

Dominion Over the Plant (i.e. drugs/alcohol)

Dominion is God's Will

In the Bible, God tells man that he is to have dominion over the plant. In short, God knew that if man would not be careful, the plant would have dominion over him. Every drug in the world comes from the plant; nicotine, alcohol, opiates, etc. Genesis 1:27-30 says, ***"God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' Then God said, 'Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food "; and it was so."*** Man is to rule over the whole earth; to subdue everything and to not let anything rule over man. Man, being made in the image of God, holds a position of authority on earth, just as God holds authority over all creation. To operate in the image of God is to exercise dominion. Sadly, a staggering number of people today are dominated by the plant.

When it comes to the plant, man doesn't seem to learn his lesson very easily. After the flood, Noah was reminded about his position of dominion, in the same way Adam was instructed in the garden of Eden. Genesis 9:1-3 says, ***"And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given. Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant.'"*** Fast forward to verses 20-21, and we Noah is drunk from wine, the plant.

The Sin of Dissipation

So, how do we have victory/dominion over the plant? The key lies in the Scriptures, specifically Ephesians 5:18, ***"Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation. But be filled with the Spirit."*** Some key things need to be understood here from this verse. First, it mentions the sin of dissipation. Dissipation is the process of losing control/strength. For example, if you put a glass of hot water on the counter and leave it, it will eventually reach room temperature. The process of the heat leaving the water is called dissipation. When a person surrenders any of his control, he is guilty of the sin of dissipation. In this verse, the example given is alcohol, but you can insert any drug, like marijuana. So, when a person engages in recreational alcohol consumption or marijuana usage, his control is gradually dissipating. Therefore, he is guilty of the sin of dissipation. This is sinful because when you're not in full control, then you're unable to surrender full control to the Holy Spirit, which is the command at the end of the verse. Even if you're only *"a little buzzed"*, let's say you've only lost 15% of your reflex control, the sin of dissipation is present and you're unable to surrender yourself in full to the Spirit. When we let the Spirit govern our lives, He equips us to have victory over vices like the plant. This is called "self-control", which is a gift of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). For more on how self-control gives us victory, and how it's greatly different than self-discipline, see my essay called, "The Sin of Self-Discipline".

One might also say, *"What about caffeine? That's a drug."* True, and any drug can be abused. However, most people consume caffeine for the purpose of heightening their senses and making themselves more alert and in control, which is the opposite of why people use alcohol or marijuana; typically used to cope, medicate, and dull the senses.

Drugs for Medical Usage

What about drugs for medicinal use? God has blessed mankind with increased knowledge about how to use the plant for medicinal use. Throughout the centuries we see this happening, and the Scriptures speak to the value of medicine. Ezekiel 47:12, ***“And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food...Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.”*** Matthew 9:12, ***“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.”*** Jeremiah 8:22, ***“Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?”*** Isaiah 38:21, ***“Let them take a cake of figs and apply it to the boil, that he may recover.”*** Luke 10:34, ***“He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine.”***

One might ask, *“What about being put to sleep for a surgery? Aren’t you out of control and dissipated then?”* This is different than the sin of dissipation in that the necessary good that is happening from the surgery is not like the unnecessary dissipation that one experiences from recreational drug use. Anesthesia for the purpose of surgery is a modern-day blessing. In the same way, just as self-harm is sinful, like cutting your body (Leviticus 19:28), but cutting the body for the purpose of repair/surgery is appropriate and necessary.

Good Rule of Thumb – No unwarranted harm to the body! If Christians can embrace this rule, they’ll be much better off; no more tobacco poisoning, no more recreational dissipation, self-mutilation, etc.

Bottom Line

- Abusing the plant means the plant is in control.
- We don’t make wise choices when we aren’t in control.
- We can’t give God control when we’re not in control.
- You and I don’t have the ability to have victory over the plant apart from the work of God in our life!
- You’ll return to what’s familiar unless there’s spiritual transformation in your life.