

καὶ μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἴνω, ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν ἀσωτία, ἀλλὰ πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι,

Textual consideration: 5:18-24 are, grammatically, one sentence.

Intro: Many people have a very emotional attachment to the subject of alcohol. Those who say all drinking is a sin to those who say its ok to drink but not to get drunk. Others go further and say its not ok to get drunk but it is ok to get a buzz (Some may inquire as to the difference). Then the weed smokers jump into the mix and quote part of Genesis 1:29 “*And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit...”*” But I say “quote the rest of the verse,” *You shall have them for food.*” If you consider smoke to be on equal par with green beans and mashed potatoes, you have a serious eating disorder.

There are different groups listening to this message:

1. Those who know they need help with their drinking problem and genuinely want help
2. Those who know they need help with their drinking problem but don't want help
3. Middle-class kids raised with fundamentalist backgrounds looking to “throw off the shackles of legalism.”<sup>1</sup>
4. Those who without a drinking problem wanting to know what the Bible says about the issue of alcohol

### **My experience with alcohol:**

- Alcoholics in my extended family  
Uncle who would give away all his money

- My drinking experience: Pastor Jeff, have you ever had a buzz? Yes.  
-KZ 2006 Aryn and the mare's milk “It cleans your lungs and your stomach.”  
\*Tara had to drink that stuff every day for a summer. It would be pretty bad to have to go into rehab coming back from a missions trip.  
-KZ 2007 Fermented camel's milk (we call that rotten milk)  
-KZ 2007 Cognac vanilla ice cream  
-KZ 2007 Lord's Supper with Russian house church

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<sup>1</sup> Before developing a hermeneutic of beverage alcohol consumption you first need to do, in my humble opinion, at least a semester of weekly ministry with a local jail, juvenile detention facility, boys home, or in the inner-city or low-rent district. I firmly believe that if one is to properly understand alcohol, one must cross the proverbial other side of the tracks. Why? Just like any other theological or biblical issue, the ultimate manifestation of its soundness is in the real world. By this I am not saying that we come to truth solely via experience or observation but that, given that the Bible is God's truth to humanity, the principles and teachings of the Bible should be equal in their application for all of society.

- Lived in SE Louisiana from ages 10-18 where being a heavy drinker was a requirement to be a planner for the highway department or political office. In SE Louisiana drinking in moderation was considered getting drunk slower.<sup>2</sup> There was actually a debate in St. Charles Parish on whether or not to pass an “open container law.” There were drive-through daiquiri establishments almost as many churches as we have in the town of Rocky Mount. I saw first hand the fallout from a lifestyle of alcohol use (use and abuse were virtually synonymous there).<sup>3</sup>
- Parents did not drink and for that I am grateful

MAIN IDEA: Often we are asked, “Is it a sin to drink alcohol?” A more fitting question for a Christ-follower is, “Is it wise to drink alcohol?”<sup>4</sup> Before going any further, let me say that if your family has a history of alcohol abuse then the sane answer to this question is obviously, “No.” Many families have been ravaged by alcohol to the point that they resemble the Hank Williams Jr. song, “Family Tradition.”<sup>5</sup> Through the power of God through His Spirit, you can break the old family tradition and start out on a different path so that your children do not have to experience the same brutality you experienced as a result of alcohol abuse.

*Two Commands:*

- Reject **Drunkness** – 5:18

καὶ μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἴνῳ, ἐν ᾧ ἐστὶν ἄσωτία

Do not be filled up with wine (AKA drunk).

\*Drinking & driving commercials – the windows of the vehicle roll down and out pours gallons and gallons of beer and alcohol.

...but what in the world is “dissipation?” ἄσωτία – with the alpha prefix, it is literally the negation of the word, σώζω “to save.”

NASB – Dissipation

KJV – Excess

NKJV – Dissipation

ESV – Debauchery

NIV – Debauchery

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<sup>2</sup> “Louisiana Drunk Driving Statistics” <http://www.alcoholalert.com/drun-driving-statistics-louisiana.html>

<sup>3</sup> “Louisiana: Substance Abuse Summary” <http://nationalsubstanceabuseindex.org/louisiana/stats.php>

<sup>4</sup> “Is it OK to drink alcohol?” <http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/resources/is-it-ok-to-drink-alcohol>

<sup>5</sup> Hank Williams Jr. “Family Tradition” <http://www.cowboylyrics.com/lyrics/williams-hank-jr/family-tradition-10115.html>

Septuagint: Proverbs 28:7 φυλάσσει νόμον υἱὸς συνετός, ὃς δὲ ποιμαίνει ἄσωτίαν, ἀτιμάζει πατέρα.

“*The one who keeps the law is a son with understanding, but a companion of gluttons shames his father.*” \*The concept of gluttony in both the Old and New Testament very closely parallels lifestyle of today’s “Party Crowd.”

Q# Is it wrong to go to parties? Why are you going? Are you going with at least another Christian to keep you accountable in order to share the Gospel or are you blindly stumbling into the trap of the fool (See Proverbs 7)?

Proverbs 23:19-21 “*Hear, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way.* <sup>20</sup> *Be not among drunkards or among gluttonous eaters of meat,* <sup>21</sup> *for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and slumber will clothe them with rags.*”

It is the same word used to describe the lifestyle of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-13 “*And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. 13 Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in **reckless living.***” The Greek text, 15:13, reads: καὶ μετ’ οὐ πολλὰς ἡμέρας συναγαγὼν πάντα ὁ νεώτερος υἱὸς ἀπεδήμησεν εἰς χώραν μακρὰν καὶ ἐκεῖ διεσκόρπισεν τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ **ζῶν ἄσώτως**. Notice the connection of the participle ζῶν to ἄσώτως. The sad picture is that of a life totally consumed (the present, active, participle), with the total opposite of God’s ideal.

“Release from all moral restraint. Drunkenness produces such an unsettling of the moral nature.”<sup>6</sup>

#### Louw & Nida

“In some languages ἄσωτία in Eph 5.18 may be rendered as ‘what one does without being able to think about it’ or ‘what one does when the mind is absent.’”<sup>7</sup>

\*The type of activity from which you wake up in someone else’s bed with a new tattoo and a person you don’t remember ever meeting or when you wake up hugging someone’s toilet. Contrast this with Ephesians 5:16 “*redeeming the time,*” hence, maximizing every moment of your life for the glory of God.

#### Kittel, Bromiley, & Friedrich

“The original sense is “incurable”; then we have the ideas of dissipation, gluttony, voluptuousness, and indiscipline. The only OT instances are Prov. 7:11 and 28:7. The

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<sup>6</sup> E.T. Horn and A.G. Voigt, Henry Eyster Jacobs ed., *The Lutheran Commentary Vol. IX: Annotations on the Epistles of Paul* (New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1896), 96.

