
The Destructiveness of Alcohol

by: Ryan Hasty

Prov 23:29-35 – “Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long over wine, those who go to taste mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things and your mind will utter perverse things. And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea, or like one who lies down on the top of a mast. “They struck me, but I did not become ill; they beat me, but I did not know it. When shall I awake? I will seek another drink.”

Though the destructiveness of drinking alcohol goes back thousands of years, the horrible effects can still be seen throughout our society:

1) The CDC (Center for Disease Control)

reports that ~88,000 per year die from alcohol-related causes.

2) There are ~17.6 million alcoholics in the USA. In 2006, alcohol misuse problems cost the USA \$223.5 billion.

3) Alcohol strains family finances, employee efficiency at the workplace, and is the #1 cause of child and spousal abuse.

4) The CDC reports that 1 in 4 college students suffer academic consequences from drinking alcohol. Many of these students will flunk out of school.

5) Alcohol encourages sexual permissiveness due to a lack of self-control. 55% of sexual assault victims have been drinking at the time of the assault as well as 97% of sexual assault perpetrators.

6) Alcohol leads to mental problems, health problems of the heart and liver, and ultimately will lead to the death of many.

7) Over 55% of highway deaths are related to alcohol. Many victims are killed or maimed for life.

Despite these statistics, and more, advertisers will spend \$600 million this very year telling you why you should drink. Their ads will be filled with carousing, revelry, and scantily clad women suggesting that the consumption of alcohol opens the door to the good life. Clever slogans are used – “Bring on the night, get some cold refreshment, head for the mountains, it doesn’t get any better than this!” In other words, the people who make the product, and therefore know it better than anyone else, purposefully market it as a stepping stone to the lust of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21) of which the Bible makes clear will keep us out of heaven.

This alone should cause every serious Christian whose desire is to be “blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world” (Phil 2:14a-15) to avoid the recreational and social consumption of distilled alcohol. No beverage that the Bible says mocks, leads to poverty, woes, sorrows, contentions, babblings, worries without cause, impairs judgment, inflames passions, and enslaves should have a place in the life of a people striving to “cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the spirit of God.” (2 Cor 7:1).

Wine in the Bible – Fermented & Unfermented

by: Ryan Hasty

One of the most common misconceptions surrounding the word “wine,” as it is used in the bible, is in thinking that it always refers to a fermented beverage. This is somewhat understandable since in our day and age wine exclusively refers to an alcoholic drink. The truth is that the term “wine,” as used in the bible, can refer to a fermented or unfermented beverage depending on the context. It can refer to either the fresh juice of the grape to be enjoyed as a blessing from God or as a beverage warned against by God that can cause intoxication.

Isa 65:8 – “Thus says the LORD, ‘As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says, “Do not destroy it, for there is benefit in it,” so I will act on behalf of My servants in order not to destroy all of them.” This passage clearly describes wine

as the fresh juice of the grape as it exists in the cluster and therefore unfermented. This kind of wine is not an intoxicant or a drug, but a blessing from God.

Isa 16:10 – “Gladness and joy are taken away from the fruitful field; in the vineyards also there will be no cries of joy or jubilant shouting, no treader treads out wine in the presses, for I have made the shouting to cease.” This passage speaks of wine as something treaded out in the presses, directly from the grape, and therefore in a nonalcoholic state. It was a blessing of the Mediterranean world that brought joy because it was a refreshing alternative to water.

Lam 2:11-12 – “My eyes fail from weeping, I am in torment within; my heart is poured out on the ground because people are destroyed, because children and infants faint in the streets of the city. They say to their mothers, ‘Where is bread and wine?’ as they faint like the wounded in the streets of the city, as their lives ebb away in their mothers’ arms.” The wine spoken of in this passage is one which can be drunk by children and therefore was not an intoxicant.

