

THE ETHICAL CHALLENGE OF ALCOHOL AND NICOTINE AND ITS
EFFECTS ON THE CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

This study on the Ethical Challenge of Alcohol and Nicotine and Its Effects on the Church was intended to find out whether it is good or not for Christians to take alcoholic beverages and tobacco. The research revealed the views of the Bible, Christian's denominations on alcoholism and nicotine. The study also found out the effects of alcohol and smoking on individuals and the society at large. It also discovered some challenges which alcoholism and smoking pose on the pastor, church, evangelism and mission.

The researcher was motivated by the alarming rate at which alcoholism and nicotine consumption cause hazards in the society. He was also bothered by the way some 'Christians' smoke and take alcohol, work in breweries and tobacco companies, sell or produce alcoholic beverages and tobacco. The method used in carrying out this research was mainly non empirical (research work) and coupled with observation of smokers and alcoholics at different locations and interviewing of some Christians whom God had delivered from the bondage of smoking and alcoholism. During the course of this research, the researcher found out that many of the evils that occurred in our society were caused by consumption of alcohol and nicotine. He also discovered that many became addicted to alcohol and nicotine by influenced in the school or community. The researcher recommended the preaching of total abstinence from alcohol and nicotine as the best way of fighting against alcoholism and consumption and should intensify her efforts in fulfilling the Great Commission assignment given her (the church) by Jesus Christ.

5.2. CONCLUSION

The society including the church of God is full of alcoholics and smokers. The ethical teachings of the Bible demand that Christians need to rise up to minister to the drug addicts especially the alcoholics and smokers. Biblical ethics demand that human bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit of the living God and are expected to glorify God with their bodies, souls (mind, emotion, will) and spirits. It is clear that alcoholics and smokers need help. If the world rejects them the church must take them, care for them, rehabilitate them, help restore their hope in life and eternally. Otherwise, their situation is injurious to their health, life and fulfillment of life. Christians should remember that for this very reason Christ came into the world for this very reason.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Having studied the effects and problems of alcohol and smoking on individuals, society, mission and evangelism, the researcher has the following recommendations for the church.

The church should embrace total abstinence from alcohol and tobacco as the only way of making the community free from the effects mentioned in this research. Therefore, church should raise objections against films and commercials promoting addictive substances including alcohol and tobacco.

The church should in the Spirit of Christ accept the addict, whether recovered or not, as people created in the image of God and show compassion. The addicts should be seen as ignorant who know not what they do and as those who need deliverance.

The church should also embrace the policy of government against smoking and alcoholism e.g. 'do not drive when you drink and do not drink when you drive' policy. This will promote good health and reduce road accident. Likewise, the revenue received from selling alcohol and tobacco be used for health and public welfare.

It should discourage selection of the smokers and alcoholics as officers in the church. This is what the Bible recommends.

The crusade against alcohol and tobacco should not be limited to the church alone. It (the church) should also reach out to the drug abusers who are outside the church setting e.g. parks, streets, schools etc. This could be done through one-on-one evangelism or witnessing.

It should also consider a ban on smoking and drinking alcohol in public places. This will stop pollution from tobacco and alcohol in public places. Finally, a review of the Baptist Covenant to take care of those who produce alcohol and raw tobacco and those who work in tobacco companies and breweries.