<sup>7</sup> J.P. Louw, & E.A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition.) (1:752) (New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989), in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

reference in Lk. 15:7 is to the prodigal's life of dissipation, and in Eph. 5:18; Tit. 1:6; 1 Pet. 4:4 to a disorderly life (rather than voluptuousness).” [W. FOERSTER, I, 506-07]<sup>8</sup>

C.S. Keener:

“Many people in the ancient world believed that drunkenness could produce a sort of inspiration or possession by Dionysus, god of wine. Dionysus's most active worshipers yielded control of themselves to him and performed sexual acts or acts full of sexual symbolism (often to the distaste of conservative Romans). Here Paul may contrast this behavior with inspiration by God's Spirit. People did not think of Dionysus every time someone became drunk, however;”<sup>9</sup>

F.F. Bruce:

“The first clause is a quotation from the Septuagint of Prov. 23.30. Over-indulgence in wine was a common enough vice in the world of the New Testament, to judge from the repeated warnings against it scattered throughout the apostolic writings. Drunkenness is one of ‘the works of the flesh’ listed in Gal. 5.19-21, and excludes one from inheritance in the kingdom of God (cf. I Cor. 6.10). It leads to other forms of profligacy—the ‘riotous living’ of the prodigal son (Luke 15.13)—and in particular it makes it impossible to exercise the prudent recognition and exploitation of fleeting opportunity which the present context enjoins... Instead of seeking such satisfaction as some expect to find through wine-bibbing, he means, let your fullness be that which the Holy Spirit produces. Some of the symptoms of this spiritual fullness are mentioned in the following verses.”<sup>10</sup>

Not only this word used in Proverbs but the Apocrypha as well, 2 Maccabees 6:4 to be exact. The Greek text reads, τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἱερόν ἀσωτίας καὶ κώμων ὑπὸ τῶν ἔθνῶν ἐπεπληροῦτο.<sup>11</sup> The Latin text reads, “nam templum luxuria et comesationibus erat plenum et scortantium cum meretricibus sacratisque aedibus mulieres se ultro ingerebant intro ferentes ea quae non licebat.”<sup>12</sup>

Verses 1-4 translate as follows:

6:1 “Not long after this the king sent an old man of Athens (think “dirty old man), to compel the Jews to depart from the laws of their fathers, and not to live after the laws of God:

6:2 And to pollute also the temple in Jerusalem, and to call it the temple of Jupiter

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<sup>8</sup> G. Kittel, G. Friedrich, & G.W. Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1995, c1985), 87 in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

<sup>9</sup> C.S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

<sup>10</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Ephesians: A Verse-by-Verse Exposition* (London: Pickering & Inglis Ltd., 1961), 110.

<sup>11</sup> *Septuaginta: With morphology* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1996, c1979), 2 Mac 6:4, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

<sup>12</sup> B. Fischer, & R. Weber, *Biblia Sacra: Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, Ed. quartam emendatam, (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997, c1969), 2 Mac 6:4, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

Olympius; and that in Garizim, of Jupiter the Defender of strangers, as they did desire that dwelt in the place.

6:3 The coming in of this mischief was sore and grievous to the people:

6:4 For the temple was filled with **riot** (ἄσωτίας) and revelling by the Gentiles, who **dallied** (ἐπεπληροῦτο-‘were being filled up upon’) with harlots, and had to do with women within the circuit of the holy places, and besides that brought in things that were not lawful.”<sup>13</sup>

Q# What does the Bible specifically teach about drunkenness?

Drunkenness is:

1. Humiliating to yourself, your family, and your Lord – Isaiah 28:7-8 *“These also reel with wine and stagger with strong drink; the priest and the prophet reel with strong drink, they are swallowed by wine, they stagger with strong drink, they reel in vision, they stumble in giving judgment. <sup>8</sup> For all tables are full of filthy vomit, with no space left.”*

\*Even the priests were routinely getting drunk.

2. Leads to an insane style of living (not necessarily clinical insanity but a mode of life that is obsessed with imbibing in that which brings personal destruction) – Isaiah 5:11 *“Woe to those who rise early in the morning, that they may run after strong drink, who tarry late into the evening as wine inflames them!”*

\*We are to run after people on the highway to hell and bring them to Christ, not waste our lives running after a buzz.

3. Is a sign you’re going to hell – I Corinthians 6:9-10

*“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.”*

Galatians 5:19-21

*“Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, <sup>21</sup> envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

4. Victimized others – Habakkuk 2:15 *“Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink you pour out your wrath and make them drunk, in order to gaze at their nakedness!”*

A modern equivalent would be trying to get someone drunk so you can get them in bed.

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<sup>13</sup> [http://www.bibleforyou.net/2Maccabees/Book/Chapter\\_6.html](http://www.bibleforyou.net/2Maccabees/Book/Chapter_6.html)

5. Destroys families – I Samuel 25  
Nabal, “The Mean Drunk”

Thus, the Bible teaches that drunkenness leads you and causes you to waste your life. It is to live in a narcissistic Twilight Zone where the revolving turret of your Happiness Meter is centered on getting smashed for the weekend or that feeling you get when it seems like the booze has taken away all your problems. In a sense, it is idolatry because it looks to alcohol instead of God for ultimate satisfaction and enjoyment.

The first Q&A in the Westminster Shorter Catechism reads:

Q.1. What is the chief end of man?

A.1. Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”<sup>14</sup>

A life of drunkenness alters the Q&A to the following:

Q.1. What is the chief end of man?

A.1. To glorify my desire to get smashed out of my line and make a fool of myself and my God and to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin for a season.

### **OBJECTION: Gluttony = Drunkenness**

REBUTTAL: I’ve never heard of anyone being pulled over when driving while fat. Neither have I read a report about a person losing their license due to having one too many Twinkies. While gluttony and drunkenness are both sins of the flesh, drunkenness has greater potential to wreak havoc in the lives of others.<sup>15</sup> Overweight preachers who take a hard-nosed stance against drunkenness often seem to be the apex of hypocrisy. While we as Christians do need to maintain a consistent standard of Christian ethics, we must also make sure we compare apples and oranges in terms of gluttony and drunkenness. Still others claim that gluttony is rarely, if ever, addressed in the current church climate. Due to this deafening absence, a stance against alcohol is understood as more of a “pick-and-choose” Christianity. This is a valid concern. However, we must be careful as not to hold to a “Red Herring” or “Smokescreen” fallacy where the issue of unaddressed gluttony somehow negates the inherent evil of drunkenness. Both are sins. Both need to be addressed. The lack of emphasis on one within the American church in no way justifies the other.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Westminster Shorter Catechism, <http://www.reformed.org/documents/WSC.html>

<sup>15</sup> Rick Hermann, “Is it Wise to Drink Alcohol?”

[http://www.seventonine.com/mp3/01%20Is%20it%20wise%20to%20drink%20Alcohol\\_.mp3](http://www.seventonine.com/mp3/01%20Is%20it%20wise%20to%20drink%20Alcohol_.mp3)

<sup>16</sup> Embedded within the, “Why do you always talk about drinking and never mention gluttony?” argument is a classic “Red Herring” fallacy whereas the claim that gluttony is equal in terms of collateral damage, personal and societal danger is a perfect example of a *non sequitor* (Latin, “does not follow” for a fallacious argument where the claim/conclusion does not follow the premises). Noble’s central argument for the

Q# But what about alcohol itself? We know that the Bible clearly warns against drunkenness and that God's will is for us to avoid drunkenness. But what does the Bible say about alcoholic beverages not necessarily the abuse of alcohol?

Historical Considerations:

1. Wine used for medicinal purposes
2. Wine used as a germ-killer when mixed with water
3. Difference between ancient beverage alcohol and modern beverage alcohol
4. Multi-national corporations seeking to press a culture of alcohol upon American society (beer commercials have helped this goal of the alcohol industry become somewhat of a popular icon within American culture).

Textual Considerations:

- Timothy wine for your stomach – I Timothy 5:23 “(No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.)” why did Paul have to tell Timothy to drink a little wine as pepto bismol? = Because Timothy was not drinking alcohol in any form!

### **Biblical Survey of Alcohol – Alcohol/Wine in the Bible (it is described as):**

Benefits of wine:

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acceptability of alcohol use is deeply implanted in this fallacy.

<http://www.perrynoble.com/2008/08/03/sunday-night-reflections-63/> While I agree with Perry 100% about the lack of discussion about gluttony in the church, the absence in no way negates the dangers of alcohol (Note: This is not a personal criticism against Perry Noble. God is continuing to use him in an incredible way. Rather, it is a critique of an argument that I do not, as another brother in Christ, think is adequate. Mark Driscoll, another brother in Christ who I greatly respect and admire, unfortunately never addresses the overarching issue of wisdom (AKA, “What is the best/wisest choice I can possibly make in regard to alcohol?”), in discussing the issue of alcohol.

