

SOCIAL DRINKING

Social Drinking is as wrong and as sinful as being drunk, REGARDLESS OF WHAT MEN MAY SAY.

There is clear evidence in the Scriptures that believers should not drink alcoholic beverages. In this report I list **7 Good Reasons Why Christians Should Not Drink Alcoholic Beverages.** However, before we do that, we are going to look at the words translated wine, drink or drinking.

- **A LOOK AT THE WORDS**



There are 637 references to wine, drink and drinking in the King James Version of the Bible. Most people think in today's terms, believing that when wine is mentioned it refers to alcoholic wine. Actually, that is not necessarily true. Thirteen different words are translated "wine" in the King James Version of the Bible. The word wine has a wide range of meaning in the Bible, covering everything from grape juice, to concentrated grape syrup to alcoholic wine. To understand what the Bible has to say about drinking, we need to look at several of these words.

- **OLD TESTAMENT HEBREW WORDS FOR WINE**

"yayin" -- It is a general term for grape beverages and includes all classes of wine, non-alcoholic or alcoholic; unfermented, in the process of fermentation and fermented. (Proverbs 31:4) The context will show whether it is alcoholic wine or not. *Yayin*, when used properly was always diluted with water.

"shekar" -- It is the word for strong drink, unmixed wine. The 1901 edition of THE JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA says, "**Yakin, wine, is to be distinguished from Shekar, or strong drink. The former is diluted with water; the later is undiluted.**" Shekar was not diluted with water." (see Numbers 28:7)



"Tirosh" -- This word refers to fresh grape juice. It is referred to often as new wine or sweet wine. (see Proverbs 3:10; Deuteronomy 7:13)

- **NEW TESTAMENT GREEK WORDS FOR WINE**

"oinos" is the counterpart to the Old Testament word **yayin**. It is a general term for grape beverages and includes all classes of wine, non-alcoholic or alcoholic; fermented or unfermented. The context has to be used to determine whether the drink was intoxicating or not. (Luke 10:34; Ephesians 5:18). *Oinos*, when used properly was always diluted with water.

"sikera" is the counterpart to the Old Testament word **shekar**. It is the word for strong drink, unmixed wine. (Luke 1:15)

"gleukos" is the counterpart to the Old Testament word **tirosh**. Dr. Paul Dixon says "It refers to fresh wine, a new wine" or freshly squeezed grape juice.

Now, **why believers should abstain from drinking...**

1. DRINKING LEADS TO DRUNKENNESS

In the April 24, 1965 issue of **Christianity Today**, the article, on page 25 says, "**People must be informed that the use of alcohol is not unlike Russian roulette: every tenth person becomes automatically hooked. the only solution is total abstinence.**" These statistics are supported by the American Medical Association.

- **DRUNKENNESS IS CONDEMNED IN THE BIBLE**

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!"

Proverbs 23:20-- "Be not among winebibbers;" The word means to drink so much that you become tipsy or drunk.

Romans 13:13 -- "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting (drunken partying) and drunkenness (general drunken-ness)..."

Galatians 5:19a & 21 -- "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these...drunkenness..."

Ephesians 5:18 -- "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;"

- **DRUNKARDS ARE AMONG THE LIST OF THOSE WHO WILL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.**

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

You cant get around it, and in fact, all godly men agree that the Bible condemns drunkenness. Drunkenness is a serious matter.

2. THE BIBLE CONDEMNS STRONG DRINK ALSO

Proverbs 20:1 "Wine is a mocker, **strong drink** is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

NOTE again, **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!"

Proverbs 23:29-31 -- "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.(a mixture of wine and spices) (31) Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright."

- **WHAT WAS "STRONG DRINK" IN BIBLE TIMES?**

Distillation was not discovered until about 1500 A.D. Strong drink and unmixed wine in Bible times was from 3% to 11% alcohol. Dr. John MacArthur says "...since anybody in biblical times who drank unmixed wine (9-11% alcohol) was definitely considered a barbarian, then we dont even need to discuss whether a Christian should drink hard liquor--that is apparent!"

