

'MIRAA' - A Major Obstacle .



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Hi :)

Greetings Church,

Allow me to greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus. Hope your 2016 is coming out well and you have continued to increase in brotherly love as a Church and also as individual members of the Body.

Today, I would like to share with you about 'Miraa' - a major cash crop in Meru that has become a major obstacle to Evangelism and Church growth in Meru.

What's '*Miraa*'?

- ◆ Miraa, also known as Khat is a cash crop that only grows in Meru, Kenya.
- ◆ Miraa has huge markets in Kenya, Somali, Middle East, India, and also in the United Kingdom until June 2015.
- ◆ Miraa is grown and used by majority of farmers in Meru - both Christians and non-christians.
- ◆ Miraa is traditionally used to pay for dowry.
- ◆ Unfortunately, Miraa is a drug, it's a narcotic.

The 'miraa' plant



- ◆ An elderly man in his Miraa farm. He is holding twigs from the miraa trees at the background.

Images of 'Miraa'.



- ◆ These are twigs plucked from branches and stems of the miraa trees. They are arranged in bundles like above before sale.

How Miraa Is Consumed

- ◆ Miraa users chew the twigs one by one for hours.
- ◆ Sometimes they even chew the leaves just like a goat would do but don't swallow.
- ◆ Others chew with gum and peanuts.



Effects Of Consuming Miraa

- ◆ Miraa is said to be a stimulant.
- ◆ It makes people super excited, talkative, and extremely imaginative. Users are said to build castles in the air and get really frustrated once the castles don't materialize the following day.
- ◆ It also makes people sleepless.
- ◆ This frustration, and fatigue from loss of sleep has led to suicide cases, road accidents, fights, alcoholism, and family break ups.

Economic benefits of Miraa In Meru, Kenya.

- ◆ Miraa is a major cash crop that uniquely grows only in Meru.
- ◆ It's sold locally and also exported to Somali, North Africa, Middle east, and India. Last year Miraa was banned in the United Kingdom. It has always been banned in the US.
- ◆ Miraa is the main source of earning for majority of families in Meru.
- ◆ Unfortunately, it is an illegal drug, a sin.

The bitter truth

- ◆ The truth is that Miraa is an illegal drug that has been banned in many countries across the World including America and Britain.
- ◆ Romans 12:2 requires us to discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.
- ◆ Therefore, as Christians engage in Miraa business here in Meru, the Church is against all odds teaching that miraa use is a sin before God.

The Problem

- ◆ Majority of adults are involved in Miraa trade.
- ◆ Both men and women use the drug freely and openly.
- ◆ Children too use the drug and some engage in harvesting and selling Miraa.
- ◆ Our leaders are in the business and use the drug publicly to encourage other communities outside Meru to tUnfortunately
- ◆ Majority of denominations accept use of Miraa.

Kids Work In Miraa Farms

- ◆ Many young boys have quit school to work in Miraa farms for quick cash.



- ◆ Miraa traders prefer hiring little boys to harvest Miraa because many times adults break the branches when they climb up the Miraa trees.

Children are in Miraa trade too



- ◆ The little funds they earn has made them drop out of school. Girls go to school though.

Kids harvesting Miraa.



Ladies harvesting Miraa.



Men harvesting Miraa.



- ◆ Two men are seen above harvesting Miraa.
- ◆ Sometimes they prefer to have kids harvest.

Men on top of the Miraa trees
harvesting.



An elderly Man Harvesting Miraa.

◆ Any one can harvest Miraa.

The only requirement is to be able to climb

up the trees and pluck the twigs.



Traders preparing 'Miraa' For Sale.



- ◆ The little twigs are graded and arranged one by one into bundles before sale.

Traders transporting Miraa to the market.



A local market place.



A man chewing Miraa.



◆ On the right are some ready for market bundles.

Government Officials promoting the drug.



- ◆ On the left is Kenya's deputy president with a member of the senate chewing Miraa.

The Challenge

- ◆ The challenge is to convince Christians that it is a sin to plant, sell, or use Miraa.



- ◆ The Lord's Church is asking Christians to farm other crops that do well in Meru including Tea, plantains, and coffee.

Prayer Request

- ① Prayers are needed for The Lord to soften Meru people's hearts and open their spiritual eyes for them to know and agree that Miraa is an illegal drug and using it is a sin.
- ② Prayers are also needed for peace to reign in Gambella, Ethiopia. The Nuer and the Anyuak communities are fighting each each other again and the Church there has asked for prayers (I served The Lord's Church in Gambella last year from September through November).