

Eight Reasons Why a Christian Should Not Use Tobacco

I Corinthians 6:19-20

I. INTRODUCTION: I

- I. 2 Tobacco is a product prepared from the leaves of the tobacco plant.
 - A. It is smoked in cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco and consumed as snuff, chewing tobacco, and dipping tobacco.
 - B. "In 2013, almost 55.8 million Americans (21.3 percent of the population) were current cigarette smokers; 12.4 million smoked cigars; more than 8.8 million used smokeless tobacco; and over 2.3 million smoked tobacco in pipes" (National Institute on Drug Abuse).
2. 3 I want to give you eight reasons why a Christian should not use tobacco.

II. DISCUSSION:

- I. 4 It harms the body:
 - A. "Cigarette smoking accounts for about one-third of all cancers, including 90 percent of lung cancer cases."
 - (1) Unfortunately, I've seen the adverse effects of tobacco use on my loved ones.
 - (2) My mother and father were both heavy cigarette smokers.
 - (3) My mother died at age 51 from cigarette-induced lung cancer.
 - (4) My father died at age 75 and his lungs were ruined by a life time of smoking. **
 - (a) The last 10 or 15 years of his life he basically lived in his *Lazy-Boy* chair.
 - (b) He couldn't walk more than 10 or 15 feet without stopping to get his breath.
 - (5) Amazingly, in both of their case they could not give up smoking despite the terrible symptoms they were experiencing (relate each case).
 - B. 5 Smokeless tobacco (such as chewing tobacco and snuff) also increases the risk of cancer, especially oral cancers" (*National Institute on Drug Abuse*).
 - (1) According to the *World Health Organization*, "Smokeless tobacco is a known cause of cancer; take a look at these pictures before you take a "pinch between the cheek and gum." 6
 - (2) In addition, the nicotine in smokeless tobacco may increase the risk for sudden death from a condition where the heart does not beat properly."
 - C. 7 We are taught to honor and properly use the physical body: "*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 Cor. 6:19-20).
2. 8 It brings premature death:
 - A. According to the *Center for Diseases Control and Prevention*: "Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States."
 - (1) "Cigarette smoking results in more than 480,000 premature deaths in the United States each year.

- (a) About 1 in every 5 U.S. deaths related to cigarette smoking.
 - (b) And an additional 16 million people suffer with a serious illness caused by smoking.
 - (c) *American Lung Association*: "In the past 50 years, 20 million people have died prematurely because of smoking. That's more people than the populations of the 5 largest U.S. cities ... COMBINED."
- (2) **9** In fact, for every one person who dies from smoking, about 30 more suffer from at least one serious tobacco-related illness." Here are the top ten diseases cigarette smoking causes (*American Lung Association*):
- ☛ Lung cancer: #1 risk factor is cigarette smoking; 1 in 5 chance of living beyond 5 years.
 - ☛ COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease): long term disability and death; third leading cause of death in U.S. (Henrietta).
 - ☛ Heart disease: Smoking harms nearly every organ in your body, including your heart. Smoking can cause blockages and narrowing in your arteries, which means less blood and oxygen flow to your heart. When cigarette consumption in the U.S. decreased, so did the rates of heart disease. Yet, heart disease still remains the number one cause of death in the U.S.
 - ☛ Stroke: Because smoking affects your arteries, it can trigger stroke. A stroke happens when the blood supply to your brain is temporarily blocked. Brain cells are deprived of oxygen and start to die. A stroke can cause paralysis, slurred speech, altered brain function and death. Stroke is the fourth leading cause of death in the United States and a leading cause of adult disability.
 - ☛ Asthma: Asthma is a chronic lung disease that makes it harder to move air in and out of your lungs—otherwise known as "breathing." Because cigarette smoke irritates air passages, it can trigger sudden and severe asthma attacks. Asthma is a serious health condition that affects 25 million Americans. Smoking only makes it worse.
 - ☛ Reproductive effects in women: Smoking can cause ectopic pregnancy in women, which is when a fertilized egg implants somewhere other than the uterus. The egg can't survive and, if left untreated, can be life-threatening for the mother. Smoking also causes reduced fertility, meaning it makes it more difficult to get pregnant.
 - ☛ Premature, Low Birth-Weight Babies: The effects of smoking not only impact mom's health, but also that of her baby. Smoking while pregnant can cause babies to be born prematurely and/or with a low birth-weight. Babies born too early or too small have increased risk of health complications and even death.
 - ☛ Diabetes: You're more likely to get type 2 diabetes if you smoke. The risk of developing type 2 diabetes is 30 to 40 percent higher for smokers than non-smokers. Additionally smoking increases the risk of complications once diagnosed with diabetes, such as heart and kidney disease, poor blood flow to legs and feet (which leads to infections and possible amputation), blindness and nerve damage.
 - ☛ Blindness, Cataracts and Age-Related Macular Degeneration: Smoking can make you go blind. It damages your eyes and can result in vision loss. Age-related macular degeneration is caused by smoking. It is the leading cause of blindness in adults ages 65 and older.

