Drugs destroy lives. In my professional life I met many young people whose lives had been blighted by the use of illegal drugs. It was one of the saddest things I saw. One abiding memory is of a handsome young couple, sitting in hospital, holding hands and staring into space. I asked, “How long before they are cured?” The gloomy answer was: “Never. They are stoned out of their minds on Heroin.” I left much saddened that more promising lives had been thrown away.

Yet this is not a new problem: drugs have been used throughout the years for people of all ages, to get into a high emotional state or to be dragged to the depths of despair. The more popular drugs for each generation tend to change regularly, with new ones being tried all the time. Each presents new dangers and damage.

The Bible View

The Bible states that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14). Why then would we interfere and take drugs illegally when bad effects will be a certainty? Once addiction sets in, the capacity to fight it is lost.

The apostle Paul warned against this in his time. He said:

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery… (Galatians 5:19–20).

We stop there, for that last word in Greek (the original New Testament language) is ‘pharmakeia’ – very similar to the modern word ‘pharmacy’. Drug taking seems to have been part of many of the Roman world’s pagan rites, and the Bible gave a positive warning against it.

Why do people take illegal drugs today? Sometimes it can be the sign of someone who feels unloved, is frustrated, insecure, or just looking for ‘kicks’ or to escape boredom. A local health sheet states that “99% of young people who turn to drugs have family health problems”.

The people who take these substances for recreational use see them as a way of escape from something – even normality – yet of course many problems can follow. Drugs will damage their health, their family and relationships, even drive users to crime. Every day, newspapers record violence, death and disaster to young lives, driven by drugs.
A Fuller Life

Following Bible teaching helps us to remove our inherent selfishness, and moves us to think of others. This means recognising and seeking to help those with problems, such as the disillusioned, the aged, the ill and the lonely. We cannot do much good by opting out of society. That is a negative approach, but the Bible always points to a positive goal for which to aim.

By reading our Bibles, we will gain conviction that God has spoken, and that He will fulfil His promises. Once we see the richness of what God offers, everlasting life in His kingdom, then the things of life today will be seen in their proper light.

*I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (Romans 8:18).*

What then are the things we long for? For many it means wealth, to be able to do all the things we desire. Yet we can see that those who have the finest of everything often fall prey to drug use as they are still unhappy. God sets clear priorities for us:

*Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you (Matthew 6:33).*

*The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law (Galatians 5:22–23).*

If our priority is God’s character and His kingdom, then this will leave less room for damaging habits. In the same way we cannot exhibit these qualities if our minds are out of control.

God requires discipline in His children, which may be difficult at times, but He holds out the marvellous prospect of being counted as faultless, having all of our faults forgiven and being welcomed into His kingdom, where no unhappiness or foolishness will spoil our existence. Our goal should be to:

*Become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world (Philippians 2:15).*

Let Paul conclude our thoughts:

*Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things (Philippians 4:8).*

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