

natural moral restraints people have against engaging in these kinds of activities -- our conscience and moral upbringing. And it does this by changing a person's beliefs and thinking.

I can personally testify about the effects of marijuana in my own life. When I smoked marijuana, something invaded my mind and started changing my thinking. I began to think that I could become one with God, or that I actually *was* God. I developed an attraction to Eastern religion, particularly Hinduism. I developed an interest in the occult, astrology, Tarot cards, astral projection, etc. My moral restraints began evaporating as I used more marijuana. I was so attached to the experience of getting high that it became my main pursuit for the next four years. I smoked marijuana whenever I had a chance. I had little motivation to study, work, or do anything but get high. I wanted marijuana so badly that I was willing to risk going to jail for many years because of it.

When I committed my life to Jesus Christ, I knew that I needed to give up marijuana and other hallucinogenic drugs. I realized that the influence of these drugs was the opposite of the influence of the Holy Spirit. The two are incompatible. In the 32 years I have had a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, I have never met anyone who smoked marijuana and also had a personal

relationship with God. On the other hand, I have met hundreds of people who have testified that God told them to give up marijuana when they became disciples of Jesus.

Before we come to Jesus Christ, we are living for ourselves, doing what we want to do. When we come to Jesus, we need to let Him be Lord of our lives, to find out what He wants us to do and seek to obey Him. We need to realize that the way we have been going is wrong, and that God's way is right. We must make a decision to live God's way, through the strength He gives us. The following is an example of a prayer you can pray to get your life right with God:

"Jesus I know that I have sinned against you. I believe that you died for my sins and rose from the dead. Now I ask you to be Lord of my life. Come into my life and make me the kind of person you want me to be. Show me each day what you want me to do. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life with you."

If you asked Jesus to save you, write us at the address below. If you do, we will send you some information to help you live for Him.

Christian Friends P O Box 27358
Oakland, CA 94602 (510) 531-5325
www.sosmin.com mail@sosmin.com

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone(____) _____



Since 1996, nine states have voted to legalize "medical" marijuana. Still, marijuana remains illegal throughout the U.S. The U.S. Penal Code states that any person can be imprisoned for up to one year for possession of one marijuana cigarette and imprisoned for up to five years for growing a single marijuana plant. Is it wrong to use marijuana? Does the Bible have anything to say about it?

The Greek word "pharmakia" is used five times in the New Testament, once in Paul's letter to the Galatians (5:20) and four times in the last book of the Bible — Revelation (Rev. 9:21, Rev. 18:23, Rev. 21:8, and Rev. 22:15). Three of these times, we are told that those who engage in "pharmakia" will not enter Heaven. According to W.E. Vine's expository dictionary of New Testament words, the word "pharmakia"

After millions of people started smoking marijuana in the 1960's, our society experienced dramatic changes. Millions of people, who believed in the Bible and Jesus Christ before they started using marijuana, began to reject Christianity and embrace Eastern religion, new age thinking, occultism, etc. They also began to reject Biblical morality. Instead they adopted the philosophy "if it feels good, do it." Most got involved in fornication, and many got involved in adultery, sexual promiscuity, homosexuality, pornography, child molestation, etc. Marijuana weakens the

see the fruit of marijuana use in our society. Those of us who used to smoke marijuana can see what it did in our own lives. Those who never smoked marijuana can see what it did in other people's lives. (And the marijuana used today is often much stronger than what was used in the 1960's.) Marijuana use does in fact open up people to demonic influence. It changes a person's personality, desires, and beliefs. Although its effects are subtler than LSD, this does not make it less dangerous. In some respects, its subtly makes it *more* dangerous, since it is more deceptive in the way it draws a person away from God and towards evil things. "Now the serpent [Satan] was more subtle than any beast of the field" Gen. 3:1. "By your sorceries all the nations were deceived." Rev. 18:23.

Every year, over 2500 admissions to Washington D.C. emergency rooms are linked to marijuana smoking. Dr. Harold Voth, senior psychiatrist for the Meuninger Foundation, found that 90 percent of those using drugs such as heroin started with marijuana. Dr. Charles Tart did a study, published in *Nature*, about the effects of marijuana. In a survey of frequent marijuana users, 80% said "I get somewhat paranoid about the people with me, I am suspicious about what they're doing," 23% said "I lose control of my actions and do antisocial things (things that harm other people)," and 20% said, "I have lost control and been 'taken over' by an outside force or will which is hostile or evil in intent for a while."

Jesus said a tree is known by its fruit. We can

long lasting and often permanent. In this respect, alcohol is different from marijuana. A person might use alcohol to reduce temporarily his moral aversion to some activity such as fornication (sex outside of marriage). However, once the alcohol wears off, the person is likely to have the same moral aversion to fornication.

In contrast, marijuana changes a person's thinking and beliefs. A person who smokes marijuana will often find himself thinking and believing that fornication is not sinful, that the whole idea of "sin" is wrong, that he should no longer trust the Bible, that there are many ways to God, and that he himself is God. The marijuana generation of the 1960's correctly condemned the hypocrisy of the alcohol generation of the 1940's and 1950's. Marijuana users are not hypocrites -- they are deceived.

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refers to "a sorcerer, especially one who uses drugs, potions, spells, enchantments." While our word "pharmacy" is derived from "pharmakia," the Greek word does not refer to all drug use, but rather drug use which is related to sorcery. Sorcery involves using certain kinds of drugs to open up oneself to the influence of Satan or demons.

Revelation 9:21 states that after God poured out his wrath on rebellious humanity through plagues, people did not repent of their "murders, sorcery, fornication or their thefts." If Revelation has anything to do with the last days, these four sins will be prevalent at that time. While very few people today claim to be sorcerers, the use of mind-altering drugs is certainly prevalent in our world today.

Many non-Christian religions use mind-altering drugs as part of their ceremonies. Long ago, marijuana was used in shamanistic rituals in India, China, and Assyria. An ancient Chinese writing noted that "If taken over a long term, it [marijuana] makes one communicate with spirits." Today, many groups — including the Rastafarians, the Tepecano Indians of Mexico, and the Kasai Tribes of the Congo — use marijuana as a sacrament in their religious functions. The Kasai consider marijuana to be a god.

The drugs used in sorcery are "mind-altering" -- they change a person's beliefs, personality and thinking. The change is