

Are Filters the Answer?

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Study by W.D. Frazee—January 31,

During recent weeks the newspapers, the magazines, and I suppose other media communication, have been taking note of the tobacco question. Probably as never before in the history of the world. It is an interesting time to be living in when some of the things that used to make us peculiar make us famous. I clipped the whole page newspaper add to bring to you tonight when don't often bring the newspaper to this pulpit, but occasionally there is a text. And I want to study it with you tonight for I think it has some interesting thoughts if we look at it. This full page add says smoke a certain brand of cigarette, which we will not give any further publicity to, but it is the next line that gets my attention. Get the filter that made activated charcoal famous.

You have heard of charcoal before too, but perhaps not in this connection. Fine granules of activated charcoal in pure cellulose. Pure cellulose, mind you, and activated charcoal.

So I looked at the add, I fell to thinking, why filter tobacco smoke? Why it seems only yesterday that we were treated to the picture of famous singers and others telling us that certain brands of cigarettes never have hurt their throats at all.

In fact one brand of cigarette made the slogan famous "not a cough in a carload." But now it is the tobacco companies that are spending millions to produce and to advertise filters. Has the tobacco changed? Has the smoke suddenly gotten something in that it has to be filtered out now? I wonder why this all is, and what it all means?

Why, of course, the answer is that science has discovered some things in tobacco smoke that cause cancer! Now one might think that the obvious answer to the problem would be to stop smoking. But no that is too simple, and too expensive for the tobacco companies, and this is the vital point, it requires self-control and self-denial.

So an easier answer must be found. Here it is—charcoal filters. And that solves the problem, or does it?

That brings me to my subject, are filters the answer?

Well you will say to me two things. You will say of course filters are not the answer, and why should you spend any time with this audience on the question. We all know that filters are not the answer.

Are you sure? Do you really believe it? You know there are other things besides tobacco smoke that are dangerous. And if you believe that the answer to some dangerous things is merely to get a filter, charcoal or otherwise, why should you deny the slave of tobacco his filter?

Did you ever hear of Sanka coffee? That came several years before filters for tobacco. What is the difference between Sanka coffee, and filtered cigarettes? Well in principle there is no difference. The basic philosophy of the thing is precisely the same. Now don't misunderstand me, and don't mistake what I said. I didn't say that Sanka coffee was as dangerous or damaging as cigarettes with filters. I am talking about the basic philosophy.

The philosophy is here is something that the world is doing and it is damaging, but oh we want to keep on doing it. Isn't there some way, oh yes, take out part of it, but oh don't take it all out. Take out some of it. Take out the worst of it. But try to leave in enough to get the thrill. And thus the scientists, and the research men, and the factories work along year after year on the problem of how to walk that narrow line.

Take out enough so that people can at least think it is safe, but leave in enough to get certain effects, certain results. The thrill that comes from nicotine, or caffeine, or any one of a thousand other things that enter the soul of man either through the bloodstream, or through the eye stream, or the eye stream.

Do you believe in gambling? Oh no we wouldn't have such a thing around! Like tobacco isn't it? But are there people that get a thrill out of gambling? Yes. I will never forget the midnight in Reno, Nevada. You might wonder what I was doing in Reno, Nevada at midnight, but I had a perfectly good reason. I was on my way to the post office to mail a letter for a friend with whom I was traveling. But I will never forget that midnight as I walked down the streets of Reno just as lighted up as though it were open for business everywhere. It was pretty much. I will never forget the expression on the face of one woman that I saw through a big plate glass window. There were all kinds of these one-armed bandits, as they call them, these slot machines.

Some of them you know they put in dimes and nickels, and some of them they put in quarters and half dollars, and some are run with silver dollars. There she was she was pouring it in and pulling the handle, and pouring it in and pulling the handle, and the expression on her face. She was intoxicated. But she was getting a thrill!

Well some do it with slot machines, some do it playing the ponies, some do it with cards, but listen really what we need to do is just to filter that whole thing. Run it through the filter.

Now some people think that all you need to do to make the thing perfectly harmless is just to take the money out of it. Play for fun! Don't play for money, just play for fun! So there are thousands that do that. They run that whole system through the filter, and they filter out the money aspect of it.

