

“Consuming Alcohol”

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Drinking alcohol continues to be a problem among men. Alcohol use ultimately brings ruin, and yet, it is a multi-million-dollar product. Living in Kentucky, we are well aware of the bourbon industry, and the dollars (in taxes and profits) it produces yearly.

Can we justify drinking alcohol because of the monetary rewards for the city, county, or state? Can we justify drinking alcohol because so much of the world thinks this is the right thing to do? I find it odd that if alcohol is such a wonderful thing to have, and a “boon” for our economy, why are there “AA” groups and Betty Ford Clinics (now called Hazelden Betty Ford) scattered throughout the United States whose purpose is to help people stop drinking alcohol and overcome addiction?

Often, people will argue that God never condemned drinking alcohol, only the abuse of it (i.e., getting drunk). This seems to be so when we know that yes, God condemned getting drunk (Rom. 13:13; I Cor. 5:11, 6:10; Gal. 5:21). Yet, is this the extent of God’s condemnation? Is it OK to drink “a little” and promise not to get drunk?

Actually, God condemns not only drunkenness but everything that leads up to that point. In other words, God condemns “social” drinking as well as getting drunk! This is not an opinion but this statement is based upon the facts of the Scripture. For example, Solomon said, *“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise”* (Prov. 20:1). In other words, wine is personified as mocking us when we drink. Mocking has to do with scorn, derision, to make fun of, or treat cruelly. This is what happens to one when it is in our system. Wine doesn’t make one “ten feet tall and bulletproof.” It is just the opposite! Anyone who thinks otherwise about alcohol is not a wise person. If one is not a wise person, then what is he?

In Proverbs 23:29-35, we read again about the dangers of alcohol. In this case, Solomon begins by talking about people who suffer injuries and yet have no idea how they were injured. Their minds are so messed up with alcohol that they have lost their memory of how it happened (v. 30). Yet, notice that God not only condemns drunkenness but also tells the reader not to even look at the wine (v. 31). *“At the last,”* it will *“bite like a serpent and sting like an adder”* (v. 32). Remember, there would be no *“at the last”* if there were not a *“first!”* Drinking alcohol is condemned by God from the beginning in this passage!

A New Testament passage that is appropriate in this study is I Peter 4:3. There, we read, *“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.”* In this verse, we see where Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, spoke God’s word and condemned drinking in any amount. *“Excess of wine,” “revellings,”* and *“banquetings”* describe various states of inebriation. Essentially, from the “social” drinking party (banquetings) to the passed out drunk (excess of wine), God, through Peter, said to not be involved in it. Such actions are in the same category as lasciviousness, lusts, idolatry, and the lusts of men (I Pet. 4:2).

Does this sound like alcohol consumption is a “game?” Does this sound like it is not a serious issue? Christians need to avoid the appearance of evil and need to stop playing games with sin (I Thess. 5:21-22). Some justify drinking champagne at weddings, while others say it is OK to drink a beer from time to time. We hear of those who think an after-dinner drink, or a “nightcap” before bed is the way to go. Friends, don’t get caught up in Satan’s trap! Alcohol consumption will wreck and ruin our souls. We stand in jeopardy when we are justifying the recreational use of alcohol! Don’t fall for Satan’s lies!

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