

The Bible, Society and Alcohol

Prov. 23:29-35

We Have a Drug Problem

- We have a drug problem in the U.S. We could talk about: cocaine, marijuana, meth, or heroine.
- America's #1 problem drug is not any of these illegal substances,
- But a legal drug called ALCOHOL.

The problem – It is legal

- 1. **Most death** – Produces more death than any other drug. Over 55% of highway deaths are alcohol related. It causes heart problems, liver problems, and powerful addiction.
- 2. **Most addiction** – There are over 17 million alcoholics in America today, and rising. They, by far, outnumber the addicts of any other drug.
- 3. **Most misery** – Think of the death, disability, psychosis, addiction...it produces more misery than any other drug.

Dangerous but produces Much Money

- \$25 billion will be spent this year on beverage alcohol. Not million, but billion!
- While it is the most dangerous drug in the world, there is no warning label on the bottle! The can doesn't read, "#1 producer of death", "#1 producer of addicts", "#1 producer of misery."

Lots of Encouragement to Drink

- Advertisers will spend \$600 million telling you that you ought to drink. TV/Radio/Billboards/magazines advertise heavily.
- TV used to limit alcohol advertising to beer, but since Jan. 1 of 2002, hard liquor is allowed to advertise as well!
- Abe Lincoln said, “Alcohol has many defenders, but no defense.”

Biblical Uses of Wine

- An offering – Lev. 23:13
- A drink with a meal – Gen. 27:25
- Festive drink – Esther 1:7
- Disinfectant – Luke 10:34
- Drug – Mark 15:23
- Medicine – I Timothy 5:23

Description of Alcohol

- “Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, *When* it swirls around smoothly;” (v. 31)
- “what does wine mean?”
- Wine” in the Bible is a generic term. It is a general term that may at times refer to an intoxicating beverage, or at times it may not.
- Like we use the word “drink.” “I gotta have a drink!”

Description of Alcohol

- Hebrew: “Shekar”—that which intoxicates.
- Most often translated in KJV as “strong drink”. Every time this word is translated wine or strong drink, It is always negative with one exception:
- *“It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink; 5 Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted. 6 Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to those who are bitter of heart.”*
Proverbs 31:4-6

Description of Alcohol

- “Tirosh”—wine or new wine; Most always a reference to grape juice, non-intoxicating.
- Is. 65:8—“new wine is found in the cluster” (still on the vine)
- “yayin”—may be fermented, maybe not...depending upon the context.
- Is. 16:10 – “...treaders will tread out wine in the presses;”
- Same word, however is used in Prov. 20:1 – “Wine *is* a mocker, Strong drink *is* a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise.”

Description of Alcohol

- In the NT, there is a 4th word used...the Greek word “oinos”, which also may or may not mean fermented wine.
- I Tim. 5:23—“use a little wine for your stomach’s sake and your frequent infirmities.”
- In I Tim. 3:8 Paul says that deacons must not be “given to much wine”.

Description of Alcohol

- Prov. 23:31—“look not upon the wine...” what wine are you talking about?
- He goes on to explain, “when it is red”, lit. when it turns rosy. This seems to be a picture of what happens in fermentation.
- Some have supposed that Jesus, when He turned the water into wine in the NT, created an intoxicating beverage!
- Remember, He lived under the law of Moses.

Destructive Nature of Alcohol:

- **Sorrow factor**—Prov. 23:29—“sorrow”
 - It ruins marriages and becomes the direct cause of divorce.
 - It turns teens into rebels who ruin their lives.
 - It turns normally gentle/docile men into wife-beaters
 - It causes children to be deprived
 - It sends people to an early grave

Destructive Nature of Alcohol:

- **Contention factor**— v. 29 Want a recipe for fighting/arguing/divorce/violence/murder?
- Family law attorney Amanda McAlister [told the Daily Mail that she sees 40 to 50 divorce cases every year where drinking played a part in the marital breakdown. By her calculations, the number of men citing alcohol as a cause in these cases has risen by 70 percent in the last five years.](#)
- numerous studies confirm “people who drink more are more likely to divorce.”
- When one spouse has an alcohol problem, divorce rates increase by a factor of four. It is incredibly difficult to have a functional relationship when alcohol is involved, because the needs and wants of the other person often or often come in second to the alcohol.
- Article Source: <http://EzineArticles.com/3890104>

Destructive Nature of Alcohol:

- **Foolishness Factor**—The one who's usually quiet and introverted is suddenly running around the room with a lampshade on their head! v. 29
“babbling”
- A man once said, “I drink vodka, so you can't smell it on my breath.” His friend said, “maybe you should switch to something they CAN smell...
...it's better for them to know you're drunk, than think you're stupid.”

Destructive Nature of Alcohol:

- **Mutilation factor** v.29 “wounds w/out cause”
 - Alcohol kills over 200,000 Americans every year. A generation is 40 years, right? That means alcohol kills 8 million out of every generation.
- We talk about Hitler and the holocaust, which killed 6 million.
- We talk about the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, killing 80,000...Nagasaki, and 35,000 died.
- And yet nearly twice that die every year from beverage alcohol...!
- In the 9 years of the Vietnam War, 57,000 Americans died fighting for our country. Millions protested that atrocity in the streets, completely blind to the 2 million dying at the hands of alcohol during the same period of time.

Destructive Nature of Alcohol:

- More than 400 Americans will die this week in alcohol-related car wrecks...many of them innocent people, victimized by drunk drivers.
- That's more people than fit on a 747! What if a packed 747 went down once a week every week and everyone died.

Destructive Nature of Alcohol:

- **Mental anguish factor**—v. 29 “redness of eyes” —indicates you have been weeping and not sleeping!
- Alcohol offers you: Red eyes/white liver/dark brown breath/a yellow streak/and a blue outlook.
- On the other hand, the Bible says, “The joy of the Lord makes full, and brings no sorrow with it.”

Destructive Nature of Alcohol:

- **Health Factor**—v. 31-32 What is in the bite of a serpent? Poison! “Intoxicated”
- **Immorality factor**—v. 33 “strange women”=someone you’re not married to! Look at vv. 26-27.
- **Instability factor**—v. 34 “tottering, staggering drunk” can’t walk straight, talk straight, or think straight...and yet one commercial calls him “the man of distinction.”
- **Addiction factor**—End of v. 35 “I will seek it yet again.” They sober up and realize it’s wrong, and regret it. They agree with this message, and still say, “I will seek it yet again.”

Evil Effects of Alcohol

- Leads to violence – Prov. 4:17
- Mocks a man – Prov. 20:1
- Makes poor – Prov. 23:20-21
- Bites like a serpent – Prov. 23:31-32
- Impairs the judgment – Prov. 31:4-5
- Inflames the passions – Is. 5:11
- Enslaves the heart – Hos. 4:11

Deliverance From Alcohol

- v. 31-- “don’t look at it!”
- Back in v. 20-- don’t be together with anyone who drinks!
- Eph. 5:18—“be not drunk w/ wine, but be filled w/ the spirit!”