

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- BELIEVE – ACTS 16:31
- REPENT – ACTS 17:30; LUKE 13:3
- CONFESS – ROMANS 10:10; I TIMOTHY 6:12
- BE BAPTIZED – ACTS 2:38; MARK 16:16
- BE FAITHFUL – REVELATION 2:10

PRAYER LIST:

North Ridgeville Church of Christ
36364 Chestnut Ridge Road
North Ridgeville, OH 44039

www.nrcoc.net

Times for Meeting

Lord's Day

9:30 AM Bible Study (all ages)
10:30 AM Worship

Wednesday

7:00 PM Bible Study (all ages)

Elders

Bruce Dean
Mark Ullman

Evangelist

Steven Wallace

THE NORTH RIDGEVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only,
deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22

March 05, 2023

“It’s a Smoke Screen!”

Glendol McClure

Cigarette ads depict the smoking world as a world of glamour and prestige. Remember the Marlboro Man, that handsome dude in big-sky country? Then, there are the smoking-product ads that portray men and women with cigarettes in their mouths engaging in exciting activities, such as car races, boat races, and various outdoor sports. Cigarette ads have even depicted women as having "*come a long way.*"

Generally, these ads picture the men as healthy, robust, and successful. The women shown are intelligent, sexy (a big selling point), and often smiling. But the smoker's real world is nothing like the world presented in the tobacco industry ads.

When the smoke clears to reveal the real world of men and women who smoke or use other tobacco products, we see a much different picture. It is a world of hacking coughs and breathing problems; foul-smelling clothes; stained teeth; leathery skin; and burn-spotted floors, carpets, clothes, and beds. Many unfortunate smokers have doomed themselves when they fell asleep while smoking, resulting in mattress or couch fires that ended their smoking careers. Further, unless smokers maintain a steady fix of nicotine in their blood streams, they exist in a world of irritability,

headaches, and restlessness. Smoking is one of the biggest causes of human health problems, often resulting in painful suffering and eventual premature death.

Yes, the ads are appealing, but the real world of a smoker is far different. The same facts are true about alcoholism and its attendant consequences. Some may view smokers as having "*come a long way*," but in reality it's the *wrong* way. Tobacco ads are nothing but a *pack* of lies, hiding the reality of what the *pack* really contains. Please consider the following Bible principles showing that it is sinful to smoke or use tobacco in other ways!

1. **The world condemns smoking.** Paul told Timothy to be "*an example of the believers in word, conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*" (1 Timothy 4:12) Do brethren who smoke in front of the local congregation's meeting place set a proper example before the world? You know the answer! Additionally, the world (doctors, health and safety professionals, etc.) views smoking and using tobacco products as unhealthy and recommends that those who engage in such practices stop.
2. **Smoking is addictive and enslaving to the user.** Peter wrote, "*For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.*" (2 Peter 2:19) Paul also wrote, "*Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*" (Romans 6:16) Can a Christian be a slave to nicotine or any other addictive substance? NO!
3. **Smoking does not glorify God.** Paul wrote, "*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*" (Rom. 12:1-2; cf. 1 Cor. 6:19-20) Are smokers *conformed* or *transformed*? You know the answer.
4. **Smoking sets a bad example before children. It does not "show a pattern of good works,"** and smokers are not bringing up their children "*in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*" Paul wrote to Titus instructing him to exhort the aged men

and women to be Godly and to teach the younger men and women. I don't think Paul meant for the aged to teach the young by setting *bad* examples, which is exactly what those who smoke do. I encourage you to read *Titus 2:1-8* and *Ephesians 6:4*.

Smoking does *NOT* set a Godly example!

5. **Smoking in the presence of other Christians demonstrates lack of brotherly love.** And the Hebrew writer penned, "*Let brotherly love continue.*" (Hebrews 13:1) The implication is, that this *brotherly love* should *not* cease. Those who are in the smoker's presence breathe the second-breath (often called second-hand) smoke and put their health at risk. Paul wrote, "*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*" (Philippians 2:3-4) The smoker who smokes in the presence of others who do not smoke is looking after his nicotine addiction--not the *things* of others.
6. **Smokers condemn themselves.** The majority of smokers readily admit that smoking is bad for their own health, a filthy habit, expensive, a health risk to others, and a bad example. They seldom recommend that others take up smoking. You won't find many smokers who are willing to encourage their children or other family members to smoke. Rather, they try to dissuade them from smoking. In this way, they condemn themselves. Remember what James wrote, "*Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*" (James 4:17)

The world condemns smoking; it results in enslavement and addiction to nicotine, does not glorify God, does not set a proper example, is not a good work, exhibits lack of brotherly love, and condemns oneself. Clearly, smoking is sinful!

The world seems to think that the "**good life**" can be found at the end of a lit cigarette, cigar, or pipe. Unfortunately, the picture changes when, after years of smoking, the person is dying of lung cancer or emphysema! Consider which picture you want to believe!