- **CHRISTIANS SHOULD NOT DRINK STRONG DRINK!**

Since **wine** has 9 to 11% alcohol and one brand 20% alcohol, you should not drink that. **Brandy** contains 15 to 20% alcohol, so thats out! Hard liquor has 40 to 50% alcohol (80 to 100 proof), and that is obviously excluded!

Someone will say, "since beer is only 4% alcohol, ITS OK FOR A BELIEVER TO DRINK BEER, RIGHT?" The answer is NO! Heres why...

3. IN BIBLE TIMES WHAT CHRISTIANS DRANK WS SUB-ALCOHOLIC, BASICALLY PURIFIED WATER

Remember the Hebrew word "**yayin**" and the Greek word "**oinos**" that we looked at earlier? These were the companion words for wine whether fermented or unfermented. In fact, whether fermented or not, it was **MIXED WITH WATER**.



Norman Geisler, former Dean of Liberty Center for Christian Scholarship, Liberty University, has written: "Many wine drinking Christians today mistakenly assume that what the New Testament meant by wine is identical to wine used today. This, however, is false. In fact, **today's wine is by Biblical definition strong drink, and hence forbidden by the Bible**. What the Bible frequently meant by **wine was basically purified water**," purified by adding some alcoholic wine. The Holman Bible dictionary says, wine was also used as a medicine and disinfectant.

Geisler goes on to say, "Therefore, **Christians ought not to drink wine, beer, or other alcoholic beverages for they are actually strong drink forbidden in Scripture**. Even ancient pagans did not drink what some Christians drink today."

All alcoholic beverages used in our culture fall under the biblical **classification of STRONG DRINK** and are therefore forbidden. The least ratio of water to wine mixture used in Bible times was 3 parts water to 1 wine. That produced a sub-alcoholic drink that was 2.5% to 2.75% alcohol. Normally, the ratio was even higher, up to 20 to 1. There is **NO BIBLICAL SUPPORT FOR CHRISTIANS DRINKING THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES OF OUR DAY!** What early believers drank was sub-alcoholic by today's standards. Pastors and deacons were cautioned to steer around even the sub-alcoholic stuff (I Timothy 3:3 & 8).

The right choice is to abstain! What is your choice?

4. IT WILL CAUSE OTHERS TO STUMBLE

Romans 14:21 says "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to **"to drink wine**, nor anything whereby thy brother **stumbleth**, or is offended, or is **made weak**."

Innumerable Christians claim their "Christian Liberty" when it comes to social drinking. In order to do that, they must turn their backs on this passage of Scripture. "Sipping Saints" have given multitudes of people an excuse to drink. More than once, I have heard a believer say "there is nothing wrong with drinking in moderation. Pastor so and so even says it is OK."

The problem is, drinking often sets off a chain reaction of influences that are like tipping over the first domino. Drinking causes some to stumble, others to be offended, and many to be weakened. Studies support my statement.

According to a survey done by the Daily Journal newspaper, October 26, 1988, one of the top five reasons teenagers drink is because their parents drink. This has proven true time and time again.

Let me take it one step further. Parents, you must remember that **whatever you do in moderation your child will likely do in excess**.

The Bible clearly defines drinking as an activity that is to be foregone because it causes others to stumble and makes them weak (fall into sin).

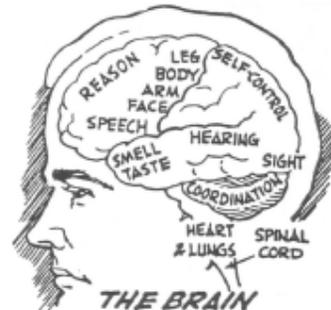
There is yet another reason believers should not drink...