<http://www.marshallchurch.org/media/proverbs/good-wine-glad-hearts?mode=expand&p=transcript#read> Let me be clear; I am not seeking to cut down Mark Driscoll or Perry Noble in a personal way but address arguments and interpretations of Scripture that I do not see as taking all the necessary criteria into account. I praise God for the ministry of these brave men while at the same time respectfully disagreeing with their lack of emphasis on wisdom in regard to the issue of alcohol. In the same vein of thought, Paige Patterson all but declares all alcohol consumption, in any amount, to be a sin. <http://bpnews.org/bpnews.asp?ID=23601> I also find it difficult to coagulate a solid textual argument for this position. As previously stated, I believe that wisdom through the leading of the Holy Spirit must be the incessant compass for a believer whether that be in regard to beverage alcohol or other related issues.

1) Symbol of gladness – Psalm 104:14-15 “*You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth* <sup>15</sup> *and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man’s heart.*”

2) Used medicinally

a. Quasi-anesthesia – Proverbs 31:6-7 “*Give strong drink to the one who is perishing, and wine to those in bitter distress; <sup>7</sup> let them drink and forget their poverty and remember their misery no more.*”

b. Antiseptic for wounds – Luke 10:34 “*He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him.*”

The alcohol in the wine served as an anti-bacterial agent for wounds because there was no CVS with a ready supply of hydrogen peroxide.

### Dangers of wine:

1. Source of shame

a. Noah \*First mention of wine in the Bible – Genesis 9

#### John Bunyan

“*Yea, I thought it impossible that ever I should attain to so much goodness of heart, as to thank God that He had made me a man. Man indeed is the most noble by creation, of all creatures in the visible world; but by sin he has made himself the most ignoble.*”<sup>17</sup>

b. Makes you an idiot/fool (the opposite of wise) – Proverbs 20:1

“*Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, **and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.***” \*Notice the recurring theme of wisdom.

c. Will make you poor if you love it – Proverbs 21:17 “*Whoever loves pleasure will be a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not be rich.*”

\*I have been told by many who are into the party scene that it is common to spend anywhere from \$50-\$350 drinking at a bar on any given Friday or Saturday night.

d. Is a Viper = Has the potential to poison & destroy everything good in your life – Proverbs 23:29-35 “*Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? <sup>30</sup> Those who tarry long over wine; those who go to try mixed wine. <sup>31</sup> Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. <sup>32</sup> In the end it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. <sup>33</sup> Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart utter perverse things. <sup>34</sup> You will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, like one who lies on the top of a mast. <sup>35</sup> “They struck me,” you will say, “but I was not hurt; they beat me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake? I must have another drink.”*”

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<sup>17</sup><file:///Users/jordanrobinson/Desktop/CD/Bunyan/text/Grace.Abounding/Entire.Book.html> “Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners” by John Bunyan (London: George Larkin, 1666), *electronic version*.

James Merritt, “It is impossible to be bitten by a snake that you never play with.”<sup>18</sup>

Adrian Rogers, “Moderation is not the cure for the liquor problem. Moderation is the cause of the liquor problem. Becoming an alcoholic does not begin with the last drink, it always begins with the first. Just leave it alone.”<sup>19</sup>

- e. Source of bad decisions – Proverbs 31:4-5 “*It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to take strong drink, lest they drink and forget what has been decreed and pervert the rights of all the afflicted.*”

Danny Akin/John MacArthur, “Can I say it is always a sin to take a drink? No. Can I say it is almost always unwise? Yes, because it violates the biblical principles of wisdom of witness.”<sup>20</sup>

\*I greatly respect the honesty of both Akin and MacArthur to not try to make the text say what it does not while emphasizing the larger framework of wisdom.

- 3) Symbolic of God’s Judgment in the Book of Revelation – Rev. 6:6; 14:8, 10; 16:19; 17:2; 18:3, 13.
- 4) Abstinence from was a sign of total dedication to God (Nazirite vow)– Numbers 6:1-4 “*And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When either a man or a woman makes a special vow, the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the LORD, he shall separate himself from wine and strong drink. He shall drink no vinegar made from wine or strong drink and shall not drink any juice of grapes or eat grapes, fresh or dried.*”<sup>21</sup>
- 5) Abstinence of Old Testament priests while performing their duties – Leviticus 10:8-11 “*And the LORD spoke to Aaron, saying, Drink no wine or strong drink, you or your sons with you, when you go into the tent of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean, and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the LORD has spoken to them by Moses.*”

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<sup>18</sup> Daniel L. Akin, *The Case for Alcohol Abstinence* [http://apps.sebts.edu/president/wp-content/uploads/old%5CResource\\_617%5CThe%20Case%20for%20Alcohol%20Abstinence.pdf](http://apps.sebts.edu/president/wp-content/uploads/old%5CResource_617%5CThe%20Case%20for%20Alcohol%20Abstinence.pdf), 2.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>21</sup> It is helpful to note that the Nazirite not only abstained from alcohol but from any product of the vine (even the skins of grapes), contact with dead bodies (even in the case of deceased family members), and anything resembling a haircut.

- 6) Abstinence for honoring family preferences – Jeremiah 35:6 *“But they answered, ‘We will drink no wine, for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, ‘You shall not drink wine, neither you nor your sons forever.’”*

\*Children, sons and daughters, if your parents ask you not to drink, you don’t drink. If you truly seek to honor your father and your mother, even though they may be far from perfect, then you will honor their requests that are, semantics aside, for your benefit.

Fallding’s classification of four different kinds of drinking:

- 1) Ornamental or Community – The Special Occasion Drinker “Symbolic Drinking”
  - A. Lord’s Supper – 1 Corinthians 11:21-22
  - B. Family meals – “Another example of this kind of drinking is the family meal of the German, the French, or the Italian family. They drink as a part of the common bond of fellowship within the family.”<sup>22</sup>

- 2) Facilitation Drinking – The Social Drinker “Social Drinking”

“This kind of drinking is done by a person who has trouble becoming a part of his community even though he trusts it, identifies with it, and is accepted by it. Drinking eases the adjustment of the person to his social group.”<sup>23</sup>

Alcoholics: Assuagement drinkers and Retaliation drinkers

- 3) Assuagement Drinking – The Problem Drinker “There’s a Tear in my Beer”

“Here, alcohol becomes a substitute for a community of mutual trust and common purpose...this kind of drinking assuages temporarily the utter loneliness and meaninglessness of life.”<sup>24</sup>

- 4) Retaliation Drinking – The Town Drunk “Give up on life, give me another bottle”

“The retaliation drinker is not only psychically or psychologically dependent upon alcohol as a drug, but he also “exploits the incapacitating power of alcohol in order to make himself a passenger on the system” of the community which he distrusts.”<sup>25</sup>

Q# So what should we be filled with and controlled by?

- Receive God’s **fullness** into your life via **Submission** to His power – 5:18

- 1) Misunderstood

- a. Hannah & Eli – I Samuel 1:13-18
- b. Pentecost & speaking in Tongues – Acts 2:13

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<sup>22</sup> Wayne E. Oates, *Alcohol in and out of the Church* (Nashville: Broadman, 1966), 20.

<sup>23</sup> Wayne E. Oates, *Alcohol in and out of the Church*, 22.

<sup>24</sup> Wayne E. Oates, *Alcohol in and out of the Church*, 23.

<sup>25</sup> Wayne E. Oates, *Alcohol in and out of the Church*, 24.

