

X-RATED FOR CHRISTIANS

A Positive Outlook on Negative Issues

Study #24

The political, educational, and cultural climate in America today is intolerant of “don’ts,” and yet receptive of any freedom of

expression no matter how offensive, vile, and depraved. As someone aptly observed, “The only thing America will not tolerate is *intolerance*.” Their responses are numerous, “That’s your opinion.” “This is right for me.” “I *feel* that this is okay.” “I



Lesson Overview

- I. Why Christians Consume Good Beverages Instead of Drinking Alcohol
- II. Why Christians Work Hard Instead of Gambling
- III. Why Christians Take Care of Their Bodies Instead of Smoking
- IV. Why Christians Fellowship But Don’t Dance
- V. Why Christians are Selective In Their Choice of Music

don’t interpret it that way.” “This is just the way I am.” “No one is going to tell me what to do....” However, God’s Word is so refreshingly absolute – many issues are clearly a matter of righteousness or sin. While some behavior may be categorized as good, better, or best, there are some things a Christian just ought *not* do.

Checklist

- This Lesson
- Spiritual Journal
- Gospel Tracts

For Next Session

- Lesson Y

Informal Conversation –
Ask about his week. Ask about answers to the prayer requests you have shared.

Discuss Last Week’s Assignments –

1. Ask him to share his Scriptural insights, prayers, and applications from his Spiritual Journal.
2. Share one of your Quiet Times.
3. Exchange highlights of your sermon notes.
4. Ask him about his effort of handing out a gospel tract.

Read page one with your Timothy.

One of the “criticisms” of the Bible is that it is so negative – full of “*thou shalt not*’s.” The Bible is negative on sin, but equally so, it is instructively positive on righteous behavior. The negativism is not due to God’s nature. Read the record of His sinless creation in Genesis 1 and 2; here you find only joy, wonder, peace, contentment, fulfillment – a desirous environment for sure. In Genesis 3, mankind sinned and caused pain, discord, contentions – a cursed existence. God’s “*thou shalt not*s” correct man’s tendency toward sin and protect him from self-destruction. This is positive involvement with man.

Comment:

God’s “*Thou shalt not*s” is akin to a parent telling his child “no” to protect him from certain danger and to increase his joy in life.

Ask:

When have you told a child “no” because danger was near? Examples – “no” to playing in the street, “no” to playing with a knife, etc. You were not trying to ruin his fun but rather to protect him so he could enjoy life more.

As this world staggers toward the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, things are going to get **w-o-r-s-e**, not better. According to 2 Timothy 3:1, these last days will be characterized by P _____ times. Matthew 24:12 predicts that I _____ shall abound.

Were it not for the clear teachings of the Word of God, it would be easy for the believer to be swept along by the tide of sin. Thank God we have the Bible!

This study will look at some of the current “sociological sins” facing believers today. They are widespread and generally accepted in the community; that doesn’t make them right. It’s what the Bible says that counts.

Comment:

Proper approach to this lesson:

1. I am free to live for Jesus.
2. God will have my heart, and I will seek Him above all else.
3. God wants me to experience an abundant life filled with contentment and joy.

REFLECTIONS IN PREPARATION FOR THIS STUDY

From the S Lesson – Separation

1. We are to be separated from the world unto God (Romans 12:1-2).
2. What is our liberty in Christ restricted to? (page 16) To things which E_____. Liberty is the freedom to do **right** – never the freedom to do *anything!*

From the V Lesson – Victory

1. What does the “world” seek from you? (page 6) It seeks to gain your L_____.
2. According to Colossians 3:1,2, where are you to place your affections? “On T_____ A_____.”
3. Note the concluding statement on page 3, “Without a doubt, God’s desire and plan is for each Christian to live a victorious life – not just victory, but A_____ super-abounding victory over our spiritual enemies!”

I. WHY CHRISTIANS CONSUME GOOD BEVERAGES INSTEAD OF DRINKING ALCOHOL

Drinking is a monumental problem in this country – thousands of lives are lost, thousands of homes are destroyed, and millions of dollars are wasted annually as a direct result of the liquor industry. And yet, for all of this, consuming alcohol is one of the most socially acceptable (and expected!) pastimes of our nation.

The Bible says much concerning liquor; it is clear in its teaching on this subject. Fortunately we have a variety of good beverages, colas, fruit juices, hot and cold drinks....

Before studying the Scriptures, it is vital to keep in mind the fact that the word “wine” in the Bible is a generic word which applies to all products derived from grapes – both natural grape juice and man-made alcoholic wine. The context of the passage determines what is meant in each case.



Comment:
Read this paragraph.

Additional Study

Read the article on wine at the end of this lesson (page 22). It addresses pertinent questions regarding social drinking as Christian behavior.

Ask:

Did you read the article starting on page 22 of this lesson?

A. God's comments about alcoholic drinks

1. "Wine is a M_____ " (Proverbs 20:1).
2. Drunkenness leads to P_____ (Proverbs 23:20,21).
3. The Bible pronounces W___ upon drunks (Isaiah 5:11).
4. Drinking leads to N_____ and shame (Genesis 9:20-23).
5. God pronounces woe upon those giving their N_____ drink (Habakkuk 2:15).
6. Liquor perverts J_____ (Proverbs 31:4-5). This passage refers to the practice of *drinking to drown your sorrows*. However, drink never removes the sorrows, it only compounds them, as Proverbs 23:29-30 teaches.
7. Drink causes us to E___ (Isaiah 28:7).

Ask:

What general impression do you get regarding what God thinks of drinking alcoholic beverages?

B. Christians are tempted to drink "socially." To this we answer:

1. Every drunkard began with just one drink.
2. Liquor is deceiving (Proverbs 20:1).
3. Drinking is unnecessary.
4. Drinking identifies you with the wrong crowd.

A Lost Man Speaks

Listen to the studied conclusions of a Toronto Star staff writer. He has made alcoholism a subject of

intense study both on the university and professional levels. As an *unsaved* man he gave up social drinking altogether (carefully stating that his change of heart was not due to any “moral or religious conversion”). His research yielded this conclusion, “...drinking has brought in its wake a host of evil by-products on a scale unprecedented in our society: Death, sickness, addiction, family disruption, murder, child abuse, accidents of all sorts, and astronomical health costs.”

5. Listen to the convictions of famous men of yesteryear.

- Abraham Lincoln said it was “a cancer in human society, eating out its vitals and threatening its destruction.”
- William Gladstone said strong drink was “more destructive than war, pestilence, and famine.”
- Sir Wilfred Lawson said it was “the devil in solution.”
- William Shakespeare said, “Alcohol is a poison men take into the mouth to steal away the brain.”
- Lord Chesterfield said it was “an artist in human slaughter.”
- General John Pershing said, “drunkenness has killed more men than all of history’s wars.”
- General Robert E. Lee said, “My experience through life has convinced me that abstinence from spirituous



liquors is the best safeguard to morals and health.”

