

Didn't they drink Alcohol in the Bible?

1 Timothy 5:23 *Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.*

How much alcohol do you drink? Alcohol can be compared to other chemicals like chlorine. If you drink a few drops in a gallon of water, it won't poison you. If you drink half water and half chlorine, you will get sick. In **1 Timothy 5:23**, Paul recommended that Timothy drink a little wine for his stomach, to disinfect the water, not to add flavor. In the culture of that time, they drank wine mixed with water to dilute the alcohol concentration (and sometimes they added other substances and essences that increased the alcohol concentration, **Proverbs 23:30**). The custom among civilized nations was to mix one part wine with 20 parts water, and this was never drunk alone, but always with food. They were considered "barbaric" and uncivilized if they drank wine with 4 parts water to one part alcohol. **If they drank it undiluted, the person was a drunkard. And it was seen as a vice even among non-Christians.** Therefore, the alcohol percentage was very low. Today, a 100% alcoholic beverage is actually 50% alcohol and 50% water. The distillation process was invented and applied to drinking alcohol after 1500. The alcohol percentage in natural wine is at most 6%, and many wines were 2.5% to 3%. So, what they commonly drank as "wine" with food was 0.12% to 0.28% (2.5% to 6% divided by 21), and to get drunk, it was straight (6%). To put it in perspective, with just one beer today, you drink more than a family of eight back then drank altogether. If you think you're going to drink "like in the Bible," then drink like they did. Put a can of a beer in a pitcher and fill the pitcher with a gallon or more of water. From this mixture, you take only one glass. Drinking straight alcohol without diluting it has always been seen in the Bible as a vice (Matthew 24:49; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:18), and the same is true among non-Christians of Bible times. It was a sin to "mix the wine," referring to the custom of adding things that increase the alcohol content or its effect. **Isaiah 5:22** *Woe to them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink.* **Proverbs 9:2** speaks of a prostitute who "mingled her wine," meaning she made it stronger so that her clients would actually drink it.

Alcoholism is a sin.

Proverbs 23:20 *Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: 21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags. 29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? 30 **They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. 31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. 32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. 33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. 34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. 35 They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.***

God warned us to stay away from wine when "It is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup." In other words, for everyone in the Bible, when they drank wine, it was almost like disinfected water with a small amount of alcohol (wine). Of course, anyone could ask for a bottle and get drunk, but this was always seen as a grave sin.

Alcohol affects us strongly.

Proverbs 31:4 *It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: 5 **Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. 6 Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. 7 Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more Hos 4:11 new wine take away the heart.***

Alcohol robs you of the ability to think clearly and make sound decisions (to reason in accordance with God's will). Alcohol, in any form, is a chemical that causes changes a person. First, there is a decline in mental faculties, followed by declines in reasoning, spiritual discernment, and then declines in moral strength. This is why businessmen want to hold business meetings under the influence of alcohol so that men will sign contracts and make deals they wouldn't make in their "right mind." Bad men want to lead women who are not so "easy" to drink alcohol and take drugs so that they will

open up, lower their standards, and become more susceptible to their plans for abuse.

Furthermore, alcohol clouds the mind, impairing its ability to discern. You simply don't think clearly, you don't care about things, and then you neither think clearly nor remember clearly. Logic and reason are impaired, as is discernment. This quality is recognized by millions who drink to forget their life's problems. Now, forgetting is one thing, but it doesn't help in the slightest to solve these problems, nor to try to live with them.

We see people in the Bible who became involved with drinking alcohol, and their problems increased: Noah (**Genesis 9:21**); Lot (**Genesis 19:32**); Isaac (**Genesis 27:25**); Nabal (**1 Samuel 25:36**); Amnon (**2 Samuel 13:28**); and others (**2 Samuel 11:13**; **1 Kings 16:9**; **20:16**; **Esther 1:10-11**; **Isaiah 56:12**; **Hosea 7:5**; **Joel 3:3**; **Luke 12:45**). The point is that drinking alcohol causes a person to do immoral things that would be more difficult to do without alcohol. Because of this effect on judgment and morality, **Proverbs 31:4-7** (above) warns us that it is forbidden for rulers to have anything to do with alcohol, because it negatively affects their calling.

