

Reading: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him” (1 Cor 3:16,17)

Hardly a youth programme passes off without someone asking in the question-answer session, “Can Christians smoke?” Several young people start smoking just for the thrill of it. They feel that they enjoy their freedom and self-worth that way. But in course of time they become addicted to this habit and feel miserable. In the initial stages the smokers feel that they get a kick to think better and work better. But soon they realize their folly. Those who smoke to forget their worries are also disappointed.

Because smoking was not perhaps known in Biblical times, there’s no specific reference to it in the Bible, unlike drinking. But the statutory warning in every cigarette packet is good enough: *Smoking is injurious to health!* This fact is proved worldwide. Even passive smoking is equally bad. The Government is banning smoking in public places. God desires that we stay healthy (3 Jn 2). How can He approve smoking? The last day of this month is observed as Anti-smoking Day all over the world!

Uninformed folks argue, “Jesus is the Saviour of our souls. Why should He bother about our eating or drinking or smoking?” But the Bible teaches that we must surrender our bodies also to Him (Rom 12:1). Apostle Paul challenged the lax lifestyle of the Christians in Corinth: “Do you not know that your **bodies** are members of Christ?... You are bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your **body** and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor 6:15, 20).

Smokers are definitely under bondage. Smoking enslaves them. They obey every beck and call of the cigarettes. It is not God’s will that His children are under any form of slavery (Jn 8:34). Through his personal testimony, apostle Paul has given us the principle of Christian living: “All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of anything” (1 Cor 6:12). The Bible admonishes us to abstain even from all “forms” of evil.

May be you are hooked to this habit. It’s never too late for God to deliver you. When Christ delivers you, it’s deliverance indeed (Jn 8:36). Ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of the Scriptures quoted above whenever you are tempted. You will be saved by remembering “what is written!” Also avoid the company of smokers. Bad company corrupts good manners. Have a dental appointment to clean up your stained teeth. Smile, Jesus loves you!

MAY 15

PRAYER

Subject: Youth

Reading: 1 Cor 6:12-20

Memorising: 1 Cor 3:16,17

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father,

We worship You as our Supreme Deliverer. You delivered Your people from Egyptian bondage. You delivered Your people from the hand of their enemies. You delivered Your people from their personal and national distress. We thank You for delivering us from so many troubles. Above all, You have delivered us from the *penalty* of sin. You are delivering us moment by moment from the *power* of sin. And You have promised to deliver us from the very *presence* of sin when we reach eternity.

Father God, we thank You for the promise that sin shall not have dominion over us because we are no more under Law but under Your Grace. Thank You for the blood of Jesus Your Son which keeps cleansing us all the time. We thank You for the promise He has given us that if He the Son makes us free, we are free indeed. We thank You for the sanctifying work of Your Holy Spirit.

We pray for those of us who are struggling with addictive habits like smoking and drinking. We confess that our will-power is not good enough to resist these temptations. Our spirit is willing, but our flesh is weak, O God. We look to You for true and lasting deliverance. We confess that You who are in us is greater and mightier than the one in the world. But we fall into temptations because we are not watchful enough in prayer. We fail to seek regularly the fellowship of Your children so we might stand together against the tempter. Help us, O God, to humble ourselves and stay accountable to the fellow-believers.

Father God, we confess that repeated failures depress us and we are tempted to give up. Help us disbelieve the lie of the devil that we cannot make it. Help us take courage and be of good cheer because Your Son has overcome the world for us. In His victorious Name we can enjoy perpetual victory. Fill us again, O Lord, with Your Holy Spirit so we may discern the schemes of Satan against us and escape his traps.

Father God, grant us compassion and understanding for those who are too weak to resist temptations and live with guilt and self-condemnation. Make us like Jesus who ministered to the worst of sinners with love and understanding. In His beloved Name, we pray! Amen!

*(Ex 12:40-42; Neh 9:10-13; Rom 6:14,22; Heb 3:12,13; 9:27,28; Jn 8:36; 16:33;
Acts 15:9; Mt 26:41; 1 Jn 1:7; 4:4; Eccl 4:9-12; Eph 6:10,11)*