These, and other verses, show that there was a wine of biblical days that had nothing to do with being an intoxicant or something that would adversely affect judgment. The fresh, unfermented juice of the grape was a sweet, refreshing alternative to water and enjoyed in that culture much like our sweet tea is enjoyed here in the south.

However, the bible also refers to a wine that is a strong drink and intoxicant, and with it are many warnings against its consumption.

Prov 20:1 – “Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise.” Wine in this fermented form is a depressant that has adverse effects on our mind, our judgment, and our health.

Study Opportunities

Sunday Bible Study: 10:00 AM
Sunday Worship Assembly: 11:00 AM

Meeting At

Homewood Suites of Bozeman
1023 E Baxter Ln,
Bozeman, MT 59715

Everyone Welcome!

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Two Men Attend Worship Services

by: Bill Hall

Two men attend worship services. The first man attends wholly out of a sense of duty. He understands the teaching of Hebrews 10:25: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,” and is determined to obey faithfully that teaching. He will not allow anything within his power to stand in the way of his attending the worship periods of the church.

The second man recognizes his duty in this matter too, but his primary motivation in attendance is his love for the Lord and his joy in blending his voice and heart with other Christians in praise and adoration to the Lord. He delights in worship and the spiritual strength he derives through worship.

The first man is mentally passive throughout the worship service. If the words of the song happen to catch his attention, he observes and appreciates them. Otherwise, he just sings along with little concern for what he is singing. If the sermon is interesting, he listens. Otherwise, he just relaxes, and hopes the time won’t drag too badly. He does meditate briefly concerning Christ’s suffering and death as he partakes of the supper, for somehow the importance of the memorial feast has been impressed upon his mind.

The second man comes mentally prepared to worship. He pays close attention to the words of each song and makes the sentiment of the songs his own sentiment. In fact, he sometimes studies the words of frequently used songs so he will be sure he understands their meaning. Depth of meaning is of greater importance to him than a catchy tune or rhythmic beat. He listens to each phrase of the prayer that is led, and if he can approve the petitions of the prayer, he unites with the one who leads with his “Amen.” He discerns the Lord’s body as he breaks bread, and he listens carefully to the sermon, volunteering his attention, hiding the word in his heart, that he might not sin against God (Psalm 119:11). If his mind wanders occasionally, he brings it back to the worship. He worships with a consciousness of God as the object of his worship, the One toward whom these expressions of adoration are directed.

The first man reduces his service to a mere code of external rites, while the second man obeys “from the heart,” combining the outward with the inward. The first man

is more likely to be satisfied with his service to the Lord, for he has accepted the easier standard, but it is the second man who enjoys God's approval. "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).

Two men sincerely try to worship. The first man, though, is frustrated throughout. His frustrations begin with the opening announcements when the man in charge takes ten minutes to say what any normal man could say in three. He is hardly over that when the song leader adds to his frustrations, selecting a song he is sure contains an unscriptural phrase. The man who presides at the table doesn't help when he uses the term "loaf" instead of "bread," and then the man who is called on to "give thanks for the bread" gives thanks for everything but the bread. The preacher makes a major contribution by totally misapplying a passage of scripture ("He probably didn't spend enough time on that one," the man thinks). When the worship period is finally dismissed, he tries to share his frustrations with those around him, but no one seems to care.

The second man observes many of the mistakes the first man observes. In fact, without fanfare he just doesn't sing the questionable phrase in the song and he silently thanks God for the bread when he realizes the leader's failure to do so. But while observing mistakes, he focuses attention on the good sentiments of the songs that are used, and on the death of his Savior during the Lord's Supper. He makes the prayer that is led his own and appreciates the good thoughts presented in the lesson. He has come to worship God. He makes allowances for human frailty on the part of the leaders in worship, appreciates their sincere efforts, and refuses to let their mistakes keep him from his purpose.

The first man is to be pitied. His ability to "worship" is dependent on the ability of the leaders in the worship period, and any half-observant person knows how inept that leadership can be at times. He comes to worship, but spends the hour criticizing. He blames others for that which is really his own problem. Consequently, his problem with worship becomes a problem also with his brethren; but one cannot have a problem with his worship and his brethren without having a problem in his relationship with God.

