

Letters to Young people.

Hi again, and welcome to the next in my series of "Letters to Young People". I hope you're all well and that you've been enjoying this series. If any of you have any suggestions as to a topic you'd like me to write on, feel free to let me know.

Anybody who spends any time at school or work, or who meets young people anywhere, will know how much drugs and alcohol have become a part of youth culture. They've always been there, but it seems that in recent times it has become more and more common. We probably all know people who regularly use them, and even who spend a considerable amount of time affected by them.

Usually, most people will say that alcohol, or even drugs, are "Okay in moderation" or something similar. Others will point out that many parents will condemn drugs, yet make frequent use of alcohol themselves. Although it's true that alcohol is legal while drugs are not, it has to be admitted that there's really very little difference!

The fact is, when we use drugs or alcohol, we're letting something else take control of our bodies. I'm sure that none of us would want to hand over control of our bodies to anyone else, so why would we hand over control of ourselves to something else? But, if you have even a small amount of any drug, even alcohol, you are allowing that to take control of you. You will do things you wouldn't otherwise do. You'll allow others to do things that you wouldn't normally allow. Basically, you lose control of who you are and what you do with yourself. People will tell you that you're "just having a good time", but are you really?

In the Bible we're told to "Keep yourself pure" (I Timothy 5: 22). Could we really say that we're doing that if we're putting drugs or alcohol in our bodies? But if we avoid those things, we can keep ourselves truly pure, and keep control of who we are and what we want to do with our lives. If you're under the control of a chemical, whether it's alcohol, speed, THC or whatever, then you're not really in charge of your own life.

It's odd really that using alcohol or drugs is sometimes seen as an 'adult' thing to do. Many people will tell you that you are being free, you are doing what it is you 'right' to do. Even the law looks at the 'right' to drink alcohol as one of the things that defines adulthood, autonomy, and independence. But really, what is truly 'independent' about it? If we are placing our minds, bodies, thoughts and actions under the control of a chemical, we are in fact a long way from being independent.

Be truly independent – don't allow a chemical to rule your life! You can only reach your true, full potential by taking charge of your own life, and taking charge of what you do with it. The bottle doesn't have anything to do with being an adult, or being independent, or even having a good time. Keep yourself pure, and truly be independent!

Gary Young