A believer can never obtain more of the Holy Spirit, for he indwells the Christian's life in all his fullness. But the Holy Spirit can get more of the believer; that is, he can exercise complete control of the life that is yielded to him.<sup>26</sup>

2) Misused – Emphasis on ecstatic utterances vs. practical love

I Corinthians 13:1 “*If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.*”

Warren Wiersbe:

“In other words, to be filled with the Spirit of God means to be controlled by the Word of God. The marks of a Spirit-filled Christian are not unusual emotional experiences, miracles, and tongues, but rather Christian character.”<sup>27</sup>

That is why Galatians 5:22-26 says the following about the fruit of the Holy Spirit:

“*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*<sup>23</sup> *gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*<sup>24</sup> *And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

<sup>25</sup> *If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.* <sup>26</sup> *Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.*”

Daniel B. Wallace:

The meaning of this text can only be fully appreciated in light of the πληρώω language in Ephesians. Always the term is used in connection with a member of the Trinity. Three considerations seem to be key:

1) In Eph 3:19 the “hinge” prayer introducing the last half of the letter makes a request that the believers “be filled with all the fullness of God” (πληρωθῆτε εἰς πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ θεοῦ). The explicit *content* of πληρώω is thus God's fullness (probably a reference to his moral attributes).

2) In 4:10 Christ is said to be the agent of filling (with v11 adding the specifics of his giving spiritual gifts).

3) The author then brings his argument to a crescendo in 5:18: **Believers are to be filled by Christ by means of the Spirit with the content of the fullness of God (emphasis mine).**<sup>28</sup>

So also in ordinary Christians the Spirit dwells not in the mind that seeks the disturbing influences of excitement, but in the well-balanced prayerful mind.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Everett Harrison ed., C.F. Pfeiffer, *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: New Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1962), in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

<sup>27</sup> Warren Wiersbe, *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1997, c1992), in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

<sup>28</sup> Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, 375.

<sup>29</sup> R. Jamieson, A.R. Fausset, D. Brown, *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc. 1997), in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

Wise questions on the drinking issue:

1) Am I fully persuaded that it is right?

Is there a caution in your spirit? Pray and listen to your conscience. The Holy Spirit will guide you.

2) Can I do it as unto the Lord?

In other words, could I drink alcohol to the glory of God? Will this act be something be pleasing to God?

3) Can I do it without being a stumbling block to my brother or sister in Christ?

What about drinking inside the privacy of my own home? If you have to hide an act, you probably shouldn't do it. If it brings shame then avoid it.

4) Does it bring peace?

If your parents or family asks you to refrain from drinking and you pursue it anyway, you violate the letter and the spirit of the Fifth Commandment, "*Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.*"

5) Does it edify my brother?

Does it help others become more like Christ?

6) Is it profitable?

Drinking alcohol is not healthy. The alcohol industry has piggy-backed on the discovery of the health benefits of resveratrol, a compound found in grapes. A New York Times article, "Red Wine Ingredient Increases Endurance, Study Shows,"<sup>30</sup> is factually correct but with one glaring omission; one can gain the same health benefits from grape juice or even grape seed extract as red wine.<sup>31</sup>

7) Does it enslave me?

There is a risk of becoming hooked after the first drink.

8) Does it bring glory to God?<sup>32</sup>

For the Christ-follower, this should overshadow all else.

9) Is it the wisest possible choice?

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<sup>30</sup> "Red Wine Ingredient Increases Endurance, Study Shows"

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/17/health/17drug.html>

<sup>31</sup> "Does grape juice offer the same heart benefits as red wine?"

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/food-and-nutrition/AN00576>

<sup>32</sup> John & Paul Feinberg, Aldous Huxley, *Ethics for a Brave New World* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1996), 43-44.

Filled with the Spirit:

\*KEY: The emphasis in Christianity is not so much on what not to do but whose you are. Hence, if I am a child of the King then my life is bursting with gratefulness and an inexorable passion to pursue my Savior, despite my shortcomings and stupidity in sin, my eye must continually remain fixed on Him. Pursuing Christ, following Him, loving Him, is a full-time job so it's like I don't have time sitting around trying to split theological apostrophes in order to justify drinking or find some proof-text to systematize all Christians in all cultures at all times.

### *What should we do?*

If the Bible and our common experience is correct about the devastating effects that abuse of alcohol can have, then the question changes from, "Where in the Bible does it tell me I can't have one beer?" to a new question: What is the wisest choice for me to make in regard to alcohol in my culture and society? Since I am pursuing Christ, I am not looking for

1. Legalistic line in the sand from man-made doctrine.
2. Proof-text in the Bible to justify drinking, and in so doing, getting as close to some kind of line in the sand between "good" and "bad" behavior.

But rather, I am looking for: How can I maximize my time and every area of my life FOR the glory of God? Simply put, how can I live in such a way that even what I put in my body and how much I put in my body points to Jesus? What is the wisest choice I can make in regard to alcohol? I believe the best approach is to abstain for the glory of God. Because I love Christ, even if it means me limiting myself in areas of freedom (for those who hold to the position that spiritual freedom extends to drinking beverage alcohol), I am more than happy to do so because even my freedom in Christ is not all about me. It is my freedom to continually place my desires and even my rights on the back burner in order to make Christ known in a culture where families and individuals have been ravaged by alcoholism and drunkenness.<sup>33</sup> For the glory of God and the love for our fellow men, I implore you to abstain, not out of a sense of legalism but out of love.

Closing AGI: Mike J. ICBC

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<sup>33</sup> Russell Moore and R. Albert Mohler, "Alcohol and the Ministry"  
<http://www.sbts.edu/resources/lectures/school-council/alcohol-and-the-ministry/>

## CHRISTIAN LIBERTY (JOHN & PAUL FEINBERG)

Christian liberty involves practices not covered in Scripture by a moral absolute that either commands or forbids them. Such activities, scripturally speaking, are morally indifferent. Still, because of social and cultural background, individuals may find such practices offensive.

Examples help to understand what is at stake. Scripture prohibits drunkenness (Eph 5:18), and while some think even an occasional drink of alcoholic beverage is also forbidden, others cite Paul's advice to Timothy (1 Tim 5:23) as evidence that an occasional drink is morally indifferent. Many American Christians consider card playing morally indifferent as long as gambling is not involved. Likewise, many think social dancing is acceptable if the intent of the dancers is not to arouse lust and impure thoughts. Despite a lack of moral absolutes to cover these practices, some believers find them offensive. Should Christians do these things? How should they decide whether to indulge or refrain? These are the issues at stake when discussing Christian liberty.

Paul discusses this whole question at great length in Romans 14–15. The *practices* under question are eating meat offered to idols and observing one day as special above another, but the *principles* Paul teaches cover morally indifferent practices in general. Paul's fundamental point is that no one has a right to impose his scruples on others in these matters. Those who indulge must not despise those who do not, and those who refrain must not judge those who indulge (Rom 14:3). If there is any judging at all, it must be done by each individual concerning himself and by Christ who judges (Rom 14:4, 10–13). Each person should decide with the Spirit's help which practices are right for him and which are not.

In view of the preceding, one might think the discussion over. However, it is not, for Paul teaches that although all things are clean in themselves (and thus morally indifferent), they are wrong for those who think them wrong (Rom 14:14). That is, something morally neutral becomes a sin if one thinks it is wrong but does it anyway (Rom 14:22–23). Each person must decide for himself before God whether to indulge or refrain, but since a wrong decision turns a morally neutral practice into sin, one must make right decisions. How can one know which practices are acceptable for him? Paul offers guidelines that can help Christians decide which activities are acceptable for them. These guidelines may be stated as eight questions (tests) that each Christian must face when deciding whether or not to indulge in a given activity. If one answers any negatively, he should not do it. Each person must ask and answer for himself alone before the Lord.