But still there is enough thrill left so that it satisfies some people, although only God knows how many people get that thrill go on to the greater thrill of putting some money down. Do you know what I mean? Have we been told through the Spirit of Prophecy? Has not the God that warned the king of Israel through Elisha about the plans of the king of Syria, has He not told us that are young people should not play cards for the very reason that as they become expert in the handling of cards and feel the thrill of that game, that some of them will be led on out into the actual gambling for money? Haven't we been told that? Yes!

So apparently that filter is not enough. So some people feel that it needs a double filter. You know some of the cigarettes today have a double filter. Did you know that? So some have felt that we should not only take away the playing for money out of it, we also ought to take those kings, and queens, and spades, and aces, and other things off the cards. And of course when that is done nobody could find any fault with it at all. Could they? No.

And the beauty of it is we thereby arrive at that wonderful happy medium. We have extracted enough of the poison to satisfy at least the careless. And we have left enough of the thrill in it to thrill the hearts of the people that gather around the tables and play cards. Well of course you must explain that the pictures on the cards are different from those that are in the gambling table.

Are filters the answer? Think it through my friends. Think it through.

Now there is another answer besides filters that is being suggested in this tobacco problem today, and that too leads us to some meditations. This next answer I got from the Newsweek. I don't often bring this to the pulpit either, but this was so good that I thought it ought to be a text too. This is in two full pages devoted to the question to smoke or not to smoke, and it is from the issue of January 27, 1964.

After telling about the surgeon general committee report, and the reaction from different ones, this Newsweek magazine quotes a southern tobacco farmer in North Carolina who owns 305 acres as to his reaction to this whole scare over tobacco.

"Some good may even come out of this," he said, "I think they will find a cure for cancer."

Well, now that is the answer isn't it? Think how simple it is. Here millions of people have been puffing away for years on things that are now proved to cause cancer, but some good is going to come out of it. What's the good? Oh a cure for cancer is going to be found, and obviously that will eliminate any problem. The tobacco companies can keep right on making the cigarettes, the farmers back of them can keep right on growing the stuff, and the people at the other end keep on smoking the stuff. Added to that will be an army of people curing the cancers.

Isn't that wonderful friends? Do you think that is the answer? Do you really? Is that your answer? Is that God's answer? Is that the answer of this movement? I catch in that answer the echoes of a voice that was heard for the first time in this

world six-thousand years ago in the branches of a tree. And he said, go ahead and eat this forbidden fruit. There is a way out, you won't surely die.

You can get the thrill without the kill. Do you believe it?

Well the one who said it was both a liar and a murderer friends. But almost everybody has believed him down through the years and has followed with the deepest interest his repeated experiments, some in the name of science, others in other directions.

Do you know that Satan has been seeking earnestly, and shall I say, sincerely, if we can think of the Devil as sincere, to find a way whereby men can continue in disobedience, and not reap all the penalties? He has been experimenting. The human race is his guinea pig.

I ask you, is that the answer? What if Satan could succeed in finding a cure for cancer caused by tobacco? Would you say, well go ahead then and smoke, get cancer, and we will cure you? That is the answer. Would you say that?

Are you saying it about anything else?

Do you really believe that the answer, the only answer, is to quit sinning? Is that why God allows men, now and then at least, to get some measure of the results of sin in this life, so that they can flee, not merely from the results of sin, but from sin itself. Is that it?

My dear friends, does it make a world of difference whether we are seeking to find a cure for sin so that men can keep on sinning, or whether we are seeking to find that will keep people from the sin that causes the results. Does it make a difference?

Which is the Gospel?

Is there danger that human beings will feel that the cross of Christ, and the death of Christ, and the Gospel of Christ are for the purpose of drawing the fangs of the serpent, somehow stopping the painful results of sin so that people can keep on getting the pleasure, the thrill of sin, without suffering the sad and bad results. Is there that danger? There is.

There are millions of people today that suppose that the purpose of religion is to get somebody that knows how to get there traffic ticket fixed, so that they won't have to appear at judgment and go to jail, and pay the fine.

Do you think for a minute that our Lord Jesus is in that business? I say no, my friends! The Gospel of this Book, the Bible, is first of all a cure for sin. It is to help people quit sinning. And then, and only then, to cure us of the results of sin. If the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return unto the Lord, He will have mercy upon him.

