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Questions Youth Are Asking Today

Answered by Mervyn Maxwell

WHY THE TRAUMA ABOUT POT?

Why all the trauma about pot? Writers in the "Signs" regard it as one of the seven deadly sins. Grass is recognized as nonaddicting; as less harmful, in fact, than alcohol. Besides that, it's fun. I'm a Christian, and I enjoy it. I wonder why you don't get the real message about marijuana?

Alcohol is generally recognized to lie at the root of 50 percent of all fatal automobile accidents and 75 percent of all major crimes in the United States. How much "less harmful" than that would marijuana need to be in order to be mere fun?

Don't kid yourself that "grass" has been given a clear bill of health by the specialists. The returns are not all in yet by any means; yet even so there is already mounting evidence that marijuana induces a false sense of pleasure and personal capability that leads susceptible persons to commit acts they would otherwise avoid. Furthermore, persons who have a particular need for psychological stimulation become addicted to marijuana psychologically even if not biologically and from this are led to more pernicious drugs. You may be one of the relatively unsusceptible majority; as a Christian, however, do you want your *influence* to encourage someone else to get hooked who may be far weaker than yourself? Do you really want to send your mind, your most priceless possession, into a make-believe world?

Modern youth are impatient to see an end to the hypocrisies of the older generation, and there are many hypocrisies that ought to

come to an end soon. It seems unspeakably sad, therefore, that today's youth fall so easily for mod-hypocrisies of their own—hypocritical love (promiscuous sex), hypocritical beauty (green eyelids, for example), and hypocritical dreams (such as drug-induced euphoria). In my book, the kids who are really swinging are the ones who are keeping their minds and bodies clean and are trying to avoid hypocrisies of every sort.

ULTIMATE QUESTIONS

I would like your answer to these questions: 1. Where did we come from? 2. Why are we here? 3. Where are we going? If you cannot answer them, please write me back and let me know.

The Bible answers each of these questions. (1) It says we came from God, who created us. Genesis 1:26: "God said, Let Us make man in Our image." (2) It says we are here to do all the good and all the kindness of which we are capable with God's help. Ephesians 2:10: "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

(3) And where are we going?

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

Would you like to ask Mervyn Maxwell to help you find an answer? If so, send your question to

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John 3:16: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." If we do not believe in Jesus, after this life we die forever; we perish. But if we do accept Jesus as our Saviour, we shall live forever in God's home. Revelation 21:3, looking to the future says, "Behold, the tabernacle [dwelling place] of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." Read on through verse 7 in your own Bible.

DOES A CHRISTIAN HAVE TO ATTEND CHURCH?

I enjoy taking the quiz that appears in the "Signs." Now I have a question I would like you to answer in your column: Can you be a Christian without going to church? Please hurry and send me a reply.

Yes, you can be a Christian without going to church. You can be a hermit!

A real Christian shares, gives, helps, encourages. Right? Going to church is a wonderful opportunity, not only to worship God for oneself but also to befriend people who come to church in need of friendship—or who would come to church if they knew that you would radiate the love of Jesus to them if you were there.

Hebrews 10:25 says we should come to church to exhort one another. The meaning of "exhort" is "to help, encourage, comfort, advise, and assist in any way possible" someone else in his search for faith.

I guarantee that if you start going to church to bring happiness to some old lady you know, or to some little children, or to anyone else who attends your church, you won't want to be a stay-at-home Christian!

PRAYING FOR A JOB

Every employment interview I have ends the same way. They either say, "We'll call you," or, "Sorry, we have someone else." I

have prayed and tried really hard to get things to work out. I went to high school and college. What's wrong? I believe in God. Why doesn't He answer my prayers and help me get a job?

There are several reasons why God doesn't always give us what we want right away. One is to see if we love Him for His own sake or merely for the things He gives us. Another is that sometimes He is waiting for things to work out best. For a few weeks, for example, some other praying Christian may need the job God knows is best for you, so that God has to take care of *both* of you!