The first question is *Am I fully persuaded that it is right?* Paul says (Rom 14:5, 14, 23) that whatever we do in these areas, we must be persuaded it is acceptable before God. If we are not, we doubt rather than believe we can do this and stand acceptably before God. If there is doubt, though, Paul says there is sin. So if there is any doubt, regardless of the reason for doubt, one should refrain. In the future, doubt might be removed so one could indulge; but while there is doubt, he must refrain.

Second, *Can I do it as unto the Lord?* Whatever we do, Paul says we must do as unto the Lord (Rom 14:6–8). To do something as unto the Lord is to do it as serving him. If one cannot serve the Lord (for whatever reason) in the doing of the activity, he should refrain.

Third, *Can I do it without being a stumbling block to my brother or sister in Christ?* Much of Romans 14 (vv. 13, 15, 20–21) concerns watching out for the other brother's or sister's walk with the Lord. We may be able to indulge, but he or she may not have faith to see that the activity is morally indifferent. If he or she sees us participate, he or she may be offended. As much as possible, we must avoid giving offense in these areas. This, however, does not mean one must always refrain. Paul's advice in 14:22 is helpful. For one who believes he can indulge, his faith is right, but let him have it before God. In other words, he need not flaunt his liberty before others. It is enough for him and the Lord to know he can partake of these practices. In sum, if one truly cares about his brother's or sister's walk, sometimes he will refrain, and at other times he will exercise his liberty privately.

Fourth, *Does it bring peace?* In Rom 14:17–18 Paul says the kingdom of God is not about things such as the meat we eat or what we drink. Instead, it is about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Thus, believers should handle these matters so as to serve Christ. How would one do that? Paul instructs us (v. 19) to do what brings peace. Certain practices may be acceptable for one person, but if others saw him indulge, it might stir up strife between them. Hence, one must do what brings peace.

Fifth, *Does it edify my brother?* The command to do what edifies is in the same verse as the charge to do what brings peace (14:19). By juxtaposing the two demands, Paul makes an important point. Some activities may not create strife with another Christian, but they may not edify him either. One must choose activities which both bring peace and edify.

Sixth, *Is it profitable?* In 1 Cor 6:12 Paul addresses the issue of Christian liberty, and he reminds believers that morally indifferent practices are all lawful, but they may not all be profitable. They may be unprofitable for us or for our brother. For example, no law prohibits playing cards, but if my card playing causes a brother to stumble, it is unprofitable for me to indulge. If the act is unprofitable, I must refuse to do it.

Seventh, *Does it enslave me?* (1 Cor 6:12). Many activities, wholesome and valuable in themselves, become unprofitable if they master us more than Christ does. As John warns, Christians must not love the world, but are to love God instead (1 John 2:15ff.). It is not that everything in the world is evil and worthless. Rather, our devotion and affections must be focused first and foremost on God. If we are to be enslaved to anything or anyone, it must be Christ.

A final test is *Does it bring glory to God?* Paul discusses Christian liberty in 1 Corinthians 10, and in verse 31 he sums up his discussion by saying that whatever we do in these areas should bring glory to God. How does one know if his actions bring God

glory? We would say at the least that if one answers any of the other seven questions negatively in regard to a particular activity, he can be sure he will not bring God glory if he indulges. Conversely, if the activity is acceptable on those other grounds, it should be acceptable on this ground as well.

In sum, Scripture distinguishes actions covered by moral absolutes and those that are not. Believers must make up their own minds (under the Holy Spirit's leading) on what to do in matters of Christian liberty. Personal preferences must not be imposed on others. In deciding what to do, one should use these eight tests taught by Paul. Each one must answer those questions honestly before God. Whatever decision stems from that process of questioning, each must have the integrity to obey.<sup>34</sup>

#### Further notes on being "filled by the Spirit":

Daniel B. Wallace:

Normally, a verb of filling takes a *genitive* of content. However, there are possibly three instances in the NT when *plyrao* takes a *dative* of content. It must be noted, however, that there are no clear examples in biblical Greek in which *en* + the dative indicates content.<sup>35</sup> (Thus the popular interpretation of πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι in Eph 5:18 as "be filled with the Spirit" in the sense that the Spirit is the content with which one is filled is most likely incorrect.)<sup>36</sup>

Wallace comments:

##### 1) Definition

The article is sometimes used in contexts in which possession is implied. The article itself does not involve possession, but this notion can be inferred from the presence of the article alone in certain contexts.

##### 2) Amplification

- a) The article is used this way in contexts in which the idea of possession is obvious, especially when human anatomy is involved. Thus, in Matt 8:3, there is no need for the evangelist to add *autou* to what is patently evident: "stretching out **his** hand" (ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα).

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<sup>34</sup> John & Paul Feinberg, Aldous Huxley, *Ethics for a Brave New World*, 43-44.

<sup>35</sup> Abbott notes that "the use of ἐν with πληρόω to express the content with which a thing is filled would be quite unexampled" (*Ephesians* [ICC] 161). See his discussion on 161-62 of ἐν πνεύματι in Eph 5:28.

<sup>36</sup> Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 170-171.

- b) Conversely, it is important to note that unless a noun is modified by a possessive pronoun or at least an article, possession is almost surely not implied. Thus, in Eph 5:18, πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι most probably does not mean “be filled in *your own* spirit” but “be filled in/with/by the Spirit.”<sup>37</sup> And in 1 Tim 2:12 the instruction for a woman not to teach or exercise authority over ἀνδρός most likely is not related to her husband, but to men in a more general way.<sup>38</sup>

Wallace:

πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι  
be filled [**with, by, in**] [the] Spirit

To see ἐν πνεύματι here as indicating content is grammatically suspect (even though it is, in many circles, the predominant view). Only if the flow of argument and/or the lack of other good possibilities strongly point in the direction of content would we be compelled to take it as such. There are no other examples in biblical Greek in which ἐν + the dative after πληρώω indicates content. Further, the parallel with οἴνω as well as the common grammatical category of *means* suggest that the idea intended is that believers are to be filled *by means of* the [Holy] Spirit. If so, there seems to be an unnamed agent.

The meaning of this text can only be fully appreciated in light of the πληρώω language in Ephesians. Always the term is used in connection with a member of the Trinity. Three considerations seem to be key: (1) In Eph 3:19 the “hinge” prayer introducing the last half of the letter makes a request that the believers “be filled with all the fullness of God” (πληρωθῆτε εἰς πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ θεοῦ). The explicit *content* of πληρώω is thus God’s fullness (probably a reference to his moral attributes). (2) In 4:10 Christ is said to be the agent of filling (with v11 adding the specifics of his giving spiritual gifts). (3) The author then brings his argument to a crescendo in 5:18: **Believers are to be filled by Christ by means of the Spirit with the content of the fullness of God (emphasis mine).**<sup>39</sup>

## WINE AND STRONG DRINK.

### I. In the Old Testament

Among a considerable number of synonyms used in the OT the most common are *yayin* (usually translated ‘wine’) and *šēkār* (usually translated ‘strong drink’). These terms are frequently used together, and they are employed irrespective of whether the writer is commending wine and strong drink as desirable or warning against its dangers. A third

<sup>37</sup> Some appeal to the parallel in I Cor 14:15, but there the article is used.

<sup>38</sup> Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, 215.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 375.

word, *ṭrôš*, sometimes translated ‘new’ or ‘sweet wine’, has often been regarded as unfermented and therefore unintoxicating wine, but an example such as Ho. 4:11, together with the usage of the Talmud, makes clear that it is capable of being used in a bad sense equally with the others. Furthermore, while there are examples of the grapes being pressed into a cup and presumably used at once (Gn. 40:11), it is significant that the term ‘wine’ is never applied to the resultant juice.

