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THE PAPER PULPIT

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Alcohol: a Destroyer of Lives

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Alcohol Destroys Internally

By “internally,” it is meant to indicate that alcohol beverages are destructive to the human body. The destructive effects of the ingestion of alcohol include, but are not limited to: increased risk of liver disease, increased risk of certain kinds of cancer, and brain damage. It is particularly damaging to the brains of unborn children, whose mothers consume alcohol in any amount. It is well-known for its impairment of brain function in those who consume it, resulting in slurred speech, impaired sense of balance, and delayed reaction times. That is why driving under the influence of alcohol is illegal in every state.

The Bible condemns the wanton self-destruction of our bodies and our lives on Earth. In First Corinthians 6, the apostle Paul argued, “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6:19,20). Christians are called to “glorify God in your body,” which is expounded upon in Romans 12:1 and 2: “I beseech you therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice,

holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” A faithful Christian will not ruin his body and impair his mind with alcohol.

A Christian who drinks, even socially, is not glorifying God, but rather is doing the opposite. Consider what the book of Proverbs has to say about those who drink alcohol: “Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they

“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”

—Proverbs 20:1

that go to seek mixed wine. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it again” (Pro. 23:29, 30,33-35). Those who consume alcohol destroy their minds and bodies. They ruin their lives by allowing a chemical to control their actions.

Quotable Quotations

“Would you feel safer if your pilot had a few drinks before takeoff, or if your surgeon had two or three cocktails before entering the operating room?”

—M. H. Tucker

“Although some persons feel that beer is a relatively harmless beverage, it is a well known fact that persons who drink beer compose a

large percentage of alcoholics in various hospitals and clinics. It is equally true that all alcoholic beverages have primarily the same effects on the human body, with the only important difference being the amount of alcohol they contain. Any two beverages containing the same quantity of alcohol will produce virtually the same effect.”

—W. D. Jeffcoat

“I do therefore most earnestly protest that it is neither fair nor honest...[that] because we love and use alcoholic drinks, therefore [to] conclude that the ancients must also have loved and used them, and only them.”

—William Patton

*“Who hath woe?
Who hath sorrow?
Who hath
contentions? Who
hath babbling?
Who hath wounds
without cause?
Who hath redness
of eyes? They that
tarry long at the
wine; they that go
to seek mixed
wine.”*

*—Proverbs
23:29,30*

Alcohol Destroys Externally

By “externally” it is meant to say that drinking alcohol beverages can reduce a good life to ruin. Remember the old joke about what happens when you play a country music song backwards? You get your dog back, you get your wife back, you get your truck back, you get your job back, and you quit drinking. The reason that joke is funny is because there is an element of truth in it. When people start drinking alcohol, it has a ruinous effect on their lives.

Many who drink think that they are harming only their own bodies, and

that their drinking does not pose a threat to anyone else, but nothing could be further from the truth. Every year, thousands of Americans lose their lives, because someone else got drunk and then got behind the wheel of a car. According to law enforcement, the vast majority of cases of assault, rape and domestic abuse involve alcohol, in some form. If alcohol could somehow be removed from society, the number of all such incidents would drop dramatically!

It takes just one momentary lapse in judgment to significantly alter

one’s life and the lives of others. People frequently underestimate just how quickly one can go from having a good time, to losing one’s mobility, one’s freedom, or one’s life. An alcoholic thinks only about how he can get his next high. He does not think about the danger he poses to himself, or to others. That is why Christians who drink usually lose whatever influence for good they may have had over others. When God’s people allow themselves to be associated with such a dangerous habit—even socially—they alienate themselves from potential prospects (Mat. 5:16). **PP**

Alcohol Destroys Eternally

The abuse of alcohol is clearly condemned in the Scriptures. Alcohol is a drug and has a legitimate use, as such. People abuse many kinds of drugs by using them for recreational purposes, rather than for their intended purpose. Alcohol is no different. When it is used as a beverage to “get high,” then it is being abused.

While there are those who will argue that there is nothing wrong with the recreational use of cannabis, or amphetamines, or opium, most people realize that there are significant dangers associated with the abuse these drugs. Why is it that so many of these same people seem to be unable or unwilling to recognize that there are simi-

lar dangers involved in abusing alcohol? It is NOT a harmless “adult beverage.” It is a dangerous substance that can ruin our lives on Earth and jeopardize our souls in eternity.

Alcohol is well known for its addictive properties. Some may be more resistant to becoming addicted to alcohol than others, but it is possible for anyone to become an alcoholic. The Bible warns Christians not to give up control of their lives to addictive forces. In Romans 6:12 and 13, the apostle Paul put it this way: *“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but*

yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” It is sinful for Christians to allow anything (alcohol, gambling, pornography) to “reign” or to rule over their lives.

Some say that, as long as alcohol beverages are not against the law of the land, they are perfectly fine for Christians to consume. But, in First Corinthians 6:12 and 13, the apostle Paul argued that, just because something is not illegal, it does not necessarily follow that it is approved by God. It is a sad reality that there will be many who will stand condemned on the last day, because of their refusal to give up their vices.

“Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.”

—Proverbs 23:31,32

PP

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The **Online Academy of Biblical Studies** offers its students a complete education in the whole Bible conducted entirely online. Tuition is free and students do not have to move from their present location. For more information, visit their web side: www.swsbs.org.





Madisonville Church of Christ

Sunday Morning Bible Study

—9:30 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship

—10:30 a.m.

Sunday Evening Worship

—6:00 p.m.

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

—7:00 p.m.

A Christ-Preaching, Bible-Teaching Church

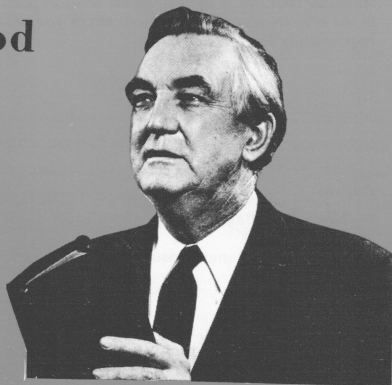
What About Drinking?

No one knows who was the first person to discover how to make alcohol, but it is evident that the discovery was made early in human history. The earliest reference to alcohol, in the Bible, is in the ninth chapter of Genesis, which says that Noah made and became drunk with wine, sometime after the great flood (Gen. 9:20,21). Most scholars tend to think that winemaking was already invented before he flood and probably contributed to the downfall of man, in the first place. Today, man's ability to make alcoholic beverages has become more and more refined. Man is now capable of producing concoctions that can render him inebriated in record time—and can even render him dead just as easily. Does the Bible give even tacit approval to drinking beer, wine and liquor? Is it okay to drink, as long as you don't get drunk? What is the definition of "drunk," anyway? These and other questions about alcohol consumption will be addressed in this issue of The Paper Pulpit. Please keep an open mind, as you consider what the Scriptures say about this great destroyer of lives.

Lesson 8

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Man's
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