The article on wine at the end of this lesson will help the Christian who is honestly seeking God’s will in the matter of social drinking.

- C. *Drinking alcohol is a stumblingblock to others.***
Romans 14:13 says, “Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to F___ ___ in his brother's way.”
- D. *But didn’t Jesus make wine at the wedding in Cana?***
Some argue for drinking by citing the first miracle of Jesus Christ – that of turning the water into wine at the marriage feast in Cana. However, oriental weddings were religious occasions, not festive, and God never contradicts His Word – this wine was *the fruit of the vine*, that is, grape juice.
- E. *From your honest evaluation of this issue, and from reading the Scriptures and the article on wine, do you conclude drinking alcohol is:***
- Not God’s best design for Christians?
 - Not an issue God is concerned about?

Review the article:

1. The wine in Bible times and wine today are not the same.
2. Is drinking wine necessary today? No.
3. Is drinking the best choice? No.
4. Is drinking habit forming? Yes.
5. Is drinking potentially destructive? Yes.
6. Will drinking offend other Christians? Yes.
7. Will drinking harm your Christian testimony? Yes.
8. Is drinking right? No.

II. WHY CHRISTIANS WORK HARD INSTEAD OF GAMBLING

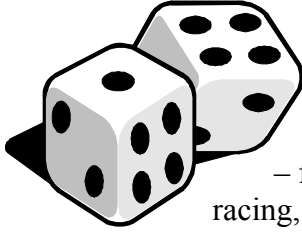
A popular slogan promoting a lottery says, “*Millions Won Weekly,*” but fails to tell the other side of the story – “*Countless Millions Lost Weekly,*” not to mention ruined lives, broken homes, hungry children, and the accompanying rise in organized crime, prostitution, and

Ask:

What is your answer to E.?

Read these opening paragraphs.

theft. Lotteries now operate in a majority of states and in the District of Columbia. Gambling is on the rise – the year 1992 alone saw an increase by 21%!



Our country is a nation of gamblers – from raffles, bingo, and lotto, to racing, professional and collegiate sports, and casinos. There are numerous opportunities to lay down your dollar with hopes of getting more in return.

What does the Bible have to say on this matter? What direction does it give either by specific command, divine principle, or experiential wisdom?

A. *Gambling is an insult to God.*

1. God shall supply A ___ our N ___
(Philippians 4:19).
2. God will see to it that His children will have all S ___ in A ___
things (2 Corinthians 9:8).
3. Christian, realize that your life and destiny are in God's hands (Psalm 37:23; Romans 8:28).

When we gamble we are in affect saying to the Lord, "I do not think You can or will keep Your promise to take care of me."

B. *Gambling is spiritually dangerous.*

- It is a sin that has destroyed many people.
1. In Proverbs 11:28 God warned, "*He that trusteth in his riches shall F ___: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.*"
 2. 1 Timothy 6:9 instructs those who will be rich (that is, they want riches above all else), that the danger before them is:

T _____
A S _____
F _____ and H _____
lusts.

C. **Gambling is basically selfish.**

It is seeking prosperity at the expense of others. Greed is the motivating cause. Where do the funds in the million-dollar jackpot come from?

1. “Thou shalt not S _____ “ (Exodus 20:15). No one gambles to lose. The prime motivation for all forms of gambling is to gain at the expense of others. That is *covetousness*.
2. 1 Timothy 6:10 does not teach that money is a problem, but rather the L _____ of it is.
3. God’s *Principle of Gain* is that there must be:

Emphasize –

1. The greed aspect of gambling, and
2. Where the money comes from that people win.

***WORK BEFORE WEALTH
SOWING BEFORE REAPING***

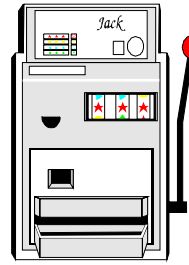
Emphasize God’s principle of gain.

- (2 Thessalonians 3:10) “...*this we commanded you, that if any would not W _____, neither should he E _____.*”
- (Ephesians 4:28) “*Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, W _____ with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.*”

Gambling abrogates God’s natural law because the gambler seeks to reap what others have sown.

D. *Gambling is poor stewardship.*

No one ever *really* wins by indulging in gambling. According to 1 Corinthians 4:2, God requires each Christian to be F_____ over all that has been given to him from God’s hand.



Explain that gambling is the antithesis to faithful stewardship.

E. *Gambling is often just plain “superstition.”*

One often hears of “lucky numbers,” “lucky systems,” “keeping your fingers crossed,” etc. Read what God has to say about such things in Isaiah 47:12,13.

1. Romans 8:28 says, “*All things work together for G_____ to them that love God*”
2. According to 1 Peter 5:7, you are to be “*Casting A_____ your C_____ upon H_____ . . .*”

One word that needs to disappear from the Christian’s vocabulary is *luck*. It plays no part in God’s loving and providential care for His own.

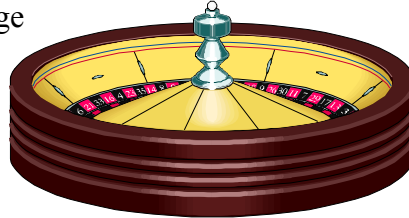
F. *Gambling makes one insensitive to God’s will.*

Gambling focuses on getting. It is materialism run amuck; it is materialism without work and without character to achieve through labor. When anyone is consumed with such self-interest, they are most insensitive to the movement of God.

Avoid gambling as an enemy of your soul. Lean wholly upon the Lord for everything that is good and necessary in life.

G. *Gambling fosters the “Get-Rich-Quick-But-Hurry” mentality in America.*

We are losing the work ethic of previous generations. They knew they had to earn something before they could have it. No one was going to step up and hand it to them; and, they didn't expect anyone to. They were willing to work hard and make something of their lives by building it themselves. But change began in the 1930s, and today, many people don't want to work and save for something; they want it now. They also want something for nothing, believing that they deserve things they haven't earned. This get-rich-quick mentality is being propagated through advertising; through professional sports, Hollywood, and rock stars; through the “magic of the stock market;” through the lottery; and more.



Read G. Gambling fosters the “Get-Rich-Quick-But-Hurry” mentality in America.

The Bible denounces laziness, greed, the love of money, stealing, faithlessness in stewardship, and being bound by obsessions. Gambling is not consistent with God’s command to trust Him.

