

#24-a

THE CHRISTIAN AND ALCOHOL

In the past lesson we saw that God desires that we be in good health and prosper. We saw that God has principles for maintaining good health in His word. What about alcohol? Doesn't recent research show that drinking wine is good for our health lowering risks for heart attacks, strokes, diabetes and even dementia?

You can search the entire Bible and never find one single verse that forbids the drinking of alcohol. So why is it that some churches forbid the drinking of alcohol while others condone it? In this lesson we shall explore the Christian and principles concerning the drinking of alcohol.

1. What does God's word teach about drunkenness? Ephesians 5:18; Romans 13:13; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

2. Does the Bible warn us against the destructive and addictive nature of alcohol? Proverbs 20:1; Proverbs 23:29-35; Isaiah 5:22 _____

3. Does the Bible forbid the drinking of alcohol for the spiritually mature and leaders of the church? 1 Timothy 3:1-3; Titus 1:7; Proverbs 31:1-7; Leviticus 10:8 _____

Note: Paul in his letters to Timothy a young pastor that he was mentoring gave attributes of those who might be leaders in the local church and advised against those who drank alcohol. In addition, in the Old Testament it was advised to a king to keep away from alcohol so that his mind would be clear for God's laws and that it is used for medication to those who are perishing. Finally, God forbade the drinking of alcohol to those who worked in His services.

4. When Jesus instituted the Communion Service at the Passover was fermented wine used? Exodus 12:14-20; 26,27 _____

Note: Jesus and His disciples would not have drunk fermented wine because God specifically stipulated that there be no 'leaven' or anything fermented in the Passover meal. Why? Because the Passover pointed to our Savior who was sinless and leaven signifies sin (1 Corinthians 5: 6-8).

5. How did Jesus refer to the drink of the Passover when he instituted the Communion Service that night before His crucifixion? Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18

Note: Jesus did not refer to his drink as 'wine' but as the 'fruit of the vine'. This is because it was unfermented grape juice.

6. What principle does the Bible say about causing others to stumble? 1 Corinthians 8:9-12; Romans 14:21

Note: Although this example talks about 'meat offered to idols' it can be applied to all situations where the eating or drinking can cause someone to stumble and fall.

7. What principle may be applied in all matters of health and Christian living? 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 10:31

Conclusion: Although the Bible does not specifically forbid outwardly the drinking of alcohol there are many principles that tell us that it is not prudent to do so. The bible warns that it is destructive and addictive in nature and that those who are spiritual should not drink it. In addition, the 'wine' that Jesus drank at Passover and hereafter at Communion is fresh unfermented grape juice. In fact, some of the most recent research is now confirming that it is the 'grapes' in the red wine that is beneficial for our health not the alcohol in and of itself. Finally we do not live to ourselves but for others and we do not want to be a stumbling block for others who may become addicted to alcohol. Above all because we are now the temple of His Holy Spirit and we are to give Him glory in all things.

ANSWER KEY TO LESSON #24a

Q.1- We are not to become drunk and those who are will not inherit the kingdom of God

Q.2- Yes

Q.3- Yes

Q.4- No

Q.5- Fruit of the Vine

Q.6- Do not eat or drink anything that would cause your brother to stumble

Q.7- Whatever you eat or drink do all for the glory of God