

# SOCIAL DRINKING

## Int.

1. Aim: To show that the Bible condemns, not approves, social drinking.
2. Jn. 2:1-11 - Jesus first miracle - turned water into wine
  - a. Some argue that since Jesus made wine and the people drunk it, then it is all right to drink alcoholic beverages today in moderation.
  - b. They would say that it is sinful to get drunk but not to drink in moderation. This is called Social Drinking.
  - c. This is wrong!!! It is in error. Absolutely False!!!
3. What about social drinking?
  - a. Can a Christian order a bottle of wine from the liquor store for his own personal consumption?
  - b. The argument goes like this: "I'm not hurting anybody, thus I cannot be sinning."
  - c. Does the Bible have anything to say about social drinking or even drinking in moderation?
  - d. I believe it does indeed address the issue. Let's turn to the word of God and see.
4. In this lesson we will discuss:
  - a. The error of this reasoning as we look at the text of John 2:1-11
  - b. Show that the word "Wine" does not always refer to an alcoholic drink
  - c. Explain why social drinking is unacceptable

## Discussion

### I. **TURNING WATER TO WINE John 2:1-11**

- A. It is often taught that Jesus made intoxicating wine and therefore social drinking is approved!
1. "At the very least the story of Cana's wedding feast indirectly approves the use of alcoholic beverages." (W.J. Wittenburg in Pastoral Psychology 4/9/58)
  2. Assumed that the wine was intoxicating and that Jesus and those attending drank it! I have heard brethren say that this wine was an intoxicating beverage.
- B. What really happened?
1. Jesus performed a miracle
  2. He speeded up the process of nature which turns water to grapes and then the grape juice or wine from the grapes -
  3. The word wine is "oinos" which can describe either intoxicating or unintoxicating wine! It must be determined by the context in which it is used!
- C. Self-Contradictory theory
1. Those who try to justify social drinking will condemn drunkenness and will use verses like I Pet. 4:3 and Eph. 5:18 Gal. 5:19-21
    - a. 1 Pet. 4:3 **"For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:"**
    - b. Eph. 5:18 **"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit:"**

2. They say that Jesus approved social drinking but not drunkenness!! The wedding feast was a social occasion.
3. This is a self-contradictory doctrine and is therefore false!!
  - a. It is said that excess is wrong and that drunkenness is excess.
  - b. These will hold the view that "well drunk" in Jn.2:10 means to get drunk or become intoxicated. **"And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: [but] thou hast kept the good wine until now."**
  - c. If such is true then it means that Jesus supplied a large quantity of intoxicating wine to people who were already drunk!
  - d. Dilemma
    - (1) Either Jesus was not guilty of sin (by assuming that it is not sinful to contribute to drunkenness)
    - (2) Or Jesus was guilty of sin which contradicts
      - (a) Heb.4:15 **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."**
      - (b) I Pet 2:22-24 **"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."**
  - e. Either way it teaches false doctrine and is false

4. If "well drunk" means intoxicated then the statement of the ruler indicates they were intoxicated
  - a. V. 10 Every man at beginning sets out good wine - when well drunk then bring out worse.
  - b. They had already used their best - but the wine that Jesus made in this miracle was even better.
  - c. Thus the people (according to their theory) were already intoxicated and then Jesus gave them an even more potent supply!!
5. I reject this theory
  - a. It is self-contradictory - to say that Jesus approves of moderate, but here they were going to excess.
  - b. It accuses Jesus of Sin!! Heb. 4:15
  - c. 1 Pet. 2:22 says that Jesus **"did no sin,"**

D. The KEY PHRASE "and when men have well Drunk" - what does it mean?

1. It does not always indicate intoxication
2. The phrase suggests the idea of drunk largely.
3. It signifies excessive drinking without reference to the kind of liquid used!
4. In the Greek translation of the O.T. the same word is used in Ps. 23:5 for **"my cup runneth over"** **"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."**
5. The term "well drunk" just means that were filled, they had drunk a large amount of grape juice or wine!