Oh friends, I am so glad that we are not given by Jesus any picture of the father of the prodigal son loaded up a chariot with all kinds of things that would make things easy and comfortable for that prodigal son, and carrying them down to that far country so that he could keep on with his wine and harlots.

No he didn't. He let him stay there until he arrived at the hog pen, and his stomach was close against his backbone, and hunger made his mind clear so that he could think. He came to himself, and saw himself, not merely as a fool, but as a sinner. And he came home repentant friends, and sobbed out his confession on his father's shoulder. Then, and only then, were the bells rung, and the robes brought, and the house filled with joy because this my son who was dead is alive again. He was lost and he is found. Luke 15:11-32.

Now there is another answer friends. That is the answer of moderation. Why even some of the tobacco companies are telling us that some people would be better off if they smoked a pipe instead of a cigarette. At least the ones that manufacture pipe tobacco are telling that. Some suggest cigars might solve the problem. People that smoke pipes and cigars don't usually inhale so they don't get so much of the nicotine, and tars down in there.

What do you think about it? Is moderation the answer? In other words, here is a man who has been smoking three packs a day. If he can gradually cut that down to the place where he is only smoking a half a pack a day, that shouldn't kill anybody. What do you think about it? Is that the answer? Do you think moderation is the answer on tobacco? No not on tobacco. But on some other devilish things it is alright isn't it?

A number of years ago I was with Elder Neal in the state capital of Louisiana in Baton Rouge. There is a great tall building that stands as a monument to Hewey Long. Up there in a government office we were discussing some matters with a state official, and in the course of the conversation he mentioned this. It had no reference to the matter we were discussing, but we were just visiting.

He said you know I had a wonderful father he came over from the old country. We boys grew up here in Louisiana, and our sisters. But he said, my father was a wonderful man he taught us temperance. He had a cellar and in that cellar was wine. And he taught us how to drink. And he said, I never saw my father drunk once in his life. And he said, not one of my brothers or sisters have I ever seen drunk in all their lives.

Quite a testimony isn't it.

Do you go along with that doctrine? You do not with liquor. You do not with tobacco. Are you sure that in ever other department you are equally committed to the definition of true temperance, and that is total abstinence from every harmful thing, and moderation in that which is good.

Remember friends, moderation is to be applied only to that which is good! There is no such thing as true moderation in that which is bad or damaging like alcohol or nicotine or caffeine. No such thing. And right there we draw the line with

the Devil. And we say who is on the Lord's side? Let him step over here and quit this dilly-dallying with the enemy.

Oh I wish that we had come to the hour when it would be appropriate to go right down the line and name all the things that this applies to. But it would offend some people if I were to do that. So I must leave it with the Holy Spirit my dear friends, to rightly interpret and apply this principle. But I beg you to search your hearts, for there is something more in this tobacco agitation that is filling the minds of millions today than merely the tobacco question.

We need to think through the question of what our philosophy is. Do we believe in filters? No. Do we believe in hunting a cure for cancer as the way to solve the tobacco question? No. Do we believe in moderation? No. Not that kind of moderation. Say if you want something interesting, look in the book *Ministry of Healing* page 446, and find this principle of moderation, so called, as it applies to fiction. High class fiction, good fiction. Read what inspiration says about it. See if you dare to apply this principle to the question of reading.

Take another area. Did you ever hear this little proverb expressed as a couplet, a little nonsense now and then is relished by the best of men? Did you ever hear that? It is used to excuse or defend what some good man does for a good cause in acting like some comedian. A little nonsense, a little nonsense now, of course we wouldn't want to much of it, but there has to be some spice. Why yes, even fruit juice in some parties has to be spiked!

There are other things besides alcohol that spike parties. And foolishness, folly, nonsensical mirth is one of the things that intoxicates. Read about it in *Counsels to Teachers*. Read the description of worldly parties conducted in Battle Creek by Seventh-day Adventists. See if that instruction is out of date.

"The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men" Proverbs 24:9.

And Ephesians chapter five, verses 3 and 4, tells how often to have jesting and joking. The third verse says not once! And I'm not talking about pleasure. I'm not talking about happiness. I am talking about nonsense. And the soul that finds its pleasure in nonsense would never be happy in heaven, for there is not going to be any nonsense there. Not a bit! Not one little tiny cupful!