Read this concluding statement to the issue of gambling.

III. WHY CHRISTIANS TAKE CARE OF THEIR BODIES INSTEAD OF SMOKING

Smoking is addictive; that's why people struggle with it. Tobacco smoke's harmful substances destroy the body and are a cause of cancers. These drugs (and other harmful narcotics) should be absent from your life for three basic reasons:

© *Christian Mentoring from A to Z*

A. For PHYSICAL reasons

It is common knowledge that smoking is harmful and even deadly. Unsaved people quit smoking for this reason; Christians should live by a higher standard.



1. 1 Corinthians 6:19 says the believer's physical body is the T_____ of the H_____ S_____. It is sacred, and should not be knowingly defiled by any harmful substance.
2. The Apostle Paul kept his physical body well by keeping it under S_____ - _____ (1 Corinthians 9:27).

Explain that a believer's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 4:4 instructs us to keep our bodies clean and pure.

Harming your body hinders your ability to effectively serve the Lord. Christians take care of their bodies as a way of acknowledging the Lordship of Christ and posturing themselves to be most effective in the King's service.

Read this significant statement regarding care for one's body.

B. For EMOTIONAL reasons

1. Many people start smoking because of underlying emotional causes – insecurity, anxiety, etc. It becomes a deadly crutch. Addiction is a terrible thing.
2. The believer is to be "... C_____ (full of care, anxious) *for nothing*..." (Philippians 4:6). Rather, he is to trust in the Lord for all things.
3. Experiencing Philippians 4:7 eliminates the need for illicit, addictive drugs.

C. For SPIRITUAL reasons

A Christian who smokes is a poor testimony for Christ. Unsaved people expect Christians to be clean in their habits, and this is not unreasonable. Addictive behavior is a great obstacle to winning people to Christ.

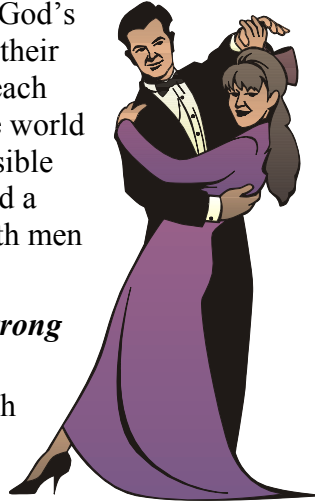
Emphasize the spiritual reason for not smoking.

IV. WHY CHRISTIANS FELLOWSHIP BUT DON'T DANCE

A. *The value of fellowship*

Fellowship deepens wholesome relationships between Christians. It bonds God's people together and enriches their lives. It pulls them closer to each other and demonstrates to the world the love and unity that is possible through Christ. Christ enjoyed a depth of relationship with both men and women; it was pure.

Explain why Christians protect each other's purity instead of alluring and defrauding one another.



B. *Dancing is a practice with strong sexual overtones.*

1. Ballroom dancing with its intimate embrace, or the latest body-shaking "gyrations" which flaunt the flesh and lower God-given inhibitions are both strongly sensual. If dancing has any place whatsoever, it could only be between a husband and wife in the privacy of their marriage relationship.
2. Other dance styles, such as ballet, are usually accompanied with skimpy, tight-fitting costumes that reveal the sensual parts

Read this section on the sexual overtones of dancing.

of the body and leave little to the imagination.

C. *The Bible associates dancing with evil.*

1. Read Exodus 32:1-29. Dancing is mentioned in verse 19. Notice what is associated with it:
 - a. Verse 4 – _____
 - b. Verse 25 – N _____
2. Read Matthew 14:1-12. Dancing was the means of getting the adulterous Herod to put John the Baptist to death. Who danced here?

D. *Some Christians point out that King David danced before the Lord (2 Samuel 6:12-21).*

It is important to understand what is happening here. David is dancing alone, and it is out of extreme joy before the Lord. He is not waltzing around with a woman in his arms, and he most likely is not sensually gyrating to music. He is jumping up and down, spinning around, clicking his heels, and waving his arms out of delight that the Ark of the Covenant has arrived. Even so, it seems this kind of dancing caused David to uncover himself (verse 20), and contributed to a problem with his wife. As innocent as this dance of child-like excitement and praise to the Lord may have been, it was nothing like the kind of dancing seen in today's society.

Read 2 Samuel 6:12-21 and explain what David was doing that is called "dancing."

Read Exodus 15:20 and explain that Miriam, with timbrel and dance, was at least 90 years old. She was not gyrating in front of men, she was an elderly woman celebrating the victory over the Egyptians at the Red Sea.

V. WHY CHRISTIANS ARE SELECTIVE IN THEIR CHOICE OF MUSIC...listening to spiritual songs instead of Rock, Country & Western, and other styles

Read these paragraphs introducing this section.

Some Christians believe the issue of music is simply a matter of personal taste – some liking Classical, others preferring jazz, or country & western, rock, rhythm & blues, and so on.

However, this is *not* the case! Music styles are not amoral as some suggest. The alphabet is amoral, but the wrong letters together make profanity, immoral words, sentences, thoughts, and stories. Lines, curves, colors, shading, textures are amoral, but the wrong elements together make pornography and offensive art. Eggs, flour, sugar, and other ingredients are neutral elements, but when put together one can make a good cake or a bad one. We are willing to admit these facts when it comes to literature, art, sculpture, or any form of creativity – and the same is true for music. Musical notes, melody, harmony, and rhythm are neutral, but the wrong construction of them produces sensual music that appeals to the base appetites of man. The proper use of these elements produces good music.



Explain that music is not neutral; it is not amoral.

Illustration:
 The letter E is neutral. I can use it this way...
 PraiseE the Lord
 or
 I hateE God

According to Ephesians 5:10, believers are to prove what is A _____ to the L_____.

A. God’s standard for music

Godly music is the expression of a Spirit-filled life. Ephesians 5:18 instructs us to be filled with the Spirit and sing.... Sing what kind of music?

1. In Ephesians 5:19-20 three forms of music listed are:
 - a. P_____ = Scripture set to music.

- b. H _____ = songs based upon Scripture.
 - c. S _____ S _____ = Christ-exalting music which speaks to one's new spiritual nature, not his old fleshly nature.
2. According to Colossians 3:16, Christian songs should T _____ and A _____ one another. Where do these songs come from? From those who let the word of Christ dwell in them richly in all wisdom (verse 16).

