

Jesus Turned Water to Wine

David Halbrook

Sometimes people defend their decision to drink alcohol by claiming Jesus turned water to intoxicating wine in Cana. They forget that not all wine in the Bible was intoxicating. They also have not thought about the facts of John 2. We can know that Jesus did not make intoxicating wine because:

1. *Wine is a mocker* (Prov. 20:1) Jesus would not provide wine that mocks the people who drink it. Also, Jesus would not provide something that Scripture warned *against!*

2. *The amount of wine Jesus made* Jesus made at least 120 gallons of wine and gave it to people who had already been drinking wine (John 2:3, 6-7, 10). If these people had been drinking intoxicating wine and Jesus offered them 120 *more gallons of intoxicating wine*, He contributed to drunkenness!

3. *The teachings of the apostles* The apostles, whom Jesus sent out, taught that drunkenness was sinful (Gal. 5:21; 1 Pet. 4:3). Therefore, Jesus would not contribute to drunkenness by making 120 gallons of intoxicating wine.

Jesus' miracle in Cana does not prove we can have a few beers today for social/recreational purposes. Send us your comments or questions.

Editor's Note: This is likely the last in a recent series of articles on alcohol in *Arkansas Weekly*. The timing of these articles coincides with a variety of related decisions being made by Arkansas lawmakers. While this subject is on the mind of area citizens, use these article to help them see God's will in these matters.

Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.

Please check the lists of various assignments and work needing volunteers on the bulletin board at the back.

Pray for: Janice White, The Ledgerwoods, Novela Puckett, Samuel Southall, others with ongoing trials (Joyce Ratliff, Norma McKnight), our brethren who are travelling, and new Christians among us.

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

June 8, 2014

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Know Your Enemy And Meet Him With Vigilance

David Hubbard

It was a normal evening, like many others, uneventful and quiet as I sat at my desk on the night shift completing systems checks and touching base with production elements throughout my shop. My job to coordinate and direct mission flow while maintaining accountability for several hundred personnel, like most jobs in a deployed environment, was largely repetitive and predictable going from one day to the next. I knew what to do, when to do it, and when to call for help. It was my job, my duty and responsibility; I was an officer with the lives of men and women under my charge, and the direct necessity to be prepared to do whatever I needed to do in order to successfully complete my mission. I had no illusions, misunderstandings or misgivings about what my role was in my unit. The job that was entrusted to me demanded nothing less.

It was easy to get relaxed in that environment, even though we knew the enemy was literally lurking all around us, the routine became second nature as you got comfortable in your duties. But despite that comfortability, you never let yourself become complacent. Complacency meant lives, and there was a good reason to maintain that level of vigilance; we knew our enemy. I made it my business to know my enemy so I could stop him, because he wanted to stop me, and he would try if I ever became complacent.

My enemy fought what is called, 'Asymmetric warfare.' This is also known as 'guerilla warfare,' 'insurgency,' and terrorism. But no matter what you call it, it is characterized by one side being significantly outgunned by the other which causes them to resort to any length, any depth of depravity to win. Often meaning long drawn out or sporadic skirmishes rather than full on battles, it's a war of believers gradually trying to chip away morale; those wicked souls so irreversibly sold-out to their backward cause that they will literally do anything to demoralize a stronger foe.

It's a messy thing this asymmetric warfare, and the only tool against it is vigilance. And so we were vigilant.

Many in the world of Christianity today believe the spiritual battle we fight is symmetric, or rather they believe the enemy is evenly footed and will play by the rules. This is manifested by these Christians keeping to themselves while only meeting other Christians at church, voting to pass laws that protect religious freedom, and then calling it a day thinking they are safe in their homes at night. Despite knowing full well that "the enemy prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour," (1 Pet. 5:8) they treat the enemy like it is somehow going to fight them when they are prepared for it. I wish I could get inside their heads, and live in that world for a few minutes. It must be very comforting to think that when you confront the enemy, you can say, "Time out! Its 12:30 and the game is on, I need to get home to watch it and eat lunch. Come back later this week and we can fight then," and truly believe the enemy will just smile and nod understandingly, wave you farewell so as to battle another day. What a peaceful, albeit naïve life that must be.

