THE CHURCH, VOL. 5 {5T 120.3}

SCRIPTURE & STUDY HELPS

- 1 Strong's Greek #5331, “pharmakeia” — the use or administering of drugs, medicine, or spells. biblehub.com/greek/5331 ↗
- 2 SAMHSA, “Marijuana: Know the Risks.” samhsa.gov ↗
- 3 Verywell Mind, “What Is a Psychoactive Drug?” — types of psychoactive drugs and stimulants. verywellmind.com ↗
- 4 Alcohol and Drug Foundation, “Caffeine” — forms, effects, and risk. adf.org.au ↗
- 5 Healthline, “The Effects of Caffeine on Your Body.” healthline.com ↗
- 6 E. G. White, Selected Messages bk. 2, p. 288; Ministry of Healing, p. 126; Counsels on Health, p. 261.
- 7 E. G. White, Christian Temperance & Bible Hygiene, pp. 34-40; Counsels on Diet & Foods; Testimonies, vol. 5.

Scripture quoted from the King James Version. Pioneer writings cited for study and comment.