B. *What is Christian music?*

To know what *Christian music* is you must understand from Scripture what *Christian* is. The Bible defines Christian in the following terms:

- 1. (2 Corinthians 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.”
- 2. (1 John 5:4) “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”
- 3. (1 Peter 1:14-16) “As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: {15} But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; {16} Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”
- 4. (Romans 8:29) “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he

Read each of these verses and take turns explaining them.

might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

To be *Christian* is to be *Christlike*. Christian music is music that reveals Christlikeness. **“Christian music is that music in which lyrics, music, performers, and performance practices are conforming to the image of Christ.”**

C. *The principle of the “New Song”*

The following diagram illustrates the progression that occurs when someone trusts Christ as Savior:

Read through section C. The principle of the “New Song”

NEW BIRTH ⇒ NEW CREATURE ⇒ NEW SONG

1. The new birth makes one a new creature in Christ and then he has a new song. At salvation a person is indwelt by and subsequently filled with the Holy Spirit. What is one change that takes place? Spirit-filled Christians adopt new music – psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:18-19). Music that is characteristically unspiritual is left behind and believers sing with grace in their hearts unto the Lord (Colossians 3:16). The trappings of the old life that are left behind include music.
2. Other passages that reveal that we will have a new song are Psalm 33:3; 96:1; 144:9; 149:1; Isaiah 42:10; Revelation 5:9; 14:3.
3. “These verses define the *character* of music, not the *kind* of music. The Hebrew word translated “new” in these Old Testament references is *chadash*. The Greek word translated “new” in the New Testament passages is *kainos*. These words mean

virtually the same thing: *new in quality* and *new in freshness* as opposed to brand new or new with reference to time.”

4. When we are saved, God gives us a new nature, a new heart, a new name, a new spirit, new mercies, and one day we will receive a new dwelling place – a new heaven and earth. However, the word *new* is used more frequently in connection with our music than with any of these concepts of our changed life. One of the most visible features of our *new* life will be our *new* song – a new quality of music in our life!

D. *Music profoundly affects us.*

A John Philip Sousa march (for example, *Stars and Stripes Forever*) stirs us to want to stand up and march around the room. Soft organ music makes many people feel religious and reflective. Heavy organ music is used at a hockey game to rally the team and get the audience involved. A love ballad can make you melancholy. Music can give men courage in battle or reduce them to tears. Retail stores will spend thousands of dollars on the “shopping” music to entice customers to buy more merchandise. Unquestionably, music has a profound emotional (and spiritual) affect on us.

The difference between godly and unwholesome music is that godly music emphasizes the melody, whereas fleshly music accentuates the beat (with little attention to the melody and harmony) and arouses the flesh.

E. *Bad music styles*

Comment:

Muzak Corporation has made a living at producing and selling “shopping” music to retailers around the world. They guarantee an increase in sales with the use of their product. The sales figures substantiate their claim – music greatly affects us.

Our comments here will be confined to three styles of music: country & western, rock & roll, and contemporary Christian music (CCM).

1. Often the theme of country & western music is sex – husbands and wives who cheat on each other, or live-in sex partners who do. Cheating, broken relationships, broken hearts, and such topics do not make for spiritually edifying music. Rock music also sings about sex, but fortunately, some times you can't understand the lyrics. You can comprehend all the filth with country & western.
2. Why is rock music dangerous? Here's a brief listing:

Review these dangers of rock music.

- The beat is fleshly – a throbbing, pulsating one that appeals to the flesh; and in conjunction with everything else about rock and roll, it arouses impure thoughts and actions.
- The lyrics basically cover four themes: sex, drugs, rebellion, and Satanism. Even rock and roll love songs often have sexual overtones.
- The musicians are some of the most depraved and ungodly people in our society. Read what one rock performer said: "Missionary evangelism is the height of cultural arrogance. To go to somebody else's country and attempt through trickery, food, or medical treatment, to capture 'souls' for Jesus.... presumes that the guy with the travel budget and the hypodermic needle has a 'spiritual edge' over the native he's going to save."
- The rock atmosphere is worldly.
- The effect of rock is morally degrading and destructive. Listen to these titles of articles from major newspapers: "*Rock Videos Called Dangerous to Teens,*" "*Satanic Rock Music is a Serious Hazard,*" "*Rock Music May Be Teen Suicide Factor,*" "*Troubled Teens Turn to Music, Not Mom*"

A disc jockey in Cleveland, Ohio first used the term rock & roll. He got the phrase from the ghetto; it was a term used for “adultery and fornication.” The rock culture is hardly a model for Christians to follow. We need to be discerning Christians and not hide behind a lame admission “I don’t see anything wrong with it.” Nor should we try to “dress it up” by attaching Christian lyrics to fleshly music and calling it Christian rock & roll. What is Christian adultery and fornication anyway?

3. Contemporary Christian Music?

What is CCM?

“There are two main thoughts that guide CCM composers and performers. The first is that music (the notes themselves) is neutral – neither good nor bad. It is assumed that the only bad music is music that promotes bad things (lyrics), is performed by bad people (the secular rock crowd), and is performed in bad places (bars, dances, rock concerts). If we as Christians can take the same music and sing about good things (God and His love), have it performed by good people (Christians), and perform it in good places (churches, youth concerts, rallies), then we can use that music to serve the Lord. ‘Any music style is acceptable for communicating the Word of God’ is the conclusion of this reasoning.

The second guiding principle of the CCM movement is that music is primarily a tool for evangelism. Since rock music is the language of today’s culture (as supporters of CCM would contend), we need to reach out in a language that culture can understand.”

The Battle for Christian Music, by Tim Fisher

Explain what CCM is. Its presuppositions are:
1. Music is neutral, and
2. Music is an evangelistic tool.
There is no Scriptural evidence to support these presuppositions.

Historical Perspective –

In the 1990s Christians witnessed the climax of a change that had been going on for some time – “Christian musicians” have succeeded in “crossing over” to secular markets. They have bridged the gap between Christian and secular music. Major secular recording companies are signing Christian performers to multimillion-dollar contracts. Christian recording companies are entering into marketing agreements with non-Christian companies to expand into secular markets that were formerly unreachable. John Styll, editor of CCM Magazine and president of the Gospel Music Association, states, “The gospel music industry began copying secular acts in an attempt to get others to see the light. The music was the bait in fishing for souls.” Unfortunately this pragmatic approach fails to preserve the distinction of being a new creature with a new song.

Weak or False Theology –

One popular CCM artist’s song “Walking in the Light” illustrates the shallow and erroneous doctrine found in Contemporary Christian Music:

*The sun woke me up real early,
It’s a beautiful morn.
‘Cause I’m goin’ down to the river
To be reborn.
Now me and Jesus did some heavy
Talkin’ last night.
So I’m goin’ down to be dipped and
Come up walkin’ in the light.*



Ask:
Did you catch the bad theology in this song? Songs must be doctrinally accurate; otherwise the music is a medium to teach false doctrine.