Ah somebody says, Brother Frazee you just kill all the joy. Well that is what the people say when it comes to prohibition. That is what they said when you wanted to take away whiskey and rum and wine and gin. And a lot of them said, it is alright to take away some of those hard liquors, but you must at least leave the beer and wine because if the people have that they will be content. Have a little. Moderation.

Oh my friends read Ecclesiastes 10:1.

"Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor" Ecclesiastes 10:1.

I hope, oh I trust that we will be so settled on this principle that we will never make nonsense in behalf of a good cause, and that we will never laugh when those who should represent God act like clowns. Those who love lies, as well as those who make them, are going to be outside the city friends. I rather think that not only those who make nonsense, but those who love it unless they get converted, unless they get cured of this devilish doctrine of moderation in things that are unlike Christ, unless we are cured of that friends heaven will be no place for us. We would find it dull and uninteresting.

We would be groping around and moping around, longing for something to liven up Saturday nights. For after people have been good and sober all day, certainly they need something to put a little life into things on Saturday night.

What is your answer to that problem? Filters? Or moderation or what?

Oh friends, thank God there is another answer entirely, a better one. Isn't there? But before I come to that I have one more of the world's answers. It is the answer of home brewed, home brewed.

Whiskey, and rum, and gin are bad. They are commercial you understand. And even beer from these breweries is not so good. But a little homemade wine or cider never hurt anybody. Home brewed.

Well you say that is absurd. But now wait a minute. I want to read you something.

"In many religious families, dancing and card playing are made a parlor pastime" *Messages to Young People*, page 399.

Now what am I reading about here? Dancing and what? Card playing. Where? A parlor pastime. In many religious families.

Now listen.

"It is urged that these are quiet, home amusements, which may be safely enjoyed under the parental eye" *Ibid*.

Home brew you see. Watch.

"But a love for these exciting pleasures is thus cultivated, and that which was considered harmless at home will not long be regarded dangerous abroad" *Ibid*.

Then home brewed isn't the answer is it? No. No. Now this audience will go along with this fine. There won't be any problem with that. I am sure nobody here has any thought of conducting dancing, or at least what is called dancing, in your home. And I don't think any of you are going to get out these cards, at least not the

ones with spades, and kings, and queens on them. So we can put that reference away. Or can we?

I wonder friends, if there is something basically or inherently wrong about dancing that makes it wrong even if it is in the home, and leads on to the dance hall? If there is something wrong basically, and inherently wrong about card playing that makes it wrong even if it is in a religious home around a table, because it leads some people out of that to the gambling places, tell me friends, what about bringing a theater right into the home?

Do you know what some mothers say? Well at least I know where my kids are. Yes. You may be sure they know where they are. They are glued to that glaring blaring thing.

Do you know the average hours per day that all the children and youth of America are spending in front of the TV? It is frightening my friends. But it is alright because it is home-brew isn't it? Well at least it is in the home, but it is hardly home-brewed.

I ask again. Is the theater alright if you have it in the home? Is drama alright if you have it in the home? Is worldly comedy alright if you bring it into the home? Is scandal alright if you eat it in the home? Are hamburgers alright if you eat them at home? Is what is bad elsewhere good in the home?

Shall we take the music of the honky-tonk and put it in the home and say it is okay. Or shall we take the opera and bring it into the home, whether by radio, by TV, or by tape recordings?

What is our philosophy? What do we believe? What are our convictions based upon?

Oh my friends, God wants us to learn to think. To think! To think through the reasons for things. A professor friend of mine told me of a certain educational institution. This really happened, and I tell it to you not to get you to smile, but to get you to think. This was several years ago.

The students became quite interested in what should be done for recreation and amusements. Some brought up the question of baseball and they looked through the *Testimonies* and they found some pretty strong things against baseball. So they decided they wouldn't have baseball. But then somebody said what about basketball? They looked all through the *Testimonies* and they couldn't find a thing about basketball, so they decided to play basketball instead of baseball.

A good Baptist told me once that he would quit tobacco if I could show him from the Bible that he shouldn't use tobacco. I say to you friends, God wants us to think.

Back to this question about the home. I wonder friends, I wonder how plain and definite I ought to be. I trust that the Holy Spirit of God is going far beyond anything I am saying tonight. Putting His finger on our lives, and in our homes

beyond what my poor words can point out. But I wonder if anything has ever happened in a Seventh-day Adventist home in a vain attempt to ape the fashions of the world, that some people would have thought was clear out of place if the people had gone out of the home to do it, or have it done.