Isaiah 5:11 *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! 12 And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.* The problem with being careless and ignoring what is important (as in operating a machine or a vehicle) when one has been drinking is not only that it affects the worldly things of this life, but also a change in one's spiritual state; that is, it affects the moral decisions one makes. This is why there is a joke that alcoholics must understand and respect. **When someone, in their right mind, says, "I'm only going to have one glass of wine or one beer," then they have the moral strength at that moment not to drink more.** After drinking it, perhaps the alcohol content in their blood doesn't reach the level of being considered "drunk." Many think that "I can control myself when I'm drinking." But the problem is that, under the influence of alcohol, your decision-making process (especially your moral compass) is altered, and after one drink, YOU DON'T CARE it.

Quitting Alcohol

By David Cox

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Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whoever is deceived by them is not wise. Proverbs 20:1

Drinking alcohol is simply a mistake. It's something that brings shame and scandal into your life. It doesn't do you any good; instead, it destroys your life and causes all kinds of evil and problems, from **health issues to the breakdown of marriages and families. Alcoholism treatments fail more often than they succeed, because they don't begin by treating alcoholism as a spiritual matter, a sin before God.** Most take the position that it's a disease (and treat it with medication), or simply a failing in life, like not exercising. **The only way to break free from alcohol use is to accept that it's a sin** because it's not God's will, and to seek God for help. Moral strength comes only from Jesus and the Holy Spirit working in your life, and this is what helps one stop drinking. You must see it as a moral issue and be determined in your life to follow God.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT! (Your moral strength is already nullified.) **This is the effect of alcohol on everyone: it impairs their decisions, and especially their moral strength to resist what is wrong and harmful.** It's not that you pass out, but rather that your decision-making abilities are impaired (especially your judgment and moral strength to say "no more" or "I'm not doing this"). This is why alcohol and drugs are used to lower one's defenses, leading to actions one wouldn't normally take. You start with just one drink, but with this alcohol in your system, your moral strength diminishes, and then you'd only have "one more." So, taking just a little is the mistake. Once you have any amount of alcohol in your system, it's like opening the floodgates and drinking until you physically can't anymore.

1 Corinthians 6:12 *All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but **I will not be brought under the power of any.*** Paul explained that even among "lawful" things, we do not accept even "acceptable" things as long as they cause addiction and enslavement. Paul did not speak directly here about drinking, but drugs, alcohol, and tobacco are habits that cause addiction (this is medically established).

Alcoholism is a spiritual issue

1 Corinthians 5:11 *But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. (1 Corinthians 6:10)*

Galatians 5:19 *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these;... 21... drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* God places the drunkard in a light that presents a choice between one or the other, such as being saved or being a drunkard. One chooses which will control their life, alcohol or God. **1 Corinthians 10:21** *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.*

Romans 13:13 *Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness...* **Ephesians 5:18** *And be*

not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

1 Peter 4:3 *For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, **excess of wine, revellings, banquetings,** and abominable idolatries:*

God directly commands us not to get drunk on wine (alcohol), where there is "dissolution," which signifies a state of unsalvation and excessive sin. "To get drunk" means to become intoxicated, to be under the influence of alcohol. If alcohol lowers one's moral defenses, why would you want to do this?

I Suppress my Body

1 Corinthians 9:27 *But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.* The victorious life is a life surrendered to Jesus Christ as the Savior and King of your life. **Alcohol has a bondage over those who drink it.** One must surrender their life to Jesus to seek help, relief, and pleasure in drinking. **The life of a surrendered Christian is one of submitting their body and life to Christ each day.**

Proverbs 23:35 *They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: **when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again*** Alcohol has the effect of always seeking it again. It takes away the feelings of pain afterward. This does not negate the harmful effect; it makes it even worse.

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