What does this song teach? A person can be born again by being baptized! Heresy! This may please unbelievers and sell records, but Christians realize salvation is in Christ not

water. The author, Amy Grant, can't find one verse in the Bible to support her song's theology.

For Additional Information

There are informative Christian books available that deal with the subject of music. A particularly insightful book is *The Battle For Christian Music*, by Tim Fisher, published by Sacred Music Services, P.O. Box 17072, Greenville, SC 29606.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH ASSIGNMENT

- Complete your Y Lesson (Your Pain and Suffering).
- Continue reading through the New Testament.
- Take sermon notes using your *Spiritual Journal*.
- Give out copies of *The Amazing Story Behind Amazing Grace*.
- Where would you like to meet for next week's session?
- Bring your Bible, pen, Y Lesson, and *Spiritual Journal*.

Encourage your Timothy and cast a vision for him regarding spiritual growth.

Pray for him and have him pray aloud.

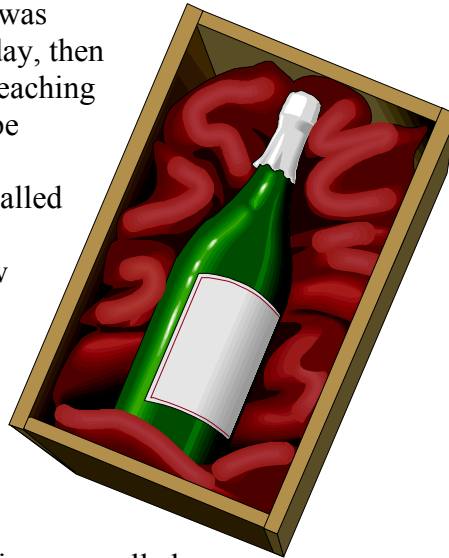
REMEMBER!!!
Turn in the
“Discipler Report
Back” page by
dropping it off at
the Hospitality
Booth in the church
foyer.

THE CHRISTIAN AND DRINKING

IS TODAY'S WINE THE SAME AS THAT IN BIBLE TIMES?

Our first task in answering this question is to determine exactly what kind of wine is referred to in the Bible, and the second is to determine how that wine compares to what is produced and drunk today. Many sincere, Bible-honoring Christians justify their drinking wine on the basis of its being an acceptable practice both in the Old and New Testaments. But if the kind of wine used then was different from that used today, then application of the biblical teaching concerning wine will also be different.

One kind of wine, called *sikera* in Greek (see Luke 1:15) and *shekar* in Hebrew (see Proverbs 20:1; Isaiah 5:11), is usually translated “strong drink” because of its high alcohol content and consequent rapid intoxication of those who drank it.



A second kind of wine was called *gleukos* (from which we get our English term *glucose*) and referred to new wine, which was especially sweet. Some of the onlookers at Pentecost accused the apostles of being drunk on this kind of wine (Acts 2:13). The corresponding Hebrew word is *tîrôsh* (see Proverbs 3:10; Hosea 9:2; Joel 1:10). Because freshly-squeezed juice would ferment rapidly and could cause intoxication even when not fully aged, it was generally mixed with water before drinking.

A third kind of wine, however, is the one most often referred to in both the Old and New Testaments. The Hebrew word for that wine is *yayin*, which has the root meaning of bubbling or boiling up. The figure of bubbling did not come from the pouring of the wine but from the boiling of the fresh grape juice to reduce it to a heavy syrup, sometimes even a thick paste, that made it suitable for storage without spoiling. Because boiling removes most of the water and kills all of the bacteria, the concentrated state of the juice does not ferment. *Yayin* most often referred to the syrup or paste mixed with water and used as a drink (cf Psalms 75:8; Proverbs 23:30). Even when the reconstituted mixture was allowed to ferment, its alcohol content was quite low.

The most common New Testament Greek word for this third kind of wine is *oinos*, and in its most general sense simply refers to the juice of grapes. Any accurate Jewish source will point out that *yayin*, mixed wine, or *oinos*, does not refer only to intoxicating liquor made by fermentation, but more often refers to a thick nonintoxicating syrup or jam produced by boiling to make it storable. In Jesus' illustration of putting new wine (*oinos*, not *gleukos*) only into new wineskins, He was possibly saying that it was thereby "preserved" from fermentation as well as from spillage (Matthew 9:17).



The practice of reducing fresh grape juice to a syrup by boiling or evaporation was widespread in the biblical Near East as well as in the Greek and Roman cultures of that day—and is not uncommon in Palestine, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon in our own day. In addition to being diluted for use as a beverage, the heavy syrup was used as a flavoring and as a jam-like spread on bread and pastries. Both the syrup and most of the drink made from it were completely nonintoxicating.

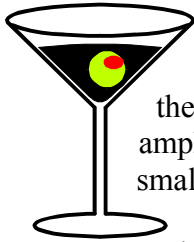
The Jewish Mishnah—the ancient oral and later written interpretations of the Mosaic law that preceded the Talmud—states that the Jews regularly used boiled wine, that is, grape juice reduced to a thick consistency by heating. The “wine” used in the Passover meal was three parts water and one part wine (cf. 2 Maccabbes 15:39). According to the Mishnah, “they do not say the Benediction over the wine until water has been added to it.”

Aristotle described the wine of Arcadia as being so thick that it had to be scraped from the skin bottles in which it was stored and the

- scrapings diluted with water in order to make a drink.

The Roman historian Pliny often referred to nonintoxicating wine. The Roman poet Horace wrote in

- 35 b.c., “Here you quaff under a shade, cups of unintoxicating wine.” In the ninth book of his *Odyssey*,
- Homer told of Ulysses putting in his boat a goatskin of sweet black wine that was diluted with twenty parts of
- water before being drunk. In A.D. 60 the Greek
- biographer Plutarch commented that “filtered wine
- neither inflames the brain nor infects the mind and the
- passions, and is much more pleasant to drink.”



