

What the Bible Says About Marijuana, Alcohol, and Vaping
July 7, 2024

Biblical Response

The Bible does not directly address marijuana, but it does give us plenty of principles to know how to respond.

Romans 13:1 - Is it legal?

Ephesians 5:17-19 - Be Filled With the Holy Spirit

Understand the will of the Lord. The Lord's will is not for you to be controlled by outside substances but by what is inside, the Holy Spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 - Your Body is a Temple of the Holy Spirit

We want to be good stewards of our bodies, which God has given us.

Effects of Marijuana on the Body

National Institute on Drug Abuse concludes that frequent users of large amounts of marijuana are more likely to have lower life satisfaction, poorer mental and physical health, and greater relationship problems.

Marijuana slows brain function. Research shows that regular marijuana use lowers the IQ of test subjects between 18 and 25 years of age.

As a stimulant, it has properties similar to cocaine, methamphetamine, and ADHD amphetamine medications. As a hallucinogen, it can cause users to hallucinate to see things or become psychotic and disconnected from reality, similar to LSD, psilocybin, and MDMA.

Pairing Evil with the Holy Spirit

But even more so, we don't want to pair the HS with evil.

If intoxication is debauchery and wickedness, why would we want to bring wickedness into the temple?

1 Peter 1:13 Be Sober-minded - Seven times we find in the NT that we are to be sober-minded. Being sober-minded has the connotations of being aware of reality and being clear-minded

Marijuana impairs this.

- NIDA - "Being under the influence of marijuana can impair verbal and working memory, attention, and psychomotor performance."

1 Peter 5:7 - Keep Watchful. Stay Alert

As a depressant, it acts like things such as alcohol, Xanax, and barbiturates. Marijuana slows brain function.

"Marijuana temporarily impairs the reliable processing of surrounding reality. Some people have compared marijuana to caffeine. But this comparison doesn't hold up.

Ephesians 5:15-16 - Make the best use of your time.

Romans 12:2 - Be Transformed, Not Conformed to the World

We are given the appeal not to conform to the world but to be transformed by renewing our minds.

1 Corinthians 6:12 - Partake of That Which is Beneficial to You

1 Corinthians 10:23-24 - Even if things are lawful, not all things are for your and your neighbors good and benefit you.

“Will it promote the cause of Christ?”

“Will this activity lead me and others to treasure Jesus above all else?”

“Will it help me fight the fight of faith with greater success?”

“Will it sharpen and intensify my knowledge of Christ and my commitment to glorify him in all things?”

Asking those questions may well elicit a different answer from the one we typically hear.

But what about Genesis 1:29?

“Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.”

- This passage gives no support for the practice of smoking marijuana for a recreational high. I know of no food that we consume by smoking. As Joe Carter has written, *“Presumably, no one adds marijuana to brownies because it improves their flavor. The reason to add this particular plant to food is because of its effect on senses other than taste”*

Medical Marijuana

“Medical marijuana” refers to the regulated use of the whole, unprocessed marijuana plant or its extracts to treat symptoms of illness and other conditions.

1 Timothy 4:4-5 - *Everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with Thanksgiving by those who know and believe the truth, for it is made holy through the word of God and prayer.*

If marijuana can be used in some form and under the oversight of a physician to help those in extreme pain or those for whom all other medical remedies have proven ineffective, it should be allowed.

- The key is it being used for holy purposes, not unholy. And being controlled by it, would be unholy.

Here's the problems...

Politics

Often it is not about medical marijuana. The approval of medical marijuana has historically been a stepping stone to approving recreational marijuana.

Addiction

Some would say that being addicted to marijuana is better than being addicted to alcohol and opiates. This can be a common therapy for addicts.

Problems with this view:

- Unfortunately, some research suggests that the use of marijuana increases the risk of the use of other addicting drugs. There are reports that opioid use has increased, rather than decreased, in states legalizing marijuana.

Mental Disorders

Marijuana is sometimes identified as useful for those who are dealing with depression, PTSD, and anxiety.

However, it is important to realize that what they are offered is an addictive substance with significant side effects to treat problems that ought to have a better solution.

Cancer and Chemotherapies Side Effects

Marijuana has been used to treat the side effects of chemotherapy such as nausea and the loss of appetite.

It uses THC, for which there has not had a legal substitute formed. So you are taking a risk for only a modest benefit at best.

Epilepsy

One medical use that has been proven to be effective is in the treatment of epilepsy. Probably the single most certain medical use for cannabis is in the CBD portion of the plant. And CBD has been proven to be effective in treating epilepsy.

Alcohol

Intoxication is a sin. Alcohol in and of itself is not.

Proverbs 20:1 - *Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.*

The best argument against its use, I believe, is the argument of 1 Corinthians 6, "Is this beneficial to my walk with Christ?"

Vaping

2019 - 27.5% of high school students had vaped.

2023 - 4.6% of middle school students and 10% of high school students — roughly 2.13 million students — reported vaping in the past 30 days.

No regulation on marketing

Government regulations

Romans 13:1

Body as a temple

Beneficial?