The term ‘new wine’ does not indicate wine which has not fermented, for in fact the process of fermentation sets in very rapidly, and unfermented wine could not be available many months after the harvest (Acts 2:13). It represents rather wine made from the first drippings of the juice before the winepress was trodden. As such it would be particularly potent and would come immediately to mind as a probable explanation of what seemed to be a drunken state. Modern custom in Palestine, among a people who are traditionally conservative as far as religious feasts are concerned, also suggests that the wine used was fermented. It may be said, therefore, that the Bible in employing various synonyms makes no consistent distinction between them.

Naturally in a land and climate particularly suited to the cultivation of the vine, we find that wine was often associated with grain, and together they stand for a full and adequate supply of food and of the good gifts of life. They can be promised therefore as the tokens of the blessing of God (Gn. 27:28), and they are acceptable to him when offered back upon the altar (Ex. 29:40). As a discipline, however, they are on occasion to be dispensed with, as when a man engages in priestly service (Lv. 10:9), or in the case of a \*NAZIRITE during the course of his vow (Nu. 6:3). The abstinence of the \*RECHABITES falls within a different category, for it was in an attempt to preserve the nomadic life that they dwelt in tents, and their refusal of wine was not on account of the dangers of its abuse, but because they were associated with the planting of vineyards, the sowing of seed and the building of houses (Je. 35:7). Evidence is by no means lacking, however, that even to those who accepted the agricultural way of life the dangers of strong drink were apparent. The warnings of the book of Proverbs are clear, and in the time of Isaiah even the priests fell into the snare.

These two aspects of wine, its use and its abuse, its benefits and its curse, its acceptance in God’s sight and its abhorrence, are interwoven into the fabric of the OT so that it may gladden the heart of man (Ps. 104:15) or cause his mind to err (Is. 28:7), it can be associated with merriment (Ec. 10:19) or with anger (Is. 5:11), it can be used to uncover the shame of Noah (Gn. 9:21) or in the hands of Melchizedek to honour Abraham (Gn. 14:18).

In metaphorical usage the same characteristics are to be observed. Wine may represent that which God himself has prepared (Pr. 9:5), and which he offers to as many as will receive it from his hand (Is. 55:1); yet, on the other hand, it may equally well represent the intoxicating influence of Babylonian supremacy which brings ruin (Je. 51:7).

## II. In the New Testament

In the NT the common word is Greek *oinos* (*cf.* Heb. *yayin*). Once we find *sikera*,

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*cf. confer* (Lat.), compare

‘strong drink’ (Lk. 1:15), a loan-word from Semitic (*cf.* Hebrew *šēkār*), and once *gleukos*, ‘new wine’ (Acts 2:13). This last word means literally ‘sweet wine’; the vintage of the current year had not yet come, but there were means of keeping wine sweet all year round.

The references in the NT are very much fewer in number, but once more the good and the bad aspects are equally apparent, and many of the points which we noticed in the OT have their counterpart in the NT. John the Baptist is to abstain from wine in view of his special commission (Lk. 1:15), but this does not imply that of itself wine is evil, for Jesus is not only present at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, but when the wine fails he replenishes the supply in extraordinarily ample measure, and later his readiness to eat and drink with publicans and sinners draws forth the accusation that he is gluttonous and a wine-bibber. The refusal of Jesus to drink the wine offered to him in accordance with Jewish custom at his crucifixion (Mk. 15:23) was not based upon an objection to wine as such, but was due to a determination to die with an unclouded mind. Later he accepted the wine (vinegar) which was the ordinary drink of labourers in the field and of the lower class of soldiers.

On more than one occasion Jesus used wine to illustrate his teaching. Mk. 2:22 points to the current practice of putting new wine into new skins and emphasizes the impracticality of doing otherwise. Commentators differ regarding the interpretation of this parable. For, while the new wine clearly points to the lively and powerful working of Christ’s new teaching, the skins which are broken may equally well refer to certain conventional forms or to the whole Judaistic system or to the human heart, all of which need to be recast in accordance with the challenge of the new age which has arrived. Unfortunately the Pharisees were unwilling to face the changes which would have been involved, and obstinately clung to the system upon which their livelihood depended (Lk. 5:39).

Metaphorically in the NT the word ‘wine’ is again used in both a good and a bad sense. The latter is found several times in Revelation, where the inhabitants of the earth are depicted as having been made drunk by the fornication of Babylon (Rev. 17:2) while she herself is drunk with their blood (Rev. 17:6). On the other hand, Paul exhorts his readers to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18) in contrast with their being intoxicated with wine. There are, of course, certain similarities between the two conditions, a consideration which may well have led Paul to express himself in this way. Certainly on the Day of Pentecost there were many who took the evidences of the Spirit to be nothing else than the result of strong drink. This same interpretation had been placed long before upon the movement of the lips of Hannah as she prayed in the presence of Eli, a supposed fault which Eli was quicker to rebuke in her than in his own sons (1 Sa. 1:14).

Timothy is exhorted by Paul to take a little wine because of its medicinal properties (1 Tim. 5:23; *cf.* its application in a different form in the story of the good Samaritan), but in the Pastoral Epistles there is a recognition of the grave dangers of excess, and those who bear office or in any way give leadership within the Christian community, both men and women, are specifically warned against this fault, which would unfit them for their task (1 Tim. 3:8; Tit. 2:3). This abuse is particularly unfitting within the church, for if it is true that drunkenness is in general a sign of heedlessness in spiritual matters, and a

disregard of the imminent return of Christ (Rom. 13:13), how much more is it to be deplored at the Lord's table, where it reveals not only a spirit of complete indifference towards God but a spirit of utter thoughtlessness in regard to those who stand together within the Christian fellowship (1 Cor. 11:21).

To sum up, then, it may be said that while wine is not condemned as being without usefulness, it brings in the hands of sinful men such dangers of becoming uncontrolled that even those who count themselves to be strong would be wise to abstain, if not for their own sake, yet for the sake of weaker brethren (Rom. 14:21). If it is argued that there are many other things which may be abused besides wine, the point may be immediately conceded, but wine has so often proved itself to be peculiarly fraught with danger that Paul names it specifically at the same time as he lays down the general principle. That this principle has application within the setting of modern life is beyond dispute among those who take their Christian responsibility seriously.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. C. Seltman, *Wine in the Ancient World*, 1957; J. P. Free, *Archaeology and Bible History*, 1950, Appendix II, pp. 351ff.; 'Wine' in *TWBR*; 'Food' in *HDB*, 2, p. 32; C. Brown, *NIDNTT* 3, pp. 918–923. F.S.F.

40

† שִׁכָּרָה S<sup>7941</sup> TWOT<sup>2388a</sup> GK<sup>8911</sup> n.[m.] intoxicating drink, strong drink (Ba<sup>NB</sup> §<sup>71</sup>);—always 'שׁ abs.; usually || לְיָ (except ψ 69:13): Is 29:9; usually condemned, Is 5:11, 22; 28:7<sup>(x3)</sup>; 56:12 (נִסְבְּאָה שׁ), Mi 2:11 1 S 1:15 Pr 20:1; forbidden to priests on duty Lv 10:9 (P); not for princes Pr 31:4; nor Nazirite Nu 6:3 Ju 13:4, 7, 14, cf.

ff.and the following (verses, etc.)

*TWBR*A. Richardson (ed.), *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, 1950

*HDBJ*. Hastings (ed.), *Dictionary of the Bible*, 5 vols., 1898-1904

*NIDNTTC*. Brown (ed.), *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 3 vols., 1975-8

F.S.F.F. S. Fitzsimmonds, B.A., B.D., M.Th., formerly Vice-Principal, Spurgeon's College, London

<sup>40</sup> D.R.W. Wood, & I.H. Marshall, *New Bible Dictionary: electronic ed. of 3rd ed.* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996, c1982, c1962), 1242 in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

†prefixed, or added, or both, indicates 'All passages cited.'

