

Tobacco — and You.

AN UNUSUAL GOSPEL MESSAGE.

“THE craving for a cigarette was gone.” What do those words mean? Evidently a new experience and a new power had come into the speaker’s life. What that “new power” is we will enquire after. But the thought of “craving” is not a surprise to the average smoker, and it betrays a MASTER. You may condemn an “opium slave,” “a drug fiend,” but you, too, have a craving, that cannot be denied. “I wish I could give up smoking,” say many. And the unfulfilled wish indicates, “I can’t.” Is that a happy experience?

“There’s no harm in a smoke.” The frequency of such words suggests an underlying fear lest there is some harm. Many use words to stifle a vague consciousness that smoking is NOT THE WISEST ACTION. As one who travels about, I would say, “No, it seems so often knit with a selfishness that occupies front seats when asked to go to the back, and defiantly ignores ‘non-smoking’ notices, that there is more than a coincidence. It looks as if smoking blunts a sense of kindness to others, and of truth. Who could cough in my face without apology? Yet the smoker blows the whiffs that hurt me, without any thought of apology. Many, if not smoking themselves, would honestly prefer a non-smoking carriage.

“There’s no harm in a smoke.” Who said so? No harm to the heart? No harm to the throat? Even some advertisements suggest there is a common danger. “Smokers’ throat,” and cancerous evils are not a dream.

Look at those ugly nicotine-stained fingers: do you want the inside of your body stained thus? Yet, “there’s no harm in a smoke.” Nicotine is a poison—it works slowly, but it works, and the sensitive tissues of the God-given human frame are affected. Because results do not follow at once therefore the heart of man is fully set! But there is harm in a smoke.

“The craving for a cigarette had gone.” The speaker of such words had evidently found a new experience, yes, a mighty Deliverer, giving new affections and power—a new life. The Lord Jesus Christ is a Reality, salvation is a fact. Reader, do you know Him, not to take away your joys but to give you true joy? The old proverb says, “Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness.” And smoking doesn’t satisfy: Christ does! He satisfies for time and eternity. Do you not know Him? You are missing LIFE. You have existence and its merriness and cravings, instead

of life and its delight and enjoyment. You only say “No,” because you don’t “know.”

I am not preaching an anti-tobacco gospel. If you gave up smoking, drinking, and half a dozen other things, you would not go to heaven. The complete abstainer may be self-righteous, but there is none righteous before God. The blood of Christ was needed for any to be saved, and thanks be to God, He has finished the work, and the way of eternal life is now opened to all who repent and believe into Him. Salvation is a reality, and is in Him, alone, yes, now is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6. 2). I am concerned about the 20th century, its cravings, and its suicidal “civilization.” I am concerned to see the habits that show a crisis is near, and that crisis will mean glory for those “in Christ,” and judgment for those outside. The Lord Jesus Christ is coming again soon. I am concerned when the dress and smoking of young (and older) womanhood show a degradation. It is unrealized because so many do it, but it is degradation nevertheless. It is a blow against the home, and against true motherhood. A straw can show which way the wind is blowing. The cigarette is blunting tenderness more than many think: an unnatural taste is acquired because of a fear to be unlike others, and to be thought to be behind the times, and this is the whirlpool of the last days. The cigarette is leading many to evil company, and it would be cruel to be silent. “Signs of the times” are a call to bolder witness of Christ. Modesty that commands respect, is out of date, and God is more forgotten than most realize. The whiff of tobacco, the love of pleasure, and the domination of craving are among the devil’s traps to wreck home life, and to blind individuals to their great need,—their need of Christ. The tactics are clever, they are Satanic, and subtle advertisements are attracting many to the eddies of destruction. But the gospel of Christ remains. Come to Him, as a needy sinner, and you will know His mightiness to save, and that will include the new person that can say with joy, “The craving for a cigarette is gone.” Thanks be unto God, for the liberty of His gospel, to deliver from the closest and worst enemy—SELF!