Writing in *Christianity Today* magazine (June 20, 1975), Robert Stein explains that the ancient Greeks kept their unboiled, unmixed, and therefore, highly-alcoholic wine in large jugs called amphorae. Before drinking they would pour it into smaller vessels called kraters and dilute it with water as much as twenty to one. Only then would the wine be poured into kylixes, the cups from which it was drunk. It was this diluted form that was commonly referred to simply as wine (*oinos*). The undiluted liquid was called *akratesteron*, or “unmixed wine,” wine that had not been diluted in a krater. Even among the civilized pagans, drinking unmixed wine was considered stupid and barbaric. Mr. Stein quotes Mnesitheus of Athens:

The gods have revealed wine to mortals, to be the greatest blessing for those who use it aright, but for those who use it without measure, the reverse. For it gives food to them that take it and strength in mind and body. In medicine it is most beneficial; it can be mixed with liquid and drugs and it brings aid to the wounded. In daily intercourse, to those who mix and drink it moderately, it gives good cheer; but if you overstep the bounds, it brings violence. Mix it half and half, and you get madness; unmixed, bodily collapse.

From an early Christian volume called *The Apostolic Tradition* we learn that the early church followed the custom of using only such mixed wine, whether made from a syrup or from the unmixed liquid.

Wine in Homer's day was twenty parts water and one part wine (*Odyssey* 9.208-9). Pliny referred to wine as eight parts water and one part wine (*Natural History* 14.6.54). According to Aristophanes, it was stronger — three parts water and two parts wine. Greek writers spoke of other Euenos — three parts water, one part wine; Hesiod — three to one; Alexis — four to one; Diocles and Anacreon — two to one; and Ion — three to one. The average was about three or four parts of water to one part of wine.

Naturally fermented wine has an alcoholic content of nine to eleven percent. For an alcoholic beverage such as brandy to have a higher content, it must be artificially fortified by distilling already-fermented wine. The unmixed wine of the ancients therefore had a maximum alcohol content of eleven percent. Even mixed half and half (a mixture which Mnesitheus said would bring madness), the wine would have had less than five percent alcohol. Since the



strongest wine normally drunk was mixed at least with three parts water to one of wine, its alcohol content would have been in a range no higher than 2.25-2.75 percent—well below the 3.2 percent that today is generally considered necessary to classify a beverage as alcoholic.

It is clear, therefore, that whether the *yayin* or *oinos* mentioned in Scripture refers to the thick syrup itself, to a mixture of water and syrup, or to a mixture of water and pure wine, the wine was either nonalcoholic or only slightly alcoholic. To get drunk with mixed wine (*oinos*) would have required consuming a large quantity—as is suggested in other New Testament passages. “Not given to wine” (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7) translates one Greek word (*paroinos*) and literally means “at, or beside, wine,” and carries the idea of sitting beside the wine cup for an extended period of time.

The answer to the first question is clearly no. The wine of Bible times was not the same as the unmixed wine of our own day. Even the more civilized pagans of Bible times would have considered the drinking of modern wines to be barbaric and irresponsible.

IS IT NECESSARY?



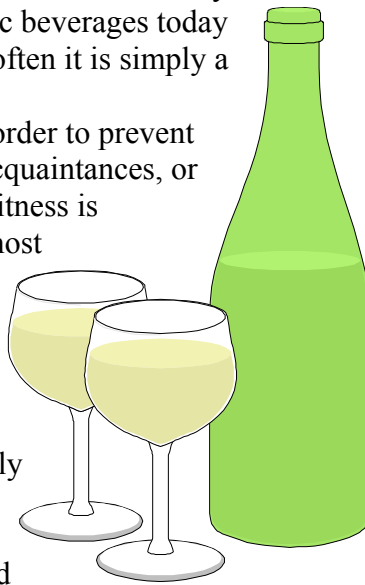
The second question that helps us determine whether or not a believer today should drink wine is, “Is drinking wine necessary for me?” In Bible times, as in many parts of the world today, good drinking water either did not exist or was scarce. The safest drink was wine, and wine that had alcoholic content was especially safe because of the antiseptic effect of the alcohol. It actually purified the water. Water could be made safe in several ways. It could be boiled, but this was tedious and costly. Or it could be filtered, but this was not a safe method. Or some wine could be put in the

water to kill the germs — one part wine with three or four parts water. This later process provided tasty, purified water, which was called “wine.”

Yet it seems hard to believe that the wine Jesus miraculously made at the wedding feast in Cana or that He served at the Lord’s Supper and on other occasions was fermented. How could He have made or served that which had even the potential for making a person drunk? When He made the wine at Cana, He first instructed the servants to fill the jars with water, as if to testify that the wine He was about to create was obviously mixed. The wedding guests commented on the high quality of the wine (John 2:10), and because they called it *oinos*, it obviously was like the mild drink they were accustomed to making by adding water to boiled-down syrup.

Even though circumstances often required or made advisable the drinking of wine that contained alcohol, the preferred wine even in the Bible times had little or none. Modern believers therefore cannot appeal to the biblical practice to justify their own drinking, because so many alternatives are now readily and cheaply available. Drinking alcoholic beverages today is an extremely rare necessity; most often it is simply a matter of preference.

Nor is drinking necessary in order to prevent embarrassing or offending friends, acquaintances, or business associates. A Christian’s witness is sometimes resented and costly, but most people are inclined to respect our abstinence when it is done out of honest conviction and is not flaunted self-righteously or judgmentally. The argument of not wanting to offend others is more likely to be based on concern for our own image and popularity than on genuine concern for their feelings and



welfare. Some feel that drinking is sometimes necessary for the sake of establishing a relationship with an unsaved person with a view to bringing him to saving faith. But such a view of evangelism fails miserably in understanding the sovereign work of God and the power of the gospel apart from human devices.

IS IT THE BEST CHOICE?

Because drinking of wine is not specifically and totally forbidden in Scripture and because it is not a necessity for believers in most parts of the world today, the drinking of it is a matter of choice. The next question is therefore, Is it the best choice?

Throughout the history of God's people He has given higher standards for those in positions of greater responsibility.



Under the sacrificial system instituted under Moses and described in Leviticus 4-5, the ordinary person was required to give a female goat or a lamb as a sin offering—or two pigeons or two turtledoves (5:7), or even a meal (fine flour) offering (5:11), if he was very poor. But a ruler had to offer a male goat, and the congregation as a whole or the high priest had to offer a bull.

Aaron and all succeeding high priests were also given higher personal standards by which to live.

They were commanded, “Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations” (Leviticus 10:9). Because the high priest was called apart to a higher office, he was also called to a higher commitment to God and to a higher quality of living. Whether their drink restriction pertained to their total living or only to the time while they were actually serving in the Tabernacle or Temple, their ministry for the Lord was to be marked by total abstinence from all alcoholic beverage. Their minds and bodies

were to be clear, pure, and fully functional when they ministered in the Lord's name. There was to be no risk of moral or spiritual compromise in sacred ministry.

