



## Restoring America's Christian Faith Is the True Answer to the Drug Crisis

There's no doubt that hard drugs such as fentanyl and heroin are destructive to the lives of individuals and society at large. No matter where one stands on the question of the government's role in the "War on Drugs," no one can seriously deny that having over 100,000 overdose deaths is not something to gloss over — and that doesn't include the illness, poverty, crime, violence, and family dissolution that go along with these substances.

Today's political leaders seem to be at a loss as to how to deal with this issue. Both those who are for and those who are against the War on Drugs will offer you statistics, anecdotes, and convincing arguments for their point of view.

The side that opposes government restriction of drugs will say that the War on Drugs has only made the issue worse by punishing users (rather than helping them get treatment) and forcing illicit substances into the black market, thus enriching criminal organizations such as Mexico's narcotics cartels.

Meanwhile, proponents of the War on Drugs say that enforcement has simply not been strict enough; the laws are not being sufficiently enforced. They point to places such as the Philippines and Singapore, where the respective governments have taken an uncompromising attitude against drugs and seemingly gotten major results out of it.

Meanwhile, there are some lawmakers, including Republican members of Congress such as Rep. Dan Crenshaw (R-Texas) and Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), who are [angling for a U.S. invasion](#) of Mexico to dismantle the cartels.

While such calls might make for good, fiery campaign rhetoric, especially as the American public clamors for politicians to "just do SOMETHING!", going that route would be an unwise decision that would end in another costly, deadly, and humiliating decades-long occupation in the vein of Afghanistan.

For anyone who's serious about solving the drug question, it is crucial to understand one important truth:

The ultimate answer to the drug crisis is a spiritual and cultural one, not exclusively a political one. If we want to end the destructive behavior of drug use, we must reshape the public's views toward and relationship with these substances.

It's been said ad nauseam that politics is the downstream of culture. The reason it's so often repeated is because it's true. By merely attacking the drug issue at the surface level in the realm of politics, we only



Luis Miguel



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on June 1, 2023

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place temporary stopgaps that are eventually overridden.

We can destroy the cartels. But as long as we have people in America who are willing to pay money for access to these drugs, someone else will step into the void to satisfy the demand.

We can end the flow of fentanyl into our borders. But if the people continue wanting something to get high on, then a domestically produced replacement will simply rise up and take its place.

The key to stopping the presence — or supply — of these drugs in our country is to end the demand. That means a radical shift in our culture. Political action can still be part of the solution, but it must go hand-in-hand with cultural action if it's to have lasting effect.

Many like to point to places in the near- and far-east, such as Singapore and Dubai, as evidence that having strict drug laws can work.

But one should also consider the culture in those places. One side of this is the political culture — the people's relationship to law and government.

Unlike the West, which has a long tradition of personal liberty and individualism, many places in the East have a collectivist culture in which governmental authority is submitted to, not questioned. In nations such as that, it is easier to change the culture through the law because the people are much more amenable to authority.

Furthermore, there is the religious culture. Take Dubai, for example. Of course, they have strictly enforced laws against drugs and the public consumption of alcohol. But one should also take into account the Islamic culture, which naturally dissuades the consumption of such substances.

For Muslims, alcohol is forbidden, so the presence or lack of a law against public alcohol consumption doesn't really matter to them. Outlawing alcohol wholesale won't create a black market or fuel organized crime as Prohibition did in America, because there is simply not enough demand for alcohol in an Islamic culture.

The high demand for drugs in America should be looked at, not as the chief illness, but as a symptom of a greater problem: The spiritual void and the resultant surge of decadent behavior.

Widespread drug use, like pornography, sodomy, and other social ills, is the manifestation of a sick society that has fallen from the health and vigor that faith in God inherently brings. When the soul, whether of the individual or of the nation, strays from God, it then seeks to fill that void with worldly pleasures and distractions — alcohol, vice, drugs.

At the end of the day, the drug crisis will continue to one degree or another unless and until we deal with the true, underlying cause: America's spiritual crisis.



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