

Words of

Truth & Reason

Acts 26:25

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CHURCH OF CHRIST—QUAIL VALLEY

Alcohol & Drunkenness

*What has God said about drunkenness?
When am I guilty of drunkenness?*

According to www.m-w.com, the word “drunk” means “having the faculties impaired by alcohol.” So when your mind is impaired by alcohol, you are drunk (intoxicated).

Some ask, “How much alcohol does it take to impair my mind?” Studies prove that after the average man or woman drinks one beer, one glass of wine, or one shot of liquor they have a Blood Alcohol Concentration of at least .02%. Being slightly drunk, they feel relaxed and may be in a slightly different mood. It is legal to drive at this point, but The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says “that driving performance degrades

after just one drink.” If your mind is impaired by alcohol, you are drunk.

Why does it matter how much alcohol it takes to be drunk? Because God said *Do not be drunk with wine* (Eph. 5:19). That forbids all levels of drunkenness (intoxication). People who makes excuses and twist passages to justify their preferred level of drunkenness prove that *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise* (Prov. 20:1). If you are thinking “But the Bible also says...,” read the next article in this series, which uses the Bible to study and defining the word “wine.”

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Author & Editor: David Halbrook

The Word “Wine” in the Bible

Understanding the Bible requires us to understand words. Did you know that the word “wine” sometimes means a beverage that is not intoxicating and sometimes means a beverage that is intoxicating? Compare Proverbs 3:10 and 20:1. In 3:10, wine is the result of wisdom. In 20:1, wine destroys wisdom. Can you tell which is intoxicating wine?

Another way to realize this is to look at the use of wine in the Bible. Wine was a daily drink like grain/corn was a common food, even used by young children (Deut. 33:28; Lam. 2:11-12), it was given to weary travelers (2 Sam. 16:2), and available during ongoing celebrations when people will drink throughout the celebration (Jn. 2:1ff). Now think. If you use an intoxicating beverage daily, give it to your children, drink it when you are exhausted from travel, and drink it throughout a day-long party what will happen? You and your family would be constantly intoxicated and alcoholics! Clearly the word “wine” in these verses is not an intoxicating beverage. Visit our website or call us for more study or to send us your comments or questions. We want to hear from you.

Jesus Turned Water to Wine

Did Jesus make intoxicating wine?

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.

*Wine is a mocker,
strong drink is a
brawler, and whoever
is led astray by it is
not wise. (Prov. 20:1)*

You are invited to:
Sunday AM Bible classes:
10:00AM
Sunday AM Worship:
10:45AM
Sunday PM Worship:
5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes
& Worship: **7:00 PM**

The Medicinal Use of Alcohol

When the topic of alcohol and the Bible arises, passages about the medicinal use of alcohol do too. Let's study them.

Paul recommended that Timothy use *a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities* (1 Tim. 5:23). Clearly, wine was a simple solution for Timothy's illnesses. Today, we do the same when we take cough medicine that contains alcohol. People who drink for pleasure but claim it is for illness will answer to God for abusing His Word.

Proverbs 31:6-7 recommends intoxicating drink for *him who is perishing and bitter of heart*. This is the same person, just as in verse 2 *my son, the son of my womb*, and *son of my vows* is the same person and in verse 4 *not for kings to drink wine* means the same as *nor for princes intoxicating drink*. This repetition (called "parallelism") is found throughout Proverbs. God permits the pain associated with death to be dulled by wine. Today morphine is used similarly.

Visit our website and read the longer version of this article for more discussion of these verses and the "health benefits" of alcohol. If you are not sick or dying, seeking a buzz from alcohol is sin

Questions from this issue's articles:

1. What is the basic meaning of the word "drunk"?
2. In the Bible, does the word "wine" always mean a drink that is intoxicating?
3. How can we know that Jesus did not make intoxicating wine?
4. For what purposes does God permit the use of alcohol? Is that how most people use it today?

* Mail your answers to the church of Christ in Quail Valley 4104 E. Harrison St, Batesville, AR 72501 OR, e-mail your answers to **TruthAndReason@suddenlink.net**

* If you have a comment or question, call (793-6700; 569-4491) or visit our website **WWW.QVCOC.COM**

* All past and current issues of *Truth and Reason* are available at our website—tell a friend!