The same high standard applied to rulers in Israel. "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted" (Proverbs 31:4-5). Their judgment was not to be clouded even by the amount of alcohol found in wine (*yayin*), much less by the much higher amount in strong drink (*shekar*). Strong drink was to be given only "unto him that is ready to perish," as a sedative to ease his pain (v.6).

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Any other use of it was not condoned. wine could be given for enjoyment "unto heavy hearts. Let him drink, and forget and remember his misery no more" (vv. high priests and the rulers of the people neither *yayin* nor *shekar*.

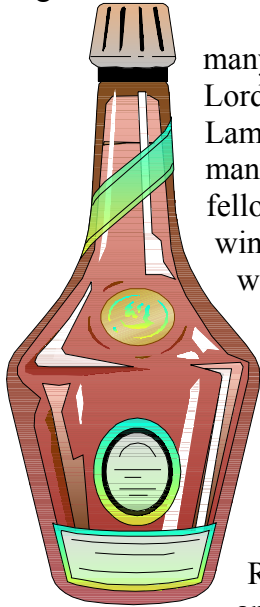
person in Israel could choose to set apart for God in a special way by Nazarite vow. "When either man or shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the Lord: He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong

drink, neither shall he drink any liquor

of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried. All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk" (Numbers 6:2-4). A Nazarite also vowed not to shave his head or to ceremonially contaminate himself by touching a dead body as long as his vow was in effect (vv. 5-7).

The name Nazarite comes from the Hebrew *nazîr*, which means “separated, or consecrated.” Such separation was voluntary and could last from 30 days to a lifetime. But while the person, man or woman, was set apart in that way for special service to the Lord, his life was to be marked by special purity, including abstention from anything even associated with alcoholic drink. The Nazarite was in a sense, stepping up to the level of a ruler or high priest by his act of special consecration and separation.

Scripture names only three men who were Nazarites for life—Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist. All three were set apart as Nazarites before they were born, Samuel by his mother (1 Samuel 1:11) and Samson and John the Baptist by the Lord Himself (Judges 13:3-5; Luke 1:15). The mothers of both Samson and Samuel also abstained from wine and strong drink (Judges 13:4; 1 Sam. 1:15), Samson’s mother by the direct command of the angel.



Though we do not know their identities, many other Nazarites lived in Israel and served the Lord through their specially consecrated lives (see Lamentations 4:7; Amos 2:11). Unfortunately, many of them were forcibly corrupted by their fellow Israelites, who “made the Nazarites drink wine” (Amos 2:12; cf. Lamentations 4:8). The world resents those whose high standards are a rebuke to low living. Instead of trying to attain a higher level for themselves, people who are worldly and fleshly—including worldly and carnal Christians—seek to bring those who live purely down to their own corrupt level.

In Jeremiah’s day the entire clan of the Rechabites had taken a vow not to drink wine, and had remained faithful to that vow. Because of their faithfulness, the Lord had Jeremiah set them up as a standard of righteous living, in contrast to the corrupt

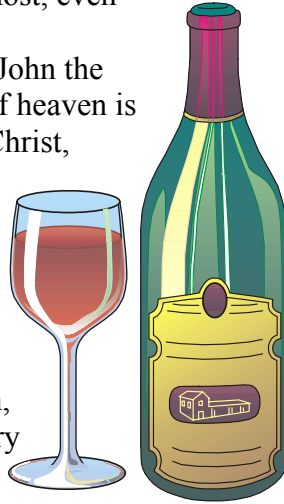
unfaithfulness of Judah, on whom He was about to bring judgment (Jeremiah 35:1-19).

The most outstanding Nazarite was John the Baptist, of whom Jesus said, “Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater” (Matthew 11:11). Before John was born, the angel said of him, “For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink: and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb” (Luke 1:15).

Yet Jesus went on to say in regard to John the Baptist that “he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he” (Matthew 11:11). In Jesus Christ, every believer is on the spiritual level of a high priest, a ruler, and a Nazarite. Christ loves us and has “washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father”

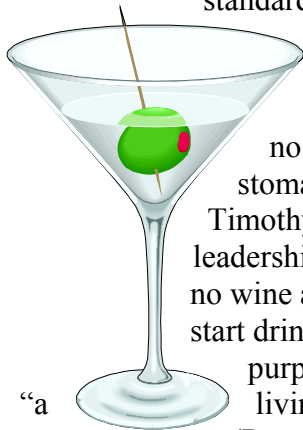
(Revelation 1:5-6). Christians are a “chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people” (1 Peter 2:9; cf. v.5). Every Christian is specially set apart for God, and every Christian is to be separated from everything that is unclean (2 Corinthians 6:17). “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved,” Paul continued, “let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1).

God did not lower His standards for New Testament saints, who are greater, Jesus said, even than John the Baptist. In both the Old and New Testaments drinking wine or strong drink disqualified a person from the leadership of God’s people. Christian leaders, like those of the Old Testament, are held to specially high standards. Overseers, or bishops, who are the same as elders and pastors, must not be “addicted to wine,” which as mentioned above, translates one word (*paroinos*) and literally means “at, or by, wine.” A leader in the church is not even to be beside wine. “Must” (1 Timothy 3:2) is from the Greek particle



dei, and carries the meaning of logical necessity rather than moral ought. Paul is therefore saying that leaders in the church of Jesus Christ not only ought but “must be...not given to wine” (vv. 2-3).

James said, “My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation” (James 3:1), and Jesus said, “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required”(Luke 12:48). If Old Testament high priests, Nazarites, kings, judges, and other rulers of the people were to be clear-minded at all times, the Lord surely does not have lower standards for leaders in the church, which is the present incarnate Body of His own Son, Jesus Christ.



“a

That Paul advised Timothy to “Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities” (1 Timothy 5:23) indicates that, consistent with his leadership abstinence, Timothy previously had drunk no wine at all and that Paul’s recommendations to start drinking “a little wine” was purely for medicinal purposes. Every believer is to present his body living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God” (Romans 12:1), in total consecration to Him.

IS IT HABIT FORMING?

A fourth area of concern for believers should be the matter of addiction. Many things become habitual, and many of the habits we form are beneficial. On the other hand, many other habits are harmful and are difficult to break.

Paul’s principle that though all things for him were lawful, he would “not be brought under the power of any” (1 Corinthians 6:12) clearly applies to the danger of alcohol addiction. Alcohol easily produces overpowering dependency. In addition to the alcohol’s direct clouding of the brain and disruption of bodily functions, the dependency itself distracts the attention and interferes with the judgment of the one who is addicted.

© Christian Mentoring from A to Z

A Christian not only must avoid sin but must avoid the potential for sin. We should not allow ourselves to get under the influence or control of anyone or anything that leads us away from the things of God even to a small extent. The safest and wisest choice for a Christian is to avoid even the potential for wrong influence.

