

=SEPARATION=

Lesson 6

Smoking

AIM: to teach my pupils the sinfulness and the danger of smoking.

POINT OF CONTACT: The teacher could have a pair of play handcuffs. The teacher could ask the class if they think it would be a good idea to shackle their hands and throw away the key so that from then on they would be handicapped. Acquiring the smoking habit is like deliberately handcuffing oneself for the rest of his life.

INTRODUCTION: There has been much research on the effects of smoking. On January 11, 1964, the press was invited to a news conference in a federal auditorium in Washington, D.C. to hear the report of U.S. Surgeon General Luther L. Terry's Advisory Committee on Smoking and Health. The committee prepared a 387-page book which concluded that "cigarette smoking is a health hazard of sufficient importance in the United States to warrant appropriate remedial action." This report just added impetus to the conviction of Christians down through the centuries since tobacco was first used for smoking. That conviction is that smoking is a bad habit and a sin!

I. SMOKING IS A HABIT WHICH IS CONTRARY TO BIBLE INSTRUCTION. (Smoking as such is not mentioned in the Bible. Tobacco was not known and smoked when Jesus was on earth. White men began using it after receiving it from the American Indians.)

1. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." Romans 6:12.
 - 1) The consciences of Christians have told them that smoking is wrong. The Holy Spirit has pointed out the sin of smoking. The very fact that people will ask whether smoking is wrong is another reason why it is sinful. Romans 14:23 teaches us that if something is done in doubt, it is sinful to do it.
 - 2) Smoking enslaves the smoker. A person who had smoked for 36 years before quitting had this to say, "...perhaps the worst thing about cigarettes is not what they do to your heart, lungs, throat and nerves but the very addiction itself. The fact that a sane, reasonable, responsible adult has to use all his wits and willpower to rid himself of this habit shows the extent of its grip."
 - 3) Through reasoning one can determine what constitutes a bad habit or a sin. Isn't it an action or an indulgence that is for the purpose of fulfilling a fleshly desire without consideration for God's commandments or man's comfort? One has to conclude that smoking is a sin.
2. "What? 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? For ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." I Corinthians 6:19, 20.
 - 1) When we think of a dwelling place for God, we cannot imagine any place that would have any dirt in it. God the Holy Spirit lives in the bodies of Christians. Dirty tobacco doesn't belong in the same house with God.
 - 2) Smoking cannot honor God. No one can say, "Praise the Lord for this smoke," for God does not give anything harmful. James 1:17, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above...." God would not give anything imperfect or harmful. Because of the harm that smoking does to the body and the mind, and because of the annoyance that it is to others, no one can say that it is a gift from God.
3. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice...." Romans 12:1.
 - 1) What is to be the condition of the bodies that are presented to God? They are to be without spot and blemish, for the Old Testament sacrifices that were brought to God had to be without spot and blemish. They are to be holy and acceptable unto God. After they get God's righteousness through Jesus, they are not to continue in sin any more.

- 2) Why present our bodies as living sacrifices to God? God expects us to do this—it is our reasonable service.
4. I Corinthians 8:9-13 warns the Christian against indulging in anything that would make a weaker person think that there is no difference between them. This would cause the unsaved one to think that there is no real reason to accept Christ as Saviour.
5. Matthew 18:1-14 stresses teaching and treating children properly. Children watch very carefully the actions of adults and will follow their examples. Woe to that person who teaches a little child to do wrong! Anybody who smokes in the presence of a child could be teaching that child that it is all right to smoke. In most cases, children and teenagers start smoking because to them it is a symbol of growing up! How shameful!
6. II Timothy 2:19-22 includes, “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” If a person does not purge himself from sin and sinful practices, he cannot be a fit vessel to be used in the Master’s service. Smoking affects the health and the cleanliness of the smoker so that his effectiveness for the Lord cannot be what it ought to be.