S*Strong's Concordance*

TWOT*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament.*

GK*Goodrick/Kohlenberger numbering system of the NIV Exhaustive Condordance.*

n.*nomen*, noun.

m.*masculine*.

BaJ. Barth, *Nominalbildung*.

abs.*absolute*.

||parallel, of words (synonymous or contrasted); also of passages; sometimes = 'see parallel,' or 'see also parallel.'

<sup>x3</sup>three times.

PPriests' Code or Narrative.

חֶמֶץ Nu 6:3; שׁוֹתֵי שׁ ψ 69:13 *drunkards*; but שׁ as common drink Dt 29:5 (opp. to miraculous), allowable in sacrif. meal 14:26, commended for weak and weary Pr 31:6; שׁ נִסְךְ Nu 28:7 (P; for וַיִּן v 14 + ); v. further Kennedy<sup>Ency. Bib. iv. 5309</sup>.—On form cf. Lag<sup>M ii. 357; BN 51</sup>.

41

**4608 σίκερα** [*sikera* /*sik·er·ah*/] n n. Of Hebrew origin 7941; GK 4975; AV translates as “strong drink” once. **1** strong drink, an intoxicating beverage, different from wine; it was a artificial product, made of a mixture of sweet ingredients, whether derived from grain and vegetables, or from the juice of fruits (dates), or a decoction of honey.

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**7941 שֵׁכָר** [*shekar* /*shay·kawr*/] n m. From 7937; TWOT 2388a; GK 8911; 23 occurrences; AV translates as “strong drink” 21 times, “strong wine” once, and “drunkard” once. **1** strong drink, intoxicating drink, fermented or intoxicating liquor.

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**ALCOHOL.** 1 Sam. 1:15; Prov. 20:1; 31:4, 6; Isa. 24:9; 28:7; 29:9; 56:12; Mic. 2:11;

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*cf. confer*, compare.

opp. opposite, as opposed to, or contrasted with.

v.verse.

+plus, denotes often that other passages, etc., might be cited. So also where the forms of verbs, nouns, and adjectives are illustrated by citations, near the beginning of articles; while ‘etc.’ in such connexions commonly indicates that other forms of the word occur, which it has not been thought worth while to cite.

v.vide, see.

Kennedy(usually) A. R. S. Kennedy.

<sup>Ency. Bib.</sup>EB(i), q.v..

LagP. de Lagarde, *Mittheilungen*.

<sup>BN</sup>P. de Lagarde, *Bildung d. Nomina*.

<sup>41</sup> F. Brown, S.R. Driver, & C.A. Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon: electronic ed.* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 2000), xiii in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

**nn**: noun or neuter

GKGoodrick-Kohlenberger

AVAuthorized Version

<sup>42</sup> J. Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: electronic ed.*, (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1996), G4608, in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

**nn**: noun

**mm**: masculine

TWOTTheological Wordbook of the Old Testament

GKGoodrick-Kohlenberger

AVAuthorized Version

<sup>43</sup> J. Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: electronic ed.*, H7941.

Matt. 9:17; 27:34, 48; Mark 2:22; 15:23, 36; Luke 1:15; 5:37; 7:33; 10:34; 23:36; John 2:3, 9, 10; 4:46; 19:29; Acts 2:13; Rom. 14:21; Eph. 5:18; 1 Tim. 3:8; 5:23; Tit. 2:3; Rev. 6:6; 14:8, 10; 16:19; 17:2; 18:3, 13 See also **WINE**.

<sup>44</sup>

**WINE.** Made from grapes, Gen. 40:11; 49:11; Isa. 25:6; Jer. 40:10, 12; from pomegranates, Song 8:2. Kept in jars, Jer. 13:12; 48:12; in skins, Josh. 9:4, 13; Job 32:19; Matt. 9:17; Luke 5:37, 38; in bottles, Josh. 9:4, 13; Job 32:19; Jer. 13:12; 48:12; Matt. 9:17; Luke 5:37, 38. Cellars for, 1 Chr. 27:27. New, Hag. 1:11. Old, Luke 5:39. Medicinal use of, Prov. 31:6, 7; recommended by Paul to Timothy, 1 Tim. 5:23. Used at meals, Matt. 26:27–29; Mark 14:23. Made by Jesus at the marriage feast in Cana, John 2:9, 10. Ceremonial use of, Matt. 26:27–29; Luke 22:17–20. Forbidden to priests while on duty, Lev. 10:9; Ezek. 44:21; to Nazirites, Num. 6:2, 3; see **NAZIRITE**. Abstinence from, of Daniel, Dan. 1:5, 8, 16; 10:3; of courtiers of Ahasuerus, Esth. 1:8; of Timothy, 1 Tim. 5:23. Samson's mother forbidden to drink, Judg. 13:4, 5. Forbidden to kings, Prov. 31:4. Denied to the Israelites in the wilderness, that they might know that the Lord was their God, Deut. 29:6. Offered with sacrifices, Ex. 29:40; Lev. 23:13; Num. 15:5, 10; 28:7, 14. Given by Melchizedek to Abraham, Gen. 14:18. Fermented, Lev. 10:9; Num. 6:3; 28:7; Deut. 14:26; 29:6; Prov. 23:31, 32; Mark 2:22. Refined, Isa. 25:6; Jer. 48:11. Of staggering, Psalms. 60:3. Inflames the eyes, Gen. 49:12. Commerce in, Rev. 18:13. Banquets of, Esth. 5:6. Given to Jesus at the crucifixion, Matt. 27:48; Mark 15:23; Luke 23:36; John 19:29. Intoxication from the use of, Psalms. 104:15; Prov. 4:17.

**Instances of Intoxication from:** Noah, Gen. 9:21; Lot, Gen. 19:32; Joseph and his brethren, Gen. 43:34; Nabal, 1 Sam. 25:36; Amnon, 2 Sam. 13:28, 29; Ahasuerus, Esth. 1:10; kings of Israel, Hos. 7:5; falsely charged against the disciples, Acts 2:13.

**Figurative:** Of the divine judgments, Psalms. 60:3; 75:8; Jer. 51:7. Of the joy of wisdom, Prov. 9:2, 5. Of the joys of religion, Isa. 25:6; 55:1; Joel 2:19. Of abominations, Rev. 14:8; 16:19.

*Symbolical:* Of the blood of Jesus, Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:23, 24; Luke 22:20; John 6:53–56.

**Unclassified Scriptures Relating to:** Deut. 14:26; Deut. 33:28; 2 Kin. 18:32; 2 Chr. 32:28; Neh. 10:39; Psalms. 4:7; Psalms. 104:14, 15; Prov. 31:6, 7; Eccl. 2:3, 11; Isa. 56:12; Hos. 2:8, 22; Hos. 7:14; Joel 1:5; Joel 2:24; Joel 3:3; Amos 6:6; Hab. 2:5; Hag. 1:11; Zech. 9:17; Zech. 10:7; 1 Tim. 5:23 See **VINE**; **VINEYARD**.

**Admonitions Against the Use of:** Lev. 10:9; Num. 6:3; Judg. 13:4; Prov. 20:1; Prov. 21:17; Prov. 23:29–32; Prov. 31:4, 5; Isa. 5:11, 22; Isa. 24:9; Isa. 28:1, 3, 7; Jer. 23:9; Jer. 35:2–10, 14, 18, 19; Ezek. 44:21; Hos. 4:11; Luke 1:15; Rom. 14:21; Eph. 5:18; Tit. 2:3 See **ABSTINENCE**; **ALCOHOL**; **DRUNKENNESS**.

