

Beverage Alcohol

The drinking of alcoholic beverages is a national problem in the United States. This has been the case for many decades, and at present does not seem to be getting any better. The advertisements say this will make you successful, attractive, and that it is the only way to have a good life. The peer pressure to conform to what others do helps to continue the problem. The Bible speaks loud and clear concerning drinking. Notice a few of the many passages of Scripture. In Leviticus 10:8-11, Aaron and his sons were not to drink while rendering service to God lest they die.

According to Mosaic Law, if a child is a “glutton, and a drunkard” (Deuteronomy 21:20) he was to be stoned to death. Notice what Solomon says: “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise” (Proverbs 20:1). He then adds:

Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder (Proverbs 23:29-32).

Solomon continues by teaching that it fills men’s mind with impure thoughts, brings on danger, causes insensibility, and is habit forming in verses 33-35. He says in Ecclesiastes 10:17: “Blessed art thou, O

land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!” Some of our Congressmen, Senators, and Presidents should take notice. Solomon was a man speaking from experience for he gave himself to win (Ecclesiastes 2:3) but came to the realization that it was vanity (Ecclesiastes 2:11).

Isaiah writes:

Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!...Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink (Isaiah 5:11, 22).

In Isaiah 22:13, he places drinking wine with carnal living. Not only is a woe placed upon the drunkards of Ephraim, but Isaiah also says they will be destroyed (Isaiah 28:1-3). Part of the reason is that wine has led them to err, and, thus, they are no longer able to lead others (Isaiah 28:7).

Daniel tells us of the tragic example of King Belshazzar who led his people in drinking wine (Daniel 5:1-2). Hosea teaches that immorality and drinking go together: “Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart” (Hosea 4:11). Joel speaks of the depravity of those who drink: “And they have cast lots for my people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink” (Joel 3:3).

It will cause people to oppress others according to Amos 4:1, so God places a woe upon those that drink wine (Amos 6:1, 6). Habakkuk says that pride and arrogance

are inflamed because the people transgress by wine (Habakkuk 2:5). Later he writes:

Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness! 16 Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the LORD’s right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory (Habakkuk 2:15-16).

After taking this stroll through the Old Testament to see what God had to say concerning drinking at that time, God’s attitude has not changed on the subject as we observe from the New Testament. In Luke 12:45-46, Christ warns against drunkenness and says those who are such will be appointed with the unbelievers. Again in Luke 21:34, Christ cautions that drunkenness cause one not to be prepared. With all this evidence, it is unbelievable that some would teach that our blessed, pure, and holy Lord, who did no sin, would make beverage alcohol in John 2 (over 150 gallons). All our Lord and Savior did was to make grape juice that was non-alcoholic.

Paul says we are not to walk in drunkenness but to walk honestly. Christians are encouraged that if a brother drinks, then we are to withdraw ourselves from him and not keep company with him (1 Corinthians 5:11). Later Paul shows the evil of alcohol by saying, “Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the king-

dom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:10. Paul repeats this teaching to the Galatians in chapter 5:21 of that book. In writing to the Ephesian brethren, he contrasted being filled with the Spirit with being drunk with wine (Ephesians 5:18). Here Paul uses a word showing that we are not to begin the process of being drunk with wine (a process that takes place with the first drink). Obviously, you cannot be both; there is a decision you must make as to which way you want to live your life.

If we want to do that which is right, why would anyone engage in drinking? The person who tries to do right will “Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

That which goes along with drunkenness is always evil. Each year there are about 10,000 that are killed by drunken drivers. There are an additional 1,400,000 arrested for drunk driving each year. Every year there are 500,000 cases of alcohol related violence reported. A staggering 86% of homicides were under the influence of alcohol and 60% of sexual abuse or rape cases. The effects on society of alcohol is astonishing as it causes over \$100 billion a year in property damage in the United States alone. (Various studies will give differing statistics, however no matter which study is considered, the amounts are disturbing.)

The Bible teaches that one is either sober or drunk. Paul stated:

For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate

of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation (1 Thessalonians 5:7-8).

Sober means “to be free from the influence of intoxicants” (Vine). To imbibe in beverage alcohol (the medicinal use or alcohol use in food is not under consideration in this tract) makes it where we are not sober. God desires man to be sober. Let us put away the use of beverage alcohol for not only our good, but the good of society.

Work Cited:

Vine, W. E., and F. F. Bruce. *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*. Grand Rapids: Revell, 1981.



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Michael Hatcher



Presented by

Southern Maine Church of Christ
159 Alfred Road
P.O. Box 344
West Kennebunk, ME 04094
<http://www.southernmainecofc.com>