

## Why I Do Not Drink Alcohol

As Christians, we must have Biblical authority for everything we do. In Colossians 3:17, Paul told the Christians, “And whatever you do in word or deed, do all ***in the name of*** [with the authority of] the Lord Jesus...” Paul also said in II Timothy 3:16-17 and II Peter 1:3 that the Scriptures provide us everything we need for life and godliness and fully equip us for every good work. Therefore if God’s Word does not authorize an activity, it cannot be a good work.

We know that God’s Word explicitly condemns drunkenness:

- I Corinthians 6:9-10
- I Corinthians 5:9-13
- I Peter 4:1-6
- Ephesians 5:18
- I Thessalonians 5:7-10
- Romans 13:13-14

So, what is drunkenness? Well, it depends. All 50 states have now set .08% blood alcohol concentration as the legal limit for driving under the influence. For commercial drivers, it is .04%. Merriam Webster defines “drunk” as having drunk so much alcohol that normal actions become difficult to do.

Okay, so what about “social drinking”? Just having a beer or two to feel “buzzed”—to feel relaxed and good? Or what about a glass of wine with dinner because of the health benefits—good for lowering cholesterol?

Where is the Biblical authority for drinking any amount of alcohol for pleasure? It is not there. Paul does tell Timothy in I Timothy 5:23 to use a little wine for his stomach’s sake and his frequent infirmities. The word wine in the Greek (oinos) simply means juice of the vine. It can be fermented or unfermented. Therefore, we cannot tell just by the word whether Paul was talking about grape juice or alcohol. Either way, this does not justify drinking alcohol for pleasure. It would be something like our modern-day cough syrup or Nyquil which have alcohol in them but are medicines.

Sometimes people will try to use Jesus’ first miracle in Cana where he turned water into wine as a justification for drinking. Again remember the Greek word for wine simply means juice of the vine and can be fermented or unfermented. You have to look at the context to determine which one the passage is referring to. It infuriates me when people accuse the Son of God of “providing booze for a party”. What blasphemy! God condemned this behavior in Habakkuk 2:15. John 13:15 and I Peter 2:21 show us that one reason Christ came to earth was to set a perfect example for us. I do not believe that Jesus would give even the slightest appearance of inappropriateness by giving anyone an excuse to drink alcohol.

King Solomon, who was the wisest man that ever lived because his wisdom was given to him

by God, tried finding happiness in alcohol. What was his conclusion? Proverbs 20:1, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise." Proverbs 23:31-32, "Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper."

In Galatians 5:16-26, Paul is writing to Christians in Galatia and he is explaining to them that if they will walk in the Spirit they will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. He goes on to explain that the Spirit and the lusts of the flesh are constantly fighting against one another and are contrary (or opposite) to one another. He then gives two lists that are by no means all-inclusive lists. The first list is examples of works of the flesh. The second list is the fruit of the Spirit. Which list is alcohol in? Works of the flesh! How can it also be a fruit of the Spirit then? Is it logical to say alcohol moves between "works of the flesh" and "fruit of the Spirit" based on the amount of alcohol consumed? Can alcohol really be on both lists when Paul made it clear these things were opposite of one another? It is illogical.



What are the good benefits from drinking? Does drinking result in the fruit of the Spirit or

the works of the flesh?

Drinking “socially” comes down to (1) example, (2) influence, (3) appearance, and (4) being a stumbling block to others.

What kind of example am I to those around me who see me drinking alcohol? Do they know that I am only drinking “socially” and “responsibly” and not getting “drunk?” How do they know that? Do I wear a sign distinguishing me as a “social” drinker and not a “drunkard?”

What kind of influence will I have on those around me who see my drinking? Will my drinking encourage others around me to drink? How is this being a good Christian? Is it good as long as I just “socially” drink?

What kind of appearance am I to those around me who see me drinking? Will I appear to be a good social responsible drinker of alcohol? How is this possible?

Will I be a stumbling block to anyone around me by drinking? In I Corinthians 8, Paul warns Christians not to do anything that would cause a weaker Christian to stumble. The example he uses is eating food offered to idols. This in and of itself was not a sin, BUT if a weaker Christian saw them eating food offered to idols and HE thought it was a sin and he strayed from the strait and narrow because of their example, it became a sin for them.

Finally, we must remember that alcohol is a poison. The human body has no use for alcohol. Alcohol starves brain cells of oxygen (hence the feeling of drunkenness), destroys the stomach lining and liver, etc. Also, socially drinking alcohol is nothing more than the process of getting drunk. Just because one stops drinking before they reach the legal drunk limit, they have still participated in the **process** of getting drunk. There is nothing responsible about that.