5. IT HARMS OUR BODIES WHICH ARE THE LORDS

I Corinthians 6:19-20 "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

I Corinthians 3:16-17 "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

The first effect of alcohol on the brain is to dull the capacity for self-criticism and the sense of caution. A lessening of care and anxiety follows this. The checks on irresponsibility and unreasonable behavior are also curtailed. Actions follow the impulses, which is dangerous. Reaction time become slower; coordination is disturbed; drowsiness follows.



Proverbs 23:29-33 gives clear testimony to the above description of alcohol on the brain. "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."

How many of you reading this report had high school or college biology? I did, and it was great. There were several girls in my high school biology class and I must say that I especially enjoyed the fit some of girls had when we dissected frogs. But what was really disgusting, even for me, was the day we had to walk up to the big barrel filled with formaldehyde and reach in and pull out a cat to work on. That day there were several of the girls that left class and as I recall a guy or two. To this day, I remember the disgusting aroma of the formaldehyde used to pickle frogs and cats.

So, what does that have to do with alcohol? Dr. Robert Haas, M.D. will fill you in. He is a former president of the American College of Sports Nutrition. He said, "Beer, wine and hard liquor form toxic substances called aldehydes that can destroy the liver, kidney and brain cells. Aldehydes serve a useful function in preserving or pickling dead animal tissue, but they serve no beneficial purpose in people. Alcohol dehydrates (robs) your body of its precious water supply, and along with the water go vital nutrients such as B Vitamins, calcium, magnesium and potassium."

According to Good Housekeeping "Even in moderate amounts alcohol has noticeable effects on the body. Because it enters the blood stream it touches almost every organ, and its effects on feelings and behavior are well known."

Alcohol has adverse affects on your esophagus, stomach & intestines, bloodstream, pancreas, liver, heart, bladder, kidneys, glands and your brain.

"The most drastic and noticed effect of alcohol is the brain. It depresses brain centers, progressively produces uncoordination, confusion, disorientation, stupor, anesthesia, coma, death. Alcohol kills brain cells, and brain damage is permanent" (From-Office of Highway Safety, Madison, WI)

As believers, our body belongs to the Lord. We should not knowingly do anything that would harm it. Alcohol harms the body, therefore we should not drink alcohol.

There is a further reason you should not drink...

6. ALCOHOL IS ADDICTIVE

I Corinthians 6:12 tells us that we are not to "be brought under the power" or to be controlled by anything. The only exception is the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18)

Alcohol is clearly a powerful substance (Proverbs 23:35). Because alcohol is addictive, we should choose **not** to drink alcoholic beverages.

The final reason we will consider for not drinking alcoholic beverages is...

7. BELIEVERS ARE KINGS AND PRIESTS SEPARATED UNTO GOD

"The prophets, the kings, the Nazarites, the leaders -- those who were special in the plan of God were total abstainers" says Dr. Paul Dixon, and he is correct. Kings and public officials

were not to drink (Proverbs 31:4-5). Further Dr. Dixon says "the priests of the Old Testament were to abstain totally." The Aaronic priests were not to drink because they ministered in the tabernacle before the Lord (Leviticus 10:9)

The application: Believers are a "royal" or kingly priesthood (I Peter 2:9). We are the temple of God (I Peter 2:5). We are Gods special children and should choose total abstinence.



Drinking, even social drinking, cannot be legitimately supported by the Bible. Every drink that is available today, even beer, falls into the category of unmixed or strong drink. Clearly, Christians should not drink alcoholic beverages. Drinking socially is a worldly activity and in light of the fact that believers are **neither to be conformed to the world** (Romans 12:2) **nor love the world**(I John 2:15) our choice should be clear. We ARE to be **SEPARATE FROM** the world (II Corinthians 6:17) and **LIGHT TO** the world (Ephesians 5:8; Phillipians 2:15). Perhaps social drinking has enhanced the acceptability of Christians in society, but it has not advanced the cause of Christ, and it does not glorify God! Social drinking is simply a means which the devil uses to blunt our testimony for Christ and squeeze us into his mold. There are at least **SEVEN GOOD REASONS A BELIEVER SHOULD NOT DRINK. One should be enough.**