

## Come let us Grow Together: Tobacco

Come let us Grow Together is a weekly series that deals with the many topical categories that exist within the Word of God. The purpose of this series is to grow in wisdom, knowledge and understanding in things pertaining to God.

“For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Rm 8:5-8)

Many people try to justify their tobacco use by claiming it isn't a sin. Some point out people that are obese and ask what about them? Are they sinning? What about what you eat? Are you eating healthy? Are you sinning? All these questions to try to justify a very serious addiction to tobacco products. However, as we just learned “For to be carnally minded is death” “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Is the use of tobacco spiritually minded or carnally minded? “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” (1 Jn 2:15-17) Is the use of tobacco “the lust of the flesh”? The answer is yes. The use of tobacco is “to be carnally minded” and “the lust of the flesh”. Therefore it is a sin to be using tobacco products. “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” (1 Cor 6:12) “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.” (Rm 6:14-18)

So how do you get free of the addictions that accompany the use of tobacco products? I understand that you may have tried to quit many, many times before and never succeeded. The first and most important step is praying to God for help even if you already done that many, many times before. Ask God to help you and be certain that you are sincerely trying to follow after the commandments of God. If you are not really trying to serve the Lord Jesus Christ then that may be the reason that God has not delivered you yet. However, there are some situations where you will have to keep praying and seeking God while trying to bring your body under subjection to Jesus Christ. “I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” (1 Cor 9:26-27) Do not neglect to ask other saints to pray for you concerning this and do not neglect to call for the elders of the Church to lay hands on you, anoint you with oil, and pray for you. “Is any among you afflicted?

let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” (James 5:13-16)

You may find that while you are doing your best to quit using tobacco products, trying your best to be obedient to the gospel teaching of Jesus Christ, praying and asking for help from God, that you still keep falling. Don't condemn yourself but rather repent of your sins and keep trying. Condemnation will only cause you to feel condemned, ashamed, and feeling guilty. God is merciful and will forgive you even if you make that same mistake all day long while you are continually repenting of it. Hear me. God knows your heart and that you are trying. “Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.” (Mt 18:21-22) How much more will God forgive your sins? “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” (Heb 2:17-18) “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb 4:14-16)

During this process of the Church praying for you and you continually presenting yourself before the elders of the Church, while doing your best to be obedient to the gospel teaching of Jesus Christ, you may consider trying medication to help you to quit. This is still an act of faith on your part. This has been very effective for many people. There are also nicotine patches as well as gum. Though nicotine is addictive and the majority reason that you can't break free from tobacco products even while trying to do your best to serve God, fearing him, and doing your best to keep his commandments, repenting every time you fall short and sin again; you may need to consider trying this method as it will at least help you to work on the psychological addiction that accompanies the use of tobacco products. Such as places you are very use to using tobacco. Maybe every time you go outside, or get into a car, or whatever your case may be. During this time you can do your best to break the psychological addiction. Whether it's helping you to stop the motion of placing a cigarette to your mouth, or if using a nicotine patch and using a piece of gum or other candy in your mouth to place between your jaw and gums to help distract your mind if you chew tobacco or are a snuff user, you can begin to work on breaking the psychological addiction.