II. SMOKING IS A HABIT WHICH CRIPPLES AND KILLS.

1. Smokers show a death rate from all causes about twice as high as that of nonsmokers when all other elements are the same.
2. Smoking overstimulates the nervous system. Acrolein is the drug in tobacco which causes the violent action on nerve centers. A man who had smoked cigars stopped smoking when he was saved. The smoking habit left its mark upon him physically, however, for it affected his nervous system to such an extent that his hand shook noticeably all the time.
3. Some types of cancer, the great killer, are caused by smoking.
 - 1) Pipe smokers many times develop cancer of the lips and tongue.
 - 2) The most deadly of all cancers—cancer of the lungs—has been traced to prolonged inhalation of cigarette smoke. One heavy smoker in eight develops lung cancer.
 - 3) Often disfiguring surgery has to be performed on people who have cancer because of smoking. Tongues, jaws, throats, chins, or noses sometimes have to be removed. Many of the patients literally have to have their faces reconstructed because of the cancer surgery. Some of them have holes in their necks where vocal chords were removed.
4. Digestion is hampered by the smoking habit.
5. The mind of the smoker becomes sluggish, and thought processes slow down because of carbon monoxide which is contained in cigarettes. This poison prevents the red blood cells from uniting with oxygen. All smokers, though unconscious of it, are suffering more or less from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Acrolain is another poison in tobacco which produces degeneration of the cells of the brain, which is quite rapid among boys. Dr. Hutchinson, who was of the Kansas State Reformatory some years ago, made the statement that cigarettes were the cause of the downfall of more boys in the institution at that time than all other vicious habits combined.

6. All cigarette smokers become short-winded because of the presence of another poison—furfural—in the tobacco. This drug causes tremors and twitching of the muscles.
7. The heart, kidneys and liver are affected by the poison, nicotine. Half a drop of nicotine is fatal. It constricts the blood vessels, thus raising the blood pressure. This causes the “pep” feeling which is followed by the depression which calls for another cigarette.
8. Chronic bronchitis and emphysema have become great killers in this country. If the present trend continues, 100,000 people will die from these two diseases in a year. One medical report states that if young people could be prevented from smoking, emphysema could be eliminated from the next generation, with rare exceptions.
9. Male cigarette smokers have a higher death rate from coronary artery disease than nonsmoking males.
10. The habit harms a woman even more than it does a man.

III. SMOKING IS A HABIT WHICH CAN BE BROKEN.

1. If the person is a Christian, by all means he should recognize his habit as a sin against himself, against God and against others; and he should forsake it. The testimonies of those who have actually stopped smoking are that it really works if the smoking is stopped all together without trying to taper off. Of course, a Christian has a “*way to escape*” if he will trust the Lord for it. See I Corinthians 10:13.
2. Within five days after quitting, one smoker testified to feeling so much better. His cough had stopped; his health had improved; the interior of his car was cleaner; he looked forward to no more burns in the carpets, linen and furniture; and his sense of smell was keener! Now and then the sight of cigarettes brought back a flood of memories—not for the joys of smoking, but of the painful time he had when he realized his addiction to them. The person who has quit smoking is released!
3. Another man who had smoked for 40 years said that during his smoking years he would awaken many times each night and reach for a cigarette. He was 20 pounds underweight; he had no taste for food; he had smokers’ throat, a bronchial cough, smokers’ nerves, and sinus trouble. The fingers of both hands were stained a deep walnut. He was ashamed to open his mouth because of the thick encrustations on his teeth, to say nothing of the brown coating on his tongue. However, his first night without cigarettes he slept for 6 straight hours! Now he has a lessening of indigestion, he has gained in weight but not in size. (This is probably due to an increased desire for activity.) The cough does not bother him as it did.

IV. SMOKING IS A HABIT THAT IS OBNOXIOUS TO NONSMOKERS. When in the presence of a smoker, people who have quit smoking are repelled by the same things that annoy people who have never smoked. An ex-smoker says, “The longer one stays away from tobacco, the more obnoxious it becomes. The exhalation from another’s cigarette stinks like a dead cat. The clothes and the breath of a smoker smell bad too.”

CONCLUSION: Any young person who thinks that he might like to learn to smoke should think about how it would displease God for him to do so. He also needs to consider that a puny piece of paper with some tobacco inside it will someday be controlling and pushing him. He should remember that if he is a Christian, his testimony will count for very little as long as he indulges in the same bad habit that many, many unsaved people do. He also should take into consideration the fact that many smokers are doomed to a painful death or a disfigured remaining few years of life. If the truth were known, cigarettes would be used only by those who desire to commit suicide!