

One Step to Freedom
Chapter 1: Planning for Victory

Lesson 3 Part 1
Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Is a Sin

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18).

Our world is filled with many different opinions concerning the abuse of drugs and alcohol. The most popular thinking is that those who are drug addicts or alcoholics have a “disease.” However, according to the Word of God (the Bible), drug abuse and alcoholism are not “diseases” but sins.

God has warned us about the wisdom and philosophy of man. He said, “Beware lest anyone cheat you through deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the basic principles of this world, and not according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8). God also said, “Your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God” (1 Corinthians 2:5).

With the philosophy of disease, man tells addicts that they are not responsible for their actions and that they are hopeless. Philosophy says that man can never be cured of their disease, and that they must label themselves as addicts forever.

If it is your belief that such addictions result from disease, please consider the following. What other diseases or destructive processes of the body are self-inflicted and by choice? Is it not true that a substance abuser always has a choice not to partake? There is no question that the body learns to crave abusive substances, but this can be overcome. Even when withdrawal symptoms result, the person always has two choices: to take that temporary fix or to endure the withdrawal symptoms.

Even if you do not believe in the disease philosophy, you may believe that drug and alcohol abuse is some kind of physical addiction that even God cannot help some people overcome. You may think this because even though abusers desperately want to stop, they “cannot.”

The following lessons are written to present a biblical perspective of drug and alcohol abuse and refute that alcoholism or drug abuse is a disease.

First, we must realize that we are all sinners by nature. That is to say, we all fall short of God’s glory (Romans 3:23) or we miss the mark of God’s perfection (Psalm 18:30). Although few of us like to say we are sinners, most of us would agree that we miss the mark of God’s perfection. We deceive ourselves if we say we have no sin (1 John 1:8).

Romans 5:12 says, “Through one man (Adam) sin entered the world, and death (came) through sin ... thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.” This Scripture says that we inherited our sinful nature from Adam. As Adam’s descendants, we are prone to sin.

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God's Word tells us that we serve this sinful nature by seeking to satisfy our physical desires (Romans 7:25). In Galatians 5:19-21 there is a list of physical desires that are sinful. Three of the listed items are idol worship, sorcery, and drunkenness.

Any or all of these sins can prevent a person from entering the kingdom of God. Let us look at these things, beginning with idol worship or idolatry, and how they relate to the person who abuses drugs.

An idol is anything that takes the place of God in our lives. It is given our priority and attention. This would include anyone other than God who is looked to as a "higher power." An idol is literally a false god that is served instead of God. Drugs and alcohol are false gods that rule the abuser's life. Those who begin as willing worshipers become slaves in bondage. Instead of living for their Creator and Savior, they live for their addictions. The Scriptures clearly indicate this as a type of idolatry.

Now let us look at sorcery (witchcraft). The original Greek word that we translate into sorcery is the same word we translate into pharmacy. That word is *pharmakia*. *Pharmakia* is translated in these different ways because some of the drugs abused today were abused back in the time of Christ. These mind-altering drugs were used by sorcerers and witches to help them tap into the powers of the demonic realm.

Over 2,000 years ago, there was a definite link between drug abuse and the occult. This is clearly evident today. It is no coincidence that the rise of Satanism over the last 20 years has coincided with the increased abuse of mind-altering drugs in our society. While not all those who abuse mind-altering drugs are into the occult, it is still obvious that there is a definite link between the two. Therefore, one can conclude from common sense that abusing drugs is a sin.

Who is the drug addict or alcoholic? Galatians 5:21 describes this person merely as one who practices such things. According to Webster's Dictionary, to practice means, "to frequent or make a habit of." Are you practicing idolatry, sorcery, or drunkenness? If you are, God has a better plan for your life. He does not want you to be excluded from His kingdom. He wants you to enter in victoriously, through faith in His Son Jesus Christ.