

Drugs?  
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Drugs? Sure, If I wanted, I could get some within minutes. I know quite a number of kids who take it. Why? They say that they're high, they can escape from their personal problems and the pressures of their "hypocritical" society. Protest? The administration is wrong! Their ideas and principles are outdated. The Church? It's an establishment of the administration; that's what's wrong with it. I go because my parents force me. They don't even care, really. We want freedom from this bias and hypocrisy. Change the world, policies, principles! Everything.

How many times a week – or even in one day – do you hear these and other similar phrases? Even if you're hearing this for the first time, do you find yourself unconsciously nodding your head and saying yes? Maybe not to the extent that you'd experiment with drugs or fight the police, but you do find yourself agreeing with these basic ideas.

Freedom and liberty. What high-sounding words. Since the beginning of time, man has been fighting for his freedom and individuality. What is this freedom for which man kills man? According to Webster, freedom is "the quality or state of being free: as the absence of necessity, coercion, constraint in choice or action; liberation from slavery or restraint from power of another." Aren't drugs and protests and life away from the Church an expression of our freedoms? You decide for yourself what course you want to follow, and what you want to do. What is wrong with having freedom? Even the Israelites, God's chosen people, wanted freedom. How many centuries did they wait for the Messiah, the One who would free them from their captivity? Surely God bestowed us with free will, individuality, and a longing for freedom. It would be wrong to let these precious gifts lie dormant, especially when God gave them to us for our benefit. We should not let these powers become rusty with idleness; and obviously, today, we do not. Man has always shouted for his freedom, but now, with the media as efficient as it is, we are more aware of it.

Man has an innate love for freedom. However, the freedom of man is imperfect because it can turn to slavery. Man's freedom is, in actuality, a servitude to the self. It cannot be a true freedom because all is based on satisfying one's self. We do not realize this, true? *I want freedom. I want to decide what I want to do. I don't want to do that, so I won't etc., etc.* Surely God does not tolerate the type of "freedom." Yet it is evident that we are all endowed with an urge toward freedom. We are faced with a dilemma. Do we obey the urges of our freedom, or do we obey God?

Can serving God be freedom? Think a moment. Isn't God's freedom the absolute freedom? Christen freedom is a dynamic, creative ideal whose basic constituent is love. It is a free turning to God in all aspects of life because of His love for us, and our love for Him. Not only does it provide freedom for our life here on earth, but it also gives us

freedom from death. For through Christ, who conquered death, we also can rise again. Death no longer has the complete mastery over us it once did. So serving God is not slavery. We serve Him because we choose to respond in such a manner to His calling. He does not force us. Through God we enjoy a liberty that we can find nowhere else. This is truly a great freedom, bestowed on us because of God's love.

If living for God and serving Him is absolute freedom, what about drugs? Don't they free us from man's paradoxical freedom? They carry us away and far beyond the threat of man's so-called liberty. Isn't that what God would want? Consider a moment. Do drugs really give freedom; or is it an illusion of freedom? Not only do users form a dependence on the drug, but they also destroy their personalities, and are incapable of being creative. This is very much against what God would want, because by destroying our personality and creativity, we are destroying a vital part of ourselves: our soul; and this is where God is a very real and living part of us. So not only do we destroy ourselves, but we also destroy God within us.

Protests, when they are not destructive or hurtful, are not all together wrong. Even Christ protested the practices and motives of the Sanhedrin. He did it, not for Himself, but for His people. So all our motives should be for the benefit of others. If an existing law, or a prejudice, or an ideal, etc. is hurting others, then change it. If we truly love our fellow man, then we should not only profess this love, we should live it, even as Christ did for the world.

The question comes down to a final chose, and its decision is your own. Will you be a slave to yourself and the world, or will you be free in God?