That however is not the case, and unfortunately our reality is full of these kinds of diluted Christians. You see, in this asymmetric war we find ourselves in, Satan knows he's outgunned, the battle has already been won against death through Christ (1Cor. 15:57). So when I say that he will go to any length in order to 'win over' your soul... understand it with the sober mind that I had when I learned that my enemy didn't hesitate to use innocent kids to kill for his belief, strapping bombs to them in order to blow up schools full of other innocent kids. Asymmetric warfare is a messy business, and like my physical enemy, Satan will do whatever it takes in order to win you, to demoralize you, to destroy you. If you're smart, that should cause you to take pause.

One of the greatest tools Satan has today is the great wealth and comfort of the American culture. That coupled with the patience of a sociopath, Satan will literally wait until you are at your weakest moment, gushing with relaxation and happiness, to drop the bottom out from under you, landing a sucker-punch that will lay your complacent soul flat on the ground. If you believe that Satan wouldn't surround you with wealth, a nice life, a happy family and friends in order to make you complacent and ineffective... you better wake up, man your post and prepare for an onslaught.

I was happy for that quiet night mentioned before, not because I was complacent, but because through vigilance, I knew exactly what I needed to do in the event of an attack. Just a day earlier, we had been attacked, and a mortar had taken the lives of several soldiers just down the road. Because of vigilance and the quick reaction of good men and women, the attackers were quickly quelled before they could harm

anyone else. We knew to be prepared, because we knew our enemy. We knew that there was no length he wouldn't go to stop us, and so there was no excuse for complacency.

Likewise, we know it is not a matter of 'If' our spiritual enemy is going to attack us, but of 'When' he will attack. Believing that we are doing enough for Christ, believing that we are safe and secure by simply attending church, not wanting to get out of our comfort zones to evangelize to a lost world is like walking through the sub-Saharan desert with lions lurking on both sides, and believing our ignorance of them will protect us from becoming catnip. We know better, we know our enemy, and we make the choice to become complacent because forgive me, but we allow our excess and comfort to become our excuse for inaction. And in the absence of action on the part of good men, evil wins.

There is no room for this kind of complacent Christian in God's Spiritual army in the same way that there would not be room for a complacent soldier in a physical army. That kind gives the enemy an advantage, it plays to ignorance, and worse than costing lives... it cost souls. I was happy to know my enemy, because knowing him meant steeling up my guard, and maintaining my vigilance. So arm yourself Christian (Eph. 6:13-18) realize you are made with a bold spirit (2Tim 1:7), take the fight to the enemy (Luke 9:23) because you are not promised tomorrow (Prov. 27:1) and the battle is at your doorstep today (James 4:7). Be honest with yourself (1Cor. 3:18-20), be brave (Josh. 1:9), and fight (James 2:17). The job entrusted to you as a Christian demands nothing less.

"He who is often rebuked, and hardens his neck, will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Proverbs 29:1)

Wrong is lovingly yet consistently reproofed in order to produce correction: *"Whom the Lord loves, He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights"* (Prov. 3:12). That is why the father tells the son *"do not despise the chastening of the Lord"* (Prov. 3:11). However, when a person repeatedly refuses to accept correction, stiffening his neck against the truth of God, punishment will come suddenly. There will be no remedy for sin in the day of judgment; that opportunity will have passed. Choose now to accept God's discipline of your sin, repent and accept his mercy and forgiveness. Never harden yourself against the yoke of Christ. It is easy when you willingly accept it and follow his truth. To reject the correction of the gospel is utterly foolish.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. (Proverbs 9:10) [SWORD TIPS #176 (May 31, 2014); Joe R. Price]