- ☛ Over 10 Other Types of Cancer, Including Colon, Cervix, Liver, Stomach and Pancreatic Cancer: Basically, all the cancers. For both cancer patients and survivors, those who smoke are more likely to develop a second primary cancer. And now we know that smoking causes at least a dozen cancers, including liver and colorectal, and reduces the survival rates for prostate cancer patients.

- (3) “The life expectancy for smokers is at least 10 years shorter than for nonsmokers.”
 - (4) Remember Hall of Famer, Tony Gwynn, who died last year from cancer in the salivary gland attributed to his habit of chewing tobacco? (died at age 54; .338 lifetime batting average; 3,141 lifetime hits, 8 time NL batting champion, 15 time All-Star, etc.)
- B. Life is short enough as it is (**Psa. 90:10:** “*The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.*”; **Jas. 4:14:** “*For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.*”). Why shorten it further?
- (1) Premature death has a tremendous impact on the lives of the survivors.
 - (2) Again, my mother died at the relatively young age of 51.
 - (a) She never got to see me graduate from college.
 - (b) She never got to see the birth of her grandson.
 - (c) She never got to meet Dawne.
 - (d) She never got to see her grandchildren obey the gospel.
 - (e) Our family has experienced scores of Christmas’s, birthdays, and other special occasions without her presence.
 - (f) This creates a pall of sadness that never leaves you; especially when you consider that it was completely avoidable.

3. **10** It inflicts harm on others:

- A. “The harmful effects of smoking extend far beyond the smoker.
- (1) Exposure to secondhand smoke can cause serious diseases and death.
 - (2) Each year, an estimated 88 million nonsmoking Americans are regularly exposed to secondhand smoke and almost 41,000 nonsmokers die from diseases caused by secondhand smoke exposure” (*National Institute on Drug Abuse*).
- B. This goes against the Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12) and love of one’s neighbor (Matt. 22:39).
- (1) Paul said, “*Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*” (Phil. 2:4).
 - (2) Think of the poor, innocent children suffering with coughing, wheezing, asthma attacks, bronchitis, pneumonia, ear infections and other serious health problems related to secondhand smoke!
 - (3) My family was exposed to this second hand smoke every time we visited my father.
 - (a) When we returned home to Michigan we would have to wash all of our clothes, even those we didn’t wear, because they reeked of cigarette smoke smell.
 - (b) When my father passed away we had to deal with his house.

- (i) We took 23 pickup truck loads of stuff to the dump; everything was saturated with the smell of cigarette smoke and was impossible to wash out.
- (ii) Before we repainted the interior we had to wash the walls; an icky brown goo coated every surface; it was disgusting!
- (iii) Cigarette smoke had so stained all the light switches and electrical outlets that they all had to be replaced.
- (iv) We essentially gutted the house and replaced nearly everything, but still there was always a slight hint of that awful cigarette smell.

4. **11** It is addicting:

- A. Reports of the Surgeon General have concluded that cigarettes and tobacco products are addicting and that “Nicotine is the drug in tobacco that causes addiction.” (*60 Minutes*)
 - (1) The *National Institute on Drug Abuse* has revealed, “Electronic cigarettes produce a flavored nicotine vapor that has been shown to contain known carcinogens and toxic chemicals, as well as potentially toxic metal nanoparticles from the vaporizing mechanism.”
 - (2) According to data published by the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* and the *U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s Center for Tobacco Products*, “Current e-cigarette use among middle and high school students tripled from 2013 to 2014.”
 - (3) Findings from the *2014 National Youth Tobacco Survey* show that current e-cigarette use among high school students increased from 4.5 percent in 2013 to 13.4 percent in 2014, rising from approximately 660,000 to 2 million students.
 - (4) Among middle school students, current e-cigarette use more than tripled from 1.1 percent in 2013 to 3.9 percent in 2014—an increase from approximately 120,000 to 450,000 students.”
 - (5) “‘We want parents to know that nicotine is dangerous for kids at any age, whether it’s an e-cigarette, hookah, cigarette or cigar,’ said CDC Director Tom Frieden, M.D., M.P.H. ‘Adolescence is a critical time for brain development. Nicotine exposure at a young age may cause lasting harm to brain development, promote addiction, and lead to sustained tobacco use’” (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*).
- B. Paul penned, “*All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*” (1 Cor. 6:12).
 - (1) The enslavement I witnessed in my parents addiction to cigarettes (and experienced myself!) was both amazing and tremendously sad; they couldn’t kick the habit even to the bitter end.
 - (2) Instead of addiction to nicotine, we need to be like the “*house of Stephanas*” who was “*addicted to the ministry of the saints*” (1 Cor. 16:15)!

5. **12** It is costly:

- A. In addition to the costs to one’s health, the economic cost of tobacco is staggering:
 - (1) More than \$300 billion a year, including nearly \$170 billion in direct medical care and more than \$156 billion in lost productivity due to premature death and exposure to secondhand smoke” (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*).

- (2) According to *The American Cancer Society*, the average price per pack of cigarettes in the U.S. is \$6.36.
 - (a) When I smoked as a teenager a pack of cigarettes only cost 35¢.
 - (b) The health-related costs to you per pack of cigarettes: \$35! Now multiply that by the number of packs smoked.
 - B. Think of all the valuable resources wasted and opportunities missed! Think of all the gospel preachers that could be supported!
6. **13** *It is a gateway drug:*
 - A. According to *The National Institutes of Health*, “A new study shows how tobacco products could act as gateway drugs, opening the door to use of illicit drugs.”
 - (1) Nicotine, the researchers found, makes the brain more susceptible to cocaine addiction.
 - (2) Scientists have long recognized that cigarettes and alcohol raise the risk for later use of illicit drugs such as marijuana and cocaine.
 - (3) In a recent national survey, over 90% of adult cocaine users between the ages of 18 and 34 had smoked cigarettes before they began using cocaine.”
 - B. **Prov. 6:27-28:** “*Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? 28 Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?*”
7. **14** *It wasn’t used by the Lord:*
 - A. ****** Can you see Jesus with tobacco couched in His lip, a pack of cigarettes in His pocket, or a hookah to His mouth?
 - B. We are instructed, “... *Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps*” (1 Pet. 2:21).
8. **15** *It undermines one’s influence for good:*
 - A. In Titus 2:6-8 Paul writes: “*Likewise, exhort the young men to be sober-minded, 7 in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, 8 sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.*”
 - (1) Is tobacco use evidence of “*showing yourself to be a pattern of good works*”?
 - (2) Does tobacco use give our opponents an opportunity to speak “evil” of us?
 - (3) Where does tobacco use fit into being “*the salt of the earth*” and “*the light of the world*”? Matt. 5:13-16
 - B. In 1 Timothy 4:12 Paul told Timothy to be “*an example to the believers.*”
 - (1) If Paul and Timothy were alive today what do you think Paul would have advised Timothy insofar as tobacco use is concerned?
 - (2) Do you suppose Paul would be a smoker or dipper?
 - (3) What would you think of my example as a gospel preacher if every Sunday after the invitation song I went to the back foyer and lit up a cigarette?

- C. Do you want your children or grandchildren using tobacco? Would you use tobacco and then turn to your children and grandchildren and say to them as Gideon of old, *“Look on me, and do likewise”* (Judg. 7:17)?

III. CONCLUSION: 16

1. Tobacco use, whether smoking, chewing or dipping is a nasty, highly addictive and expensive habit.
2. Tobacco use will destroy your health and your good influence.
3. Multitudes of tobacco users have sought to quit and earnestly warned others not to start.
4. While tobacco and nicotine may be good as a pesticide, when it comes to the body, we cast it aside and say, “None inside!”
5. Only a fool would let tobacco cost him/her their soul!

Adapted from an article (*Why We Don't Use Tobacco*) by John Isaac Edwards.