

Aim of lesson

To consider the rights and wrongs of smoking, drinking and drugs.

Bible background

1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20

Preparation required

Read the relevant passages on the Students' Notes and work out your own position on the relevant drugs. Consider each student in your class and try to imagine what they might say. Be prepared for them having different standards to each other and you. For instance, you will have to be careful not to tell them never to drink if you like a glass of wine yourself or you may have to protect a young person who would be shocked by the behaviour of another. You may also need to be not too condemnatory if you wish someone to be honest with you.

Suggested outline of lesson

Go through the questions and references in the Students' Notes, discussing each point as fully as the young people wish before proceeding to the next.

Share the references amongst the young people or look some of them up yourself if this will help but let the students themselves decide what the Bible is telling us.

Some points that should come out of the lesson:

How should we regard our bodies?

Our bodies are not our own. They have been given to us by God to use in his service. Therefore we should not abuse them. If our service is like a race, we should treat our bodies like an athlete does; no smoking, etc.

Who is in control in your life?

One of the fruits of the spirit is self-control. Talk about the loss of control when a person is dependant on any sort of drug and contrast it with the benefits of letting God control our lives. Are there any differences between smoking, drinking and different sorts of drug taking?

Are there any good points?

Anything that is addictive is dangerous. Maybe cannabis is therefore not as bad as hard drugs or smoking but then is the company you are keeping or the places you go the right ones? Also don't forget that cannabis is illegal.

It should be borne in mind however that some addictive drugs are used in medicine.

What does God think about drunkenness?

These verses are self-evident but it may also be useful to talk about the difference between drunkenness and social drinking and the dangers of one leading to the other.

What can we do to avoid the dangers?

The Bible is very strict about getting rid of the bad things in our lives. We can keep clear of temptation by avoiding the wrong company and filling our lives with helpful things.

It may also be helpful to talk about how the young people could help a friend who may be more vulnerable or having problems.

Does it matter what other people think?

The young people should be encouraged to understand how their actions may be seen by others. What sort of example do they set for younger people? How do their family or ecclesia suffer when they behave badly?

Relevance to our lives

It is very important that our young people discuss these issues from a Christian point of view because there are so many pressures from peers, magazines, television and even sometimes teachers encouraging them to 'do their own thing', 'discover themselves', etc., that they need to be prepared.

Prayer

The young people should be encouraged to pray about all their temptations for guidance for themselves and others.

Other suggestions for activities

1. The young people could position on the charts at the end of their notes all the common drugs they can think of: tea, coffee, aspirins, wine, beer, sleeping tablets, anti-depressants, cigarettes, cannabis, heroin, LSD. What about adrenaline (the excitement of playing computer games)?
2. Some communities, like the Mormons, will not take any drugs, so they do not drink tea or coffee. Are they right?
3. The class could make a list of reasons why people smoke, drink or take drugs and discuss how prevention is better than cure.