

**SCRIPTURE READING:** 1 Thessalonians 5:4-8; Galatians 5:19-24.

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. Someone recently asked, "How do I convince a friend of mine not to drink alcohol?"
2. Drinking is a temptation, yes for the young, but really for everyone.
3. In this morning's lesson, I want to make the *Biblical* case against drinking alcohol.

**DISCUSSION:**

1. 1 Thessalonians 5:4-8. Alert, sober vs. asleep, drunk.
2. Galatians 5:19-24. Drunkenness vs. self-control.
3. As the Holy Spirit's answer to hatred is not indifference but love, so the Holy Spirit's answer to drunkenness is not mild intoxication but self-control! The idea, "moderation in everything," does not apply to clear thinking and self-control! 2 Peter 1:5-11.
4. Leviticus 10:8-11; Proverbs 31:4-5.
5. "Perceptual and attentive mechanisms are affected after just one drink. This is the primary cause of alcohol related accidents. It's not the drunk that's weaving down the road who causes most such accidents. It's the impaired driver who simply fails to see the red light, pedestrian, motorcyclist, or curve. Such a driver is not aware of his problem because he obviously doesn't know that he fails to see things. With a blood alcohol concentration of .05% (half that of legal intoxication in most states), the driver has increased his accident probability by 100 percent" (Ken Green, Searching the Scriptures, commenting on what he learned from the book, How Much Is Too Much? The Effects of Social Drinking, by Leonard Green).
6. Ernest P. Noble, former director of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, has said, "If my cognitive stuff tells me that my social drinking is going to affect my ability to conceptualize ... I'm not going to drink when I'm going to do any business. I won't drink in the daytime, even a beer for lunch. My advice is not to drink at all in situations when you have to use your high mental faculties. If I wanted to be sinister, I'd get the man with whom I'm doing business the best stuff to drink, and I'd order a Perrier water. Because I'd have the edge on that person. That's what they do in Las Vegas. It's not because they're generous that they give out all those drinks."
7. "Some medical schools demonstrate the effect of beer by giving two examinations on successive days, with similar questions. The first exam is given as usual. The second is given after each student has drunk one bottle of beer. Most of the students judge the second test to be easier and their grades better on it. The fact is, the second test grades average about 17% lower. Only one beer makes the difference" (Dub McClish, The Restorer).
8. According to a pamphlet published by the United Tennessee League, "the frontal lobe of the brain is that part of the brain that controls these functions (removal of inhibitions, loss of self-control, weakening of willpower, feeling of well-being, false confidence, impaired judgment, loquaciousness [very talkative], dulling of attention) and it is the first [part of the brain] effected by alcohol. As little as .01 percent in the blood begins to impair these functions so important to godly living. In other words, the very first effect of alcohol is to make one feel a little freer to do things he would not otherwise do and a little less able to say 'No' to things he would normally refuse; to make it a little harder to stand for what is right or even to know what is right. Under the least influence, vulgarity seems a little less vulgar; obscenity a little less obscene, sin a little less sinful, and morality a little less urgent. The temper is harder to control, lust is more difficult to avoid and one feels he is a little more capable of resisting temptation than he really is. Yet, at this point, neither the State nor society would consider him drunk. Of course, the more one drinks, the more pronounced these tendencies become. But can the Christian afford even the least weakening of his moral armor in these days of such powerful and common temptations?" (Sewell Hall, Christianity Magazine, 1989, p. 37).
9. Proverbs 23:29-35. Don't even consider the "positives." Rather, only focus on the negatives.
10. Matthew 6:9-13. Genesis 9:20-21; 19:30-6.
11. Matthew 5:14-16. Do we really want to risk influencing someone who'll drive impaired, get drunk, or become an alcoholic to take his/her first drink?
12. Briefly answering common objections. (I'd be glad to explore these objections further).
  - A. Wine in the Bible isn't always alcohol. Isaiah 16:10. The new wineskins of Matthew 9:17 were to prevent fermentation. If old wineskins were vented, they wouldn't burst. If new wineskins were fermenting and not vented, they would burst. Job 32:19.
  - B. The difference between the qualifications for elders and deacons isn't complete abstinence vs. moderation. 1 Timothy 3:3, 8. The difference is effect vs. cause. The ESV well captures the distinction, "Not a drunkard ... Not addicted to much wine."
  - C. Paul prescribed a little wine for *medicinal* purposes. 1 Timothy 5:23. That's not what we are talking about in this lesson; it doesn't prove the wine was alcohol; and except as medicine, Timothy didn't drink any wine.



**CONCLUSION:** If someone asks, "Can a Christian drink at all?" the appropriate answer is, "For what scriptural reason would a Christian want to drink at all?"