

Its Likeness to Other "Weeds"

Because this article may stir up some emotions, it should be stated that it was written about *cocaine* in the country of Columbia in Central America.

But there are many Wicked Weeds in the world. If you thought of *something else*, **your conscience has spoken and must not be ignored.**

If you use a "Wicked Weed," **Q-U-I-T**. "Cease to do evil; learn to do good." (**Isaiah 1:16-17**) None of the medicines or programs will help you if you don't *want* to quit. And with the godly desire and determination to quit, man-made programs and methods are often unnecessary.

Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. (**James 5:16**)

God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (**2 Timothy 1:7**)

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (**Philippians 4:13**)

If you support a Wicked Weed by growing or selling it, separate yourselves from it, and even make a bonfire out of the evil things! Find godly ways to earn a living, and trust *God* to put food on your table!

If you *don't* use or support a Wicked Weed, then you might want to share this article with someone who does. In the meantime, take heed lest you fall (**1 Corinthians 10:12**) and pray that you won't be led into temptation. (**Matthew 6:13**)

God bless you in His service.

That Wicked Weed

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Its Role in Society

There is a weed that has become the mainstay of a regional economy and the primary crop for many growers. Those growers have strong political connections, and the weed has sometimes been glamorized by Hollywood.

Many people start using it because some of their friends do. Curiosity combines with the fear of being laughed at or left out, and people who would usually not even *touch* it start *using* it. Those who buy the expensive weed are often seen in the worst parts of town, but it also has a formidable toehold among the wealthy and well-educated.

It is often connected with booze and sexual immorality, and a larger percentage of criminals than other people tend to use it. Public opinion about it is mixed, but it is coming under increasing scrutiny and opposition.

Its Role in the Church

Some church members oppose it in every form, from the planting to the selling to the using. Other church members use it publicly. Consequently, discussion of it is awkward, to say the least.

Those who *use* it often become defensive and make excuses for their actions, attempting to justify themselves and often trying to divert attention from their own sin by looking at the sins of others. Those who *oppose* it often convince themselves that it's not worth dividing the church over, so they don't say much.

But it is, indeed, a Wicked Weed. Scriptural arguments against it center around the following four points:

Its Use . . .

Q) . . . is **Questionable**. The very fact that many people consider it morally wrong casts a dark shadow of doubt over it. **Romans 14:23** teaches that "whatever is not of faith is sin." For something to be "of faith" (in the context of Romans 14) there cannot be *any* doubt about it in the person's mind. Unless you believe beyond a shadow of a doubt that it's *right* to use that Wicked Weed, then it's *wrong* for you to use it. Besides that, its use . . .

U) . . . is **Unhealthy**. Harming the body is sinful. **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** teaches that the Christian's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and should be used to glorify God. **Romans 12:1-2** teaches Christians to present their bodies as living sacrifices to God for His service. Mountains of evidence prove that the use of that Wicked Weed damages the body, but naturally, those who grow, sell and use it say it's *not* harmful to the body. But did you ever hear of grandparents who thought their grandbaby was ugly? People who profit from it would only hurt themselves by admitting its damaging impact. Be that as it may, its use . . .

I) . . . is **Influential**. "Your actions speak so loudly that I can't hear what you're saying." Christians who use that Wicked Weed have "defiled their mind and conscience. They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work." (**Titus 1:15-16**) Sound extreme? Think of it this way: The user who uses that Wicked Weed in spite of the nagging doubts as to whether or not it's right a) cannot teach about listening to your conscience or about taking good care of your body, b) cannot warn anyone against becoming addicted to anything, and c) falls far short of the goal that Paul set for Titus:

In all things showing yourself to be a pattern [or, example] of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you. (**Titus 2:7-8**)

Besides all this, its use . . .

T) . . . **Takes over**. Yes, it's *addictive*, even though its use may not be particularly pleasant at first. Paul said, "All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." (**1 Corinthians 6:12**) Even wholesome things become evil when allowed to take us over. Besides harming a person's soul, body and influence, that Wicked Weed takes over a person's *mind* (and eventually even his finances). The user who says, "I can quit any time I want to," but who has to take a break during a two-hour worship service to use it has been "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (**Hebrews 3:13**)

(Just for the record, we're talking about using it *for pleasure*. The plant has a medical use, but other drugs and substances serve the same purpose, so the plant is usually grown simply for pleasure.)

"That Wicked Weed has put food on our table!"

Let's be consistent. It's wrong to *use* it, so it's wrong to *approve* of it.

Knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. (**Romans 1:32**)

But many Christians not only *approve* of it, they actively *support* the use of that Wicked Weed by growing it and selling it, usually because of its economic value. Some Christians assume that God's people would starve to death if they didn't grow that Wicked Weed. Whatever happened to faith? Do you not think that God will provide for His people in godly ways? Jesus knew that people tend to worry about what to wear and where their next meal will come from. (**Matthew 6:25-32**) He said,

Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. (**Matthew 6:33**)

Think about a different type of evil for a moment. It is wrong to read pornography (dirty magazines). Now, is it right to *sell* those magazines as long as you don't read them? Or, is it right to support your family by taking pictures for those magazines (and then excuse yourself by saying, "But I'm just a photographer")?

Let's look at a Bible example. On one occasion in Ephesus, Christians could have *sold* some books to non-Christians. (The books were worth 50,000 pieces of silver!) But they were wrong to *read*, so they were wrong to *sell* (**Acts 19:19**), so the Christians made a bonfire out of the books!

The very next story in Acts 19 (verses 23-41) centers around the support of idolatry. Demetrius was a silversmith who used his talents to make idols of a false goddess, Diana. When Paul preached against idolatry, it hurt Demetrius' trade. (See verses 26-27.) It's a "fatal" blow when you hit some people in the pocket book! You see, *Demetrius supported idolatry* by selling the idols, and *the idolaters supported Demetrius* by buying his idols.

Now what about that Wicked Weed? It's wrong to *use* it, so it's wrong to *support* it. Never let it be said among God's people that anything evil puts food on our tables. *God* puts food on our tables, and He can do so through the honest, wholesome hard work of His people.