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<sup>44</sup> J. Swanson, & O. Nave, *New Nave's* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1994), in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

**WINE PRESS**, Num. 18:27, 30; Deut. 15:14; Judg. 6:11. In vineyards, Isa. 5:2; Matt. 21:33; Mark 12:1. Trodden with joy and shouting, Jer. 48:33.

**Figurative:** Treading the, of the sufferings of Christ, Isa. 63:2, 3; of the judgments of God, Lam. 1:15; Rev. 14:19, 20.

**DRUNKARD.** Deut. 21:20, 21; Psa. 69:12; Prov. 23:21; Isa. 28:1, 3; Joel 1:5; Nah. 1:10; 1 Cor. 5:11; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10 See **DRUNKENNESS**; **WINEBIBBER**.

**DRUNKENNESS.** See **TEMPERANCE** Deut. 21:20, 21; Deut. 29:19–21; 1 Sam. 1:14; Psa. 69:12; Prov. 20:1; Prov. 21:17; Prov. 23:20, 21, 29–35; Prov. 31:4–7; Isa. 5:11, 12, 22; Isa. 19:14; Isa. 24:9, 11; Isa. 28:1, 3, 7, 8; Isa. 56:12; Jer. 25:27; Hos. 4:11; Hos. 7:5, 14; Joel 1:5; Joel 3:3; Amos 2:8, 12; Amos 6:1, 6; Mic. 2:11; Nah. 1:10; Hab. 2:15, 16 v. 17.; Matt. 24:49 Luke 12:45. Luke 21:34; Rom. 13:13; Gal. 5:19–21; Eph. 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:7, 8

**Figurative:** Isa. 28:8; 51:17, 21–23; 63:6; Jer. 25:15, 16, 27, 28; 51:7–9; Lam. 3:15; Ezek. 23:31–34; Hab. 2:15, 16. See **ABSTINENCE**; **DRUNKARD**; **SOBRIETY**; **WINE**.

**Instances of:** Noah, Gen. 9:21. Lot, Gen. 19:33. Nabal, 1 Sam. 25:36. Uriah, 2 Sam. 11:13. Amnon, 2 Sam. 13:28. Elah, 1 Kin. 16:9. Ben-hadad and his thirty-two confederate kings, 1 Kin. 20:16. Ahasuerus, Esth. 1:10, 11. Belshazzar, Dan. 5:1–6.

**Falsely Accused of:** Hannah, 1 Sam. 1:12–16. Jesus, Matt. 11:19. The Apostles, Acts 2:13–15.<sup>46</sup>

## **ABSTINENCE, TOTAL.**

**From Intoxicating Beverages:** Lev. 10:8–10; Num. 6:3, 4; Judg. 13:4, 13–14; Esth. 1:8; Prov. 23:20, 31, 32; Prov. 31:4; Jer. 35:6–8, 14; Luke 1:15 See **TEMPERANCE**.

**Instances of:** Israelites in the wilderness, Deut. 29:6. Samson, Judg. 16:17, with 13:3–5, 13, 14; Num. 6:3, 4. Daniel, Dan. 1:8, 12. Rechabites, Jer. 35:6–14. John the Baptist, Matt. 11:18; Luke 1:15; 7:33.

Leviticus 10:8-10

(1) *Strong drink* (vv. 8–11). This is the only place in Leviticus where God speaks directly to Aaron, so it must be an important commandment. The Jews were not forbidden to drink wine or strong drink, but they were warned against drunkenness and the sins that often accompany it (Prov. 20:1; 23:20, 29–31; Isa. 5:11; Hab. 2:15). Those who serve the Lord must be an example to others and be filled with the Spirit and not with wine (Eph. 5:18). By their teaching and example, they must “put a difference” between the holy and

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

the unholy (see Ezek. 22:26; 42:20; 44:23; 48:14–15). The NT follows this same approach (Rom. 14:14–23).<sup>48</sup>

**10:8–11 Priests' responsibilities.** First, priests were *not to drink* alcohol before going on duty in the sanctuary (9). It has long been suggested that this command, coming in its present context, was given because Nadab and Abihu's sin was committed in a drunken state. This is possible, but the text does not say so. The reason more probably lies in the following verses about the duties of the priests, which needed a clear head. Wine, in the OT, is one of God's gifts and blessings in creation, suitable for celebration (Ps. 104:15) and also effective in dulling pain (*e.g.* of bereavement; cf. Pr. 31:7). In excess, however, it confuses and debauches (Pr. 23:20–21, 29–35), and so it is to be avoided by those who need unclouded judgment to exercise serious responsibilities (Pr. 31:4–5). Priests were not required to refrain from wine at all times (that was part of the voluntary Nazirite vow, which was normally temporary; see Nu. 6:1–20; cf. Am. 2:12) but only while on duty. Habitual drunkenness among the priests was particularly condemned by the prophets, precisely because it destroyed their teaching ability, and thus left the people with no moral guidance or knowledge of God (Is. 28:7–10; Ho. 4, esp. v 11). In the NT the same duty of moderation and soberness is laid on Christians and especially on those who teach and exercise pastoral oversight (Eph. 5:18; 1 Tim. 3:2–3, 8; Tit. 2:2–3).<sup>49</sup>

**8–11. Do not drink wine nor strong drink**—This prohibition, and the accompanying admonitions, following immediately the occurrence of so fatal a catastrophe [Le 10:1, 2], has given rise to an opinion entertained by many, that the two disobedient priests were under the influence of intoxication when they committed the offense which was expiated only by their lives. But such an idea, though the presumption is in its favor, is nothing more than conjecture.<sup>50</sup>

### Verses 8-11

Aaron having been very observant of what God said to him by Moses, now God does him the honour to speak to him immediately (v. 8): *The Lord spoke unto Aaron*, and the rather because what was now to be said Aaron might perhaps have taken amiss from Moses, as if he had suspected him to have been a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, so apt are we to resent cautions as accusations; therefore God saith it himself to him, *Do not drink wine, nor strong drink, when you go into the tabernacle*, and this at their peril, *lest you die*, v. 9. Probably they had seen the ill effect of it in Nadab and Abihu, and therefore must take warning by them. Observe here, 1. The prohibition itself: *Do not drink wine*

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<sup>48</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament: Le 10:1* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993), in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

*cf. compare*

<sup>49</sup> D.A. Carson, *New Bible Commentary: 21st century edition: 4th ed.*, Le 10:8 (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

<sup>50</sup> R. Jamieson, A.R. Fausset, D. Brown, *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments: Le 10:8* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

*nor strong drink*. At other times they were allowed it (it was not expected that every priest should be a Nazarite), but during the time of their ministration they were forbidden it. This was one of the laws in Ezekiel's temple (Eze. 44:21), and so it is required of gospel ministers that they be *not given to wine*, 1 Tim. 3:3. Note, Drunkenness is bad in any, but it is especially scandalous and pernicious in ministers, who of all men ought to have the clearest heads and the cleanest hearts.<sup>51</sup>

Finally, they depended on *the wrong energy*; for verses 9–10 imply that they were under the influence of alcohol. This reminds us of Ephesians 5:18, “And be not drunk with wine . . . but be filled with the Spirit.” If every child of God were killed who substituted fleshly energy for the power of the Spirit, not many would be left! A.W. Tozer once said, “If God were to take His Holy Spirit out of this world, much of what the church is doing would go right on; and nobody would know the difference.”<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and unabridged in one volume: Le 10:8* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996, c1991), in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].

<sup>52</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be holy: Le 10:1* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1996, c1994), in *Logos Library System* [CD-ROM].