Sometimes the reason is that God is trying to teach us about ourselves. I do not know you, of course. Do you dress well when you go for a job? Is your skirt too short? Is your hair nice? Are you overweight? Are you perhaps trying for a kind of job you wouldn't succeed at? God may be helping you learn about yourself so He can lead you to another occupation where you would do well.

Read Psalm 37, especially verses 4-7: "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. . . . Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him."

SAVING A GOOD FAMILY

Some families have meetings in their home and respect each other. My family is a good one, but sometimes I think it may fall apart. We don't go to movies or anywhere else together. How can God and I help my family? Please show me. Thank you very much.

Thousands of families have found the very thing you are looking for by sending for a free Bible correspondence course such as the one offered on page 31 in this issue of *Signs of the Times*. Often it has been a young person like you who has applied. It is very satisfying for a family to sit around a table and study the Bible together.

If you think your parents aren't ready for this yet, ask for a junior Bible correspondence course, and when it comes invite your brother and sister to study it with you.

Of course, you can start going to church by yourself. If the first one you attend doesn't seem to help, try another. Naturally I recommend the nearest Seventh-day Adventist church. Report to your family the best things that happen while you're at church and get them enthusiastic about going with you.

Keep me posted on how things develop, and God bless you.

NO MARRIAGE IN HEAVEN?

If God is love (1 John 4:8), and if marriage is a sacred symbol of Christ's love for His church (Ephesians 5) and "a holy institution bequeathed on man at creation," as the minister usually says it is at weddings, then why isn't there going to be any marriage in heaven? This is the one thing about heaven I don't like.

It is true that Jesus said there would be no marrying in heaven. Matthew 22:30. Just why this is so, I cannot say. The only reason I can think of is that He evidently has something better to take its place.

You know, it is interesting to reflect on the fact that you yourself haven't always wanted to get married. When you were eighteen months old, the thing you wanted to do most of all was to get into your mother's bedroom and empty out all her drawers! When you were four, I dare say, your supreme ambition was to race your trike smack into your Daddy's legs. When you were ten, if anyone had suggested that someday you would marry one of your playmates, you would likely have replied, "What? Me marry one of those things?"

Then as your biological-psychological makeup changed once again, you found yourself falling in love. This was good. Falling in love is a nice thing—something so good that only God could have created our capacity to do so.

But in heaven, we are told, we

are to have a brand-new biological-psychological makeup—a new body "fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Philippians 3:21)—a wonderful part of a wonderful new life so marvelous and good that "the former [way of life we now know] shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Isaiah 65:17. Personally I find myself very curious about whatever it may be that God is keeping up His sleeve for us—something that is going to be even better than a loving marriage.

COMMENTS FROM READERS: IS IT GOOD TO BE BAD FIRST? I ACCEPTED CHRIST IN JAIL.

I was impressed with your answer to the question if it was better for a youth to be bad so he could have a testimony about how wonderful it is to accept Christ. May I answer that I accepted Christ from behind bars in a jail cell. I can tell the youth that it would have been much more pleasant to accept Christ at an early age. I know God has forgiven me, and I have forgiven myself. But for the rest of my life I have to live with the wrongs I committed. Forgiveness doesn't block out memory. I was involved with a murder and other crimes. If I had to do it over, I would gladly trade my life of "excitement" for their square life. I was raised in a strict Christian home. I was not satisfied then, but now I wish I could turn the clock back. I wouldn't complain about my square life anymore. [Georgia]

ON PRAYING, "IF IT'S GOD'S WILL."

I agree that we should pray for healing only in harmony with God's will, but I also think it is right for people to strengthen their faith by reading 3 John 2, where it appears that God's desire "above all things" is that we should be in health even as our souls prosper. Of course they also need to be reminded of Psalm 66:18: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." And I would surely like to recommend Ted Torkelson's book, "Doctor Upstairs." It's marvelous. [Newfoundland] □