The second man, by maintaining a positive attitude toward his brethren, even when they make mistakes, is able to worship acceptably and is drawn closer to God by his worship.

In which of these two men do you see a reflection of yourself? The need is obvious!

We must cast off our laziness and indifference, revitalize our spirits, and bring ourselves to worship God acceptably. There is a considerable difference between mere attendance of a worship service and truly acceptable worship. I am not condoning sloppily conducted worship periods. Leaders in worship should seek to avoid mistakes and to do their work effectively. But acceptable worship depends far more on the heart and attitude of the worshiper than on the abilities of leaders. Our first man may point the finger of blame at others, but his real need is a total change of attitude within himself.

Is Love to Blame?

by: Steve Klein

Have you ever known parents who claimed that they loved their children too much to spank them? Ever known someone who tried to justify having sex outside of marriage because they loved the person? Ever known a Christian who would not rebuke and correct religious error because they loved others too much to hurt their feelings in this way? I submit that in each of these cases, love is being blamed for something that it has nothing to do with.

The Bible plainly teaches that love motivates us to do exactly the opposite of what was described in each of the preceding examples.

Love will cause us to discipline our children. “He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly” (Proverbs 13:24).

Love demands that we abstain from sexual immorality. If we love someone, we are not going to participate with them in an act that will condemn their soul! If we do, we are being selfish, not loving. In Ephesians 5:2-3, God’s word explains that walking in love involves avoiding fornication: “And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication . . . let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints” (Ephesians 5:2-3).

Love will move us to rebuke sin and correct error. Love will not allow us to stand idly by and watch those we care about lose their souls by committing sin or believing doctrinal error. Jesus said, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten" (Revelation 3:19). The apostle Paul had strongly rebuked the Corinthians. In 2 Corinthians 2:4 he explains why: "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you."

The right kind of love will never cause us to do the wrong kind of thing. Love "does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth" (1 Corinthians 13:6). Real love will never be used to justify sin; rather, it will be used to help us identify what is what is right and good. The Lord's will is "that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent" (Philippians 1:9-10).

Love always seeks the most lasting good for the one who is being loved. Momentary pain or pleasure is not love's greatest concern. Love is focused on the eternal welfare of the one who is loved. "My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:18)

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Isa 5:11, 22 – "Woe to those who rise early in the morning that they may pursue strong drink, who stay up late in the evening that wine may inflame them...Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine and valiant men in mixing strong drink". These verses clearly refer to a wine that we should have nothing to do with as it invokes woe from the Lord Himself.

Since wine of the bible can refer to both fermented and unfermented beverages, we must be careful not to assume alcoholic content in every context where the term "wine" is employed and attempt to use that as justification for drinking alcohol today. This is particularly true when we consider the fact that wine of today is distilled and much higher in alcoholic content than even the strongest drink of biblical days. When we try to compare wine of biblical days with wine of our day, we are dealing with apples and oranges.

Daily Bible Reading

July 2019

July 1	Genesis 1-3	July 17	Genesis 29-30
July 2	Genesis 4-5	July 18	Genesis 31
July 3	Genesis 6:1-8:19	July 19	Genesis 32-33
July 4	Genesis 8:20-10:32	July 22	Genesis 34-35
July 5	Genesis 11-13	July 23	Genesis 36-37
July 8	Genesis 14-16	July 24	Genesis 38-40
July 9	Genesis 17-18	July 25	Genesis 41
July 10	Genesis 19:1-21:21	July 26	Genesis 42-43
July 11	Genesis 21:22-23:20	July 29	Genesis 44-45
July 12	Genesis 24	July 30	Genesis 46-47
July 15	Genesis 25-26	July 31	Genesis 48-50
July 16	Genesis 27-28		

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