I ask again. Is home brew the answer?

Well I leave that with you. Now I come to the real answer, and it is not filters. It is not moderation. It is not finding a cure so that we can keep on with the world. It is not home-brew. The answer is in Ephesians.

“Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” Ephesians 5: 17-18.

That is the answer. The Spirit of God is the answer, and there is no other answer. We will never be able to solve the problems of this world through filters or moderation, through home-brew, or cancer cures. There is only one thing that can solve the problem, and that is Jesus. Jesus is the answer.

As He said to that woman of Samaria, if all you do is drink of this water, you will thirst again. Whoever will drink of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. The water that I will give him will be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Jesus wants every Christian to be a walking advertisement of the efficacy of the Gospel. A walking advertisement of the fact that Jesus satisfies. That we don't have to have a bottle of whiskey up in the closet shelf to take a nip occasionally in order to keep going. That we do not have to have some idol hid somewhere but that Jesus, only Jesus, satisfies.

“For those who would regain or preserve health there is a lesson in the words of Scripture, “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” Not through the excitement or oblivion produced by unnatural or unhealthful stimulants; not through indulgence of the lower appetites or passions, is to be found true healing or refreshment for the body or the soul... Let not the attendants upon the sick hope to benefit these patients by granting them frivolous, exciting indulgences. These have been the curse of their lives. The hungry, thirsting soul will continue to hunger and thirst so long as it seeks to find satisfaction here” *Ministry of Healing*, page 246-247

Why friends, the better the filter works, the deeper the dissatisfaction that it brings to view.

“The hungry, thirsting soul will continue to hunger and thirst so long as it seeks to find satisfaction here. Those

who drink at the fountain of selfish pleasure are deceived. The mistake hilarity for strength, and when the excitement ceases, their inspiration ends, and they are left to discontent and despondency” *Ibid.*

Now comes this matchless statement. I am very anxious that we all get this.

“Abiding peace, true rest of spirit, has but one Source. It was of this that Christ spoke when He said, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world gives, give I unto you.” This peace is not something that He gives apart from Himself. It is in Christ, and we can receive it only by receiving Him” *Ibid.*

How do we get it? Oh by receiving Jesus. Thank God friends, we are not going to have to keep on smoking and get some filters. None of these things that enable people to go on with something they are used to. They need not a modification of that old life, they need a new life altogether.

New diet. New dress. New reading. New music. New work. New education. New thinking. New joys. New pleasures. New satisfactions. Thank God friends, the things we are talking about don’t have to be taken in through a filter. And thank God they leave no sad after effects. No cancer of body, or dissatisfaction of mind. Christ is the wellspring of life.

“When the sunlight of God’s love illuminates the darkened chambers of the soul, restless weariness and dissatisfaction will cease, and satisfying joys will give vigor to the mind, and health and energy to the body” *Ibid.*

Now turn in closing to the 16th Psalm.

“I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer thing Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life” Psalm 16:8-11.

Thou wilt show me what? The path of life. Not out of a bottle. Not out of a pack of cigarettes. Not of a worldly party. Not out of a TV. Not out of the music of this world, nor the folly of this world, nor the literature of this world, not anything of this world.

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the

Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abides forever” 1 John 2:15-17.

Thou wilt show me what? The path of life.

“In thy presence is fullness of joy; at the right hand there are pleasures forevermore” Psalm 16:11.

Dear friends, if we have tasted this peace, we have nothing to boast about in ourselves, but we ought to have something to rejoice over. If I have come in rags and He has given me something to wear, nothing for me to strut about, but I can be happy about it can't I? Yes. So let's witness for our Savior, humbly, but confidently. If Jesus has satisfied our hearts. If all we want is more of Him.

If instead of being pulled toward the world, we desire to get as far away from its folly and vices as possible, not in selfish isolation, not in pharisaical exclusiveness, but oh like Enoch to be withdrawn from the vice and impurity, the folly and the shallowness of this wicked age, God grant dear friends that our witness shall be firm and uncompromising, and that we shall carry a certain sound in our trumpet notes that Jesus satisfies. And that as we get more and more of Him, we find that He more and more satisfies.

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