

AARP Magazine is sent to senior citizens, and they have various tips and advice to them. (I'm not sure why they sent it to me!) One article about the reality of marijuana and alcohol consumption when you were young caught my attention. The article was entitled "Undo the Damage (of Your Rock'N'Roll Years)." Let me share an excerpt with you on both of them.

Smoking Cigarettes & Pot

"THE REALITY. The longer you've been off cigarettes, the better condition you're in. Ten years after quitting, your risk of dying from lung cancer is half that of a smoker's; 15 years after, your heart disease risk is the same as that of a nonsmoker.

"With marijuana, the prognosis is less clear, but one New Zealand study found lower IQs among adults who reported smoking a lot of dope when young. There is also some evidence that young pot smokers are more likely to develop schizophrenia and psychosis later in life.

"THE FIX. If you still smoke cigarettes, quit. If you smoked pot in the past, a healthy lifestyle now may help offset the impact marijuana had on your body."

Drinking Alcohol

"THE REALITY. ... Keep in mind that alcohol affects many other parts of the body (besides the liver, awg) that don't regenerate as well or at all. Binge drinking when younger has been linked to a host of problems when you are older, including an increased risk of heart disease and cancer. Even more sobering, the hippocampus and frontal brain structures don't mature until about age 25, so if you drank a lot before then, you may have inhibited your brain's functional development.

"THE FIX.... The challenge, because alcohol is an addictive substance, is making sure moderate doesn't become excessive."

Biblical Instruction

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1).

"He who loves pleasure will be a poor man; He who loves wine and oil will not be rich" (Proverbs 21:17).

"Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly" (Proverbs 23:29–31).

"Give strong drink to him who is perishing, and wine to those who are bitter of heart" (Proverbs 31:6).

"And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18).

"Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: ... drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21).

My Observations

AARP Magazine is not a "conservative" magazine or organization. But even its editors see the real and lasting dangers of drugs and alcohol. The magazine gives advice to senior citizens, but it does not tell you how many young people died from drugs and alcohol and therefore never became senior citizens!

Those who practice drunkenness cannot inherit the kingdom of God. I have known many Christians who thought they could practice "social drinking" and never become alcoholics. Most of those of whom I know became alcoholics, in spite of their protestations in their younger years. Even AARP tells you that alcohol is "an addictive substance" but they still encourage moderate drinking! **Seriously?!** Why not tell young and old alike that alcohol can destroy your mind, your body, your career, your family, your life and your eternal life?! Why do businesses spend billions of dollars encouraging the drinking of beer, wine, liquor, etc. — and then say "Don't drink and drive" and "Drink responsibly!" Can we not see the double standard here people?!

As a young Christian, and then a young preacher, the first sermon I developed was the danger of drinking and drugs. I never touched the stuff because I had seen what it did to friends and family! I have never regretted leaving it out of my life. I am wiser, richer, and healthier.

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