

## Should Christians Consume Alcoholic Beverages? – Part 2

### ➤ Last week

- Testimony: person said I may share this. (Told me b4 they believe Bible isn't against moderate drinking)
- **Three places our convictions must come from** (how we distinguish good & evil)
  - **The clear commands of God's word.** (This is objective)
  - **The proper application of Biblical principles.** (This is also objective as far as God is concerned)
  - **The personal dealings of God in the heart** (i.e. personal convictions)
- **Biblically we determined that the following is sin:**
  - Intoxication
  - **Any** use of strong drink (whiskey?) (Some **strong arguments** suggest our wine of today may fall into the category of strong drink)
    - There can only be one purpose for consuming "strong drink", intoxication
  - Hanging out in bars

### III. **The proper application of Biblical principles on this** & related subjects. (*Conti. from part 1*)

A proper understanding & application of biblical principles leads one to the conclusion that any use of alcoholic beverages is unwise, as well as unacceptable to God, in our society. Let's look at some of the biblical principles:

### ➤ **Social drinking** – drinking in moderation w/o the intention or the result of getting drunk...

#### A. **In a place where no one else intends to get drunk; I say that Because...**

1. 1 Tim 5:22b ...neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.
  - a. Partaker = (Gr. koinoneo) - to come into communion or fellowship with, to become a sharer, to be made a partner to join oneself to an associate, to make oneself a sharer or partner.
2. Eph 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.
  - a. Fellowship = association with / participation in. **Drunkenness** is an unfruitful works of darkness
3. **I have never seen such a gathering where there is alcohol & no one intends to get drunk...** The Italians & Frenchmen in & from the old country may have had them.

#### B. **I will not attempt to say that drinking any alcohol in moderation is a violation of the clear commands of God** (*unless "it is strong drink"*)

#### C. **I will say** it's a violation of Bible principles as applied to today's culture of drunkenness & alcohol addiction

#### D. **I will not attempt to say that Jesus did not turn water into wine** at the wedding feast; Yet we do not know the level of alcohol content... (*See strong arguments comment above*) Though Jesus certainly did not endorse, or encourage drunkenness.

#### E. **I will say we are living in a completely different society & culture from Jesus day.** For example:

##### According to the Natl Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence

- 17.6 million Americans are alcohol dependent (1 in 12) (another study gave much larger ratio: 1 in 8)
- Several million more engage in risky binge drinking that could lead to alcohol problems
- More than half of all adults have a family history of alcoholism
- 7 million children grow up in a home where alcohol is abused
- 88,000 deaths occur annually due to excessive alcohol use
- Alcoholism is the 3rd leading, lifestyle-related, cause of death in the nation
  - Alcoholism = uncontrollable need for alcohol
- Excessive alcohol use is responsible for 2.5 million years of potential life lost every year; that's an average of about 30 years of potential life lost for each death from alcohol.

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- Approximately 40% of all hospital beds in the USA (excluding those being used for maternity & intensive care) are being used to treat health conditions that are related to alcohol consumption.

- **Joel Engle** is a church-planter who pastors *The Exchange Church in the Dallas /Fort Worth Metroplex*. He is the author of *The Exchange*, *The Father I Never Had*, and has written several top 10 songs in Christian music. He advocates that some Christians are able to drink moderately; but he does so with great caution. He says; "I do NOT want to present the advocacy of drinking alcohol in a cavalier way. **We live in a culture of addiction and abuse**" (emphasis mine) "Drunk driving, teenage alcoholism, child abuse stemming from drunk parents are HUGE issues. Moderate drinking CAN lead to alcoholism. It is a possibility, so we must be extremely careful".
- I suggest the best way to be extremely careful is to abstain entirely from alcohol.
- I want to highlight Joel Engle's statement; "**We live in a culture of addiction and abuse**"; which I agree with.
  - I say that "To set the example that casual, social drinking is acceptable, in this culture, while also attempting to see men & women set free from the bondage of alcohol addiction, and in light of the devastation and destruction that addiction has brought into peoples lives and families, simply makes NO sense! It is counterproductive to our efforts, and the very thought of it is repugnant and repulsive to me. And I believe it is completely contrary to the heart of God.

### F. **Reasons given for social drinking:**

- Try to give me a good reason for this... I can give you plenty of reasons against it.
- 1. **Drinking to fit in** (in moderation). (because your family or friends are doing it and you want to fit in)
  - a. **You've got the wrong friends!**
  - b. **You've got the wrong motivation.**
  - c. Is the desire to "fit in" good or evil?
    - (1) If you **feel & kowtow to pressure** to do things because others around you do it... I contend that, without a change of character, you are headed for shipwreck.
    - (2) **How many other things do you do out of that pressure?**
      - (a) Ro 12:1 be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...
      - (3) Galatians 1:10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.
        - (a) persuade = to make friends of, to win one's favour, strive to please one
        - (b) please = to accommodate one's self to the opinions, desires and interests of others
- 2. *What I'm calling* **"Redeeming" your past sin:**
  - **Trying to use your past sin for "good"** in your Christian life, because you believe a Christian has a liberty to consume (wine or beer) as long as they do not get drunk.
  - **Share my testimony:** night of salvation. I'm not trying to preach my personal convictions, but sharing what God was teaching me...
    - a. God was mercifully teaching me a bible principle
      - (1) Gal 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.
      - (2) 2 Cor 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

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(3) 2 Pet 2:19-22 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. 20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. 22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

b. **If you have abused alcohol in your past, you are living dangerously trying to redeem alcohol use in the future, in your Christian life.**

(1) I contend: If you used alcohol for sin in your past; you should not use alcohol at all in your future

(2) If you haven't abused alcohol in past in the past, its wise to never take a drink.

a. **We are commanded not to be brought under the control of anything.**

(1) 1 Cor 6:12 (b) ...All things are lawful (*permissible, I am given freedom to choose*) for me, but I will not be brought under the power (*control*) of any.

(a) Many individuals thought they could handle an occasional drink, only to find that it became a controlling bondage in their life.

(b) Anything that controls our lives, other than the Holy Spirit is an idol.

i. Col 3:5 mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; ...and covetousness (*a controlling greed or lust*), which is idolatry:

(c) If we never drink, we know we will never be brought under the control of alcohol.

3. **Simply because it is my Christian liberty...**

- To Christians who feel they have a “liberty” to drink a beer or glass of wine socially or with a meal, and if they feel none of the above is applicable to them...

...I want to bring out the absolute selfishness of that argument. (We'll cover this more in Part 3)

b. **We are commanded not to be involved in anything that will make us a stumbling block to another.**

(1) Rom 14:21 It is good neither to eat flesh, **nor to drink wine**, (*emphasis mine*) nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

(a) Stumbleth = to trip up

(b) Offended = entrapped, tripped up or enticed to sin.

(c) made weak = to be weak, to be feeble, to be without strength, to be powerless

(2) Rom 15:1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, & not to please ourselves.

**My experience in 37 years of Christian living and 31 years of ministry:** Most people who attempt to drink in moderation, in our culture, wind up sinning and often even backsliding. And even if not, they probably all wind up leading someone else into sin. 😊