Even when something is not habit-forming for us, it may be for someone who is looking at and following our example. Because alcohol is universally acknowledged to be highly addictive, a Christian's drinking unnecessarily creates the potential for the alcohol addiction of someone else.

IS IT POTENTIALLY DESTRUCTIVE?

A fifth concern should be for alcohol's potential destructiveness. The pagan writer Mnesitheus, already quoted, spoke of wine mixed with half water as causing madness and of unmixed wine's bringing bodily collapse. The mental, physical, and social destructiveness of alcohol is too evident to need much documentation.

Over 40 percent of all violent deaths are alcohol related, and at least 50 percent of all traffic fatalities involve drinking drivers. It is estimated that at least one-fourth of all hospitalized psychiatric patients have a problem with alcohol. Heavy consumption of alcohol causes cirrhosis of the liver and countless other physical disorders. Alcohol-related problems cost billions of dollars each year in lost income to employers and employees, in settlements by insurance companies and in higher premiums for their customers, and in many other less direct ways.

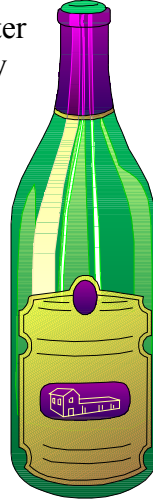


Dissipation, to which drunkenness inevitably leads, is from *asotia*, which literally means "that which is unable to be saved." It was used of a person who was

hopelessly and incurably sick and also was used of loose, profligate living, as in that of the prodigal son (Luke 15:13). Dissipation is therefore a form of self-destruction.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the Old Testament gives many vivid accounts of the close association of heavy drinking with immorality, rebellion, incest, disobedience to parents, and corrupt living of every sort. Violence is a natural companion of strong drink (Proverbs 4:17), and “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging” (Proverbs 20:1).

The prophet Joel cried, “Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine: for it is cut off from your mouth” (Joel 1:5). Later in his message he said, “And they have cast lots for my people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink” (Joel 3:3). Habakkuk warned, “Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness! Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the Lord’s right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory” (Habakkuk 2:15-16).



The Christian must ask himself if it is wise for him to have any part of something that has such great potential for destruction and sin.

WILL IT OFFEND OTHER CHRISTIANS?

In speaking of food sacrificed to idols, Paul said, “We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.... Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol: and their conscience being weak is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God... for neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this

liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak.... And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died” (1 Corinthians 8:4, 7-9, 11).

Our freedom in Christ stops where it begins to harm others, especially fellow believers. We have no right to “destroy with [our] meat [or drink] him for whom Christ died” (Romans 14:15). We cannot be absolutely certain even of our own ability to always drink in moderation, and even less certain that our example will not cause others—including our children—to drink beyond moderation. “For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure: but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak” (Romans 14:20-21). Our own freedom in Christ should not be cherished above the welfare of even one other believer. We are to do those things “which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another” (v. 19).

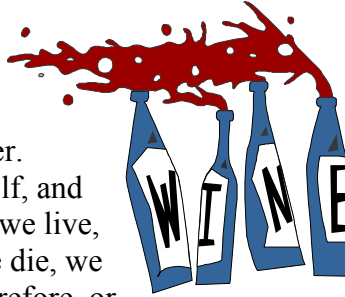


WILL IT HARM MY CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY?

To exercise our liberty in a way that might harm a brother in Christ cannot possibly enhance our testimony to unbelievers. Drinking might make us more acceptable in some circles, but our lack of concern for fellow Christians would work against any positive witness we might give. It would also hinder our testimony before many other Christians, who, though they might not be concerned about our influence hindering their own living for the Lord, would nevertheless be concerned about how it might harmfully influence other Christians.

Paul’s standard given to the Corinthians indicates that the best testimony is to refuse a pagan host so as not to offend a brother: “If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go: whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no

question for conscience sake. But if any say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof: Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?" (1 Corinthians 10:27-29). The witness is most effective if the pagan host can see how much you love and care for your Christian brother.



“For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord: and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's” (Romans 14:7-8). Because everything a Christian is and has is the Lord's, the apostle also said, “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved” (1 Corinthians 11:31-33).

If we want to reach people who are not saved, as well as give an encouraging example to those who are, we will not exercise our liberty to drink or to do anything else that would cause them to be spiritually offended or misled.

IS IT RIGHT?



In light of all the above questions, the Christian should finally ask, is it right for me to drink at all? We have seen that the answer to the first question is clearly no—the wine drunk in the Bible times is not the same as contemporary wine. The answers to the second and third questions are also no for the majority of believers today—it is generally unnecessary to drink wine and is seldom the best choice. The answer to the next four questions is yes

in at least some degree. Drinking is clearly habit forming and potentially destructive and it is likely to offend other Christians and could harm our testimony before unbelievers.

A man once said to me, “I have a beer with the boys sometimes. Is that wrong?” I replied, “What do *you* think about it?” “Well, I don’t think it’s wrong; but it bothers me.” “Do you like being bothered?” I asked. “No, I don’t,” he said. “You know how to stop being bothered, don’t you?” I continued, to which he gave the obvious answer, “Yes. Stop drinking.”

Paul explicitly said, “He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Romans 14:23). Even if we believe that something is not sinful in itself, if we cannot do it with a completely free conscience, we sin because we do it against our conscience. Going against our conscience will push us into self-condemnation and self-imposed guilt. Conscience is a God-given alarm to guard against sin, and whenever we go against it we weaken it and make it less sensitive and less reliable, thereby training ourselves to reject it. To continually go against conscience is to cause it to become “seared with a hot iron” (1 Timothy 4:2) and to become silent. When that happens, we lose a very powerful agent God has given to lead us (1 Timothy 1:5,19).

As we ask ourselves questions about drinking, the final one is the most important: Can I do it before others and before God in total faith and confidence that it is right? It’s very doubtful.

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Discipler Report Back



I met with _____ on
____ / ____ / ____ and reviewed the contents of this
lesson. My comments regarding the discipleship time
together are:

*(make comments only if they are needed to help the Pastoral
staff assist you in ministering to this person)*

Discipler's Name _____

*Please drop this off at the Hospitality Booth in the
church foyer on the first service after conducting
this session. This will help the Pastoral staff stay
current with the status of our new converts and
new members being discipled.*

Thank You

**This is a
sample of
the
“Discipler
Report
Back” page
that you
removed
from the
back of your
Timothy’s
lesson.**

**Return that
sheet to the
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church foyer.**