- E. Another key phrase is "good wine"
1. Many just assume that this means intoxicating wine!
  2. But it refers to the taste or the flavor of the wine
    - a. Flavor was known immediately
    - b. But power to intoxicate could not have been known upon tasting!
  3. The ruler of the feast realized that the guests would be able to tell that this wine was a better tasting wine. If they had all been drinking an alcoholic beverage they would hardly have known where they are and not been able to say anything about the taste of the wine they were drinking.
  4. Drunkenness implies the amount of ethyl alcohol which is consumed in social drinking:
    - a. Drunk - [Methusko]
      - (1) "To begin to be softened" - Youngs Ana. conc.
      - (2) "To grow drunk (marking the beginning of methuo) - Bullinger
    - b. There are degree's of drunkenness and a person begins to be drunk when they begin to drink!
    - c. "There is no minimum (blood alcohol concentration) which can be set at which there will be absolutely no effect." [minutes of the 1960 annual meeting of the American Medical Association.]
    - d. When a person takes any amount of alcoholic beverage they are softened, intoxicated, and drunk to that degree.
    - e. The effects of alcohol begin with the first drink. Drunkenness is a condition which actually begins with the first drink and progresses further when more is consumed.

f. Alcohol is detectable in the brain within 30 seconds after being swallowed!

F. Object of the Miracle - Jn.2:1-11

1. To manifest or make known the "glory" of Jesus v.11
  - a. He demonstrated his identity with God
  - b. Because he made the water to wine
2. The nature of Jesus
  - a. Was going about doing good - Acts 10:38
  - b. He was "holy harmless, and undefiled"- Heb.7:26
3. He did not bring shame and sorrow and strife and destruction to mankind.  
That would have been the case if the wine was alcoholic!

## II. **THE WORD "WINE" DOES NOT ALWAYS REFER TO AN ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE**

A. Different words

1. Thirteen terms in Greek and Hebrew
2. Three most common:
  - a. Hebrew - Yayin & Tirosh
  - b. Greek - Oinos

B. Sometimes condemned and other places approved

1. Condemned
  - a. Pro. 20:1 - a curse **"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."**
  - b. Pro. 23:31- prohibited **"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright."**

- c. Ps. 75:8 - emblem of Divine wrath **"For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them."**
2. Approved
- a. Ps. 104:15 - A Blessing **"And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart."**
- b. I sa. 65:8 **"...the new wine is found in the cluster,...."**
- c. I sa. 55:1 - symbol of spiritual blessings **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."**
3. Conclusion - there are two different substances referred to by the term wine
- a. One approved of God - non-alcoholic
- b. The other condemned - alcoholic
4. The context determines whether it is approved or condemned.

### **III. WHY SOCIAL DRINKING IS UNACCEPTABLE**

- A. Drunkards cannot enter heaven
1. Gal. 5:19-21
  2. I Cor. 6:10
- B. Why does God condemn it?
1. It causes hurt and heartaches and problems
  2. Many killed in accidents by drunk drivers
  3. Homes and lives are ruined - destroys body, brain, liver etc.

4. Suicide rate for alcoholics is 58 times higher
  5. Murders committed
- C. What would be wrong with a Christian drinking a beer in the privacy of his own home?
1. There is a contradiction in the terms "Christian" and "drinking beer" or "Wine."
  2. Beer has alcohol in it and causes the same kind of consequences and actions in a person who consumes it.
  3. The Bible does not say "Don't get dead drunk" or "Don't get blind-staggering drunk". It just condemns drinking.
  4. The word "Drunk" means = "To begin to be softened". Some assume that the word drunken means to be almost unconscious. But there are degrees of drunkenness. A man is drunk when he drinks one beer. He is one drink drunk when he takes his first drink.
  5. III. [Readers Digest had an ad by Seagram's Distilling Company] In this ad they had a man write the sentence, "I can drive when I drink." The man wrote this sentence first when he was sober. After taking two drinks, he wrote the sentence again, but this time it was distorted. He wrote the sentence after four drinks, after five, and after seven. Each time the sentence became more and more illegible, until finally it was almost impossible to read. The last two sentences of the ad read, "When you drink too much, you can't handle a car. You can't even handle a pen." After this man had taken two drinks, he was drunk enough that he could not even write a six-word sentence without some distortion. [See Words of Life - Feb. 4, 1977 - Article by Raymond Allen Hagood]
  6. Prov. 23:29-32

7. Drinking alcoholic beverages of any sort in any degree is sinful and deadly!! The difference between a social drinker and a drunkard is only a difference of degree, not a difference of kind.!
8. Brother Tant answered the question: "Is it all right to drink a little just to be social with my friends? He said: "I suppose it is no more sin to drink a little than it would be to steal a little or lie a little, or whip your wife a little or even kill a man a little!"
9. There is no passage of scripture that shows saints approved while drinking alcoholic beverages!!
10. We cannot practice evil in moderation

#### **IV. ASSORTED THOUGHTS ABOUT "Drinking"**

##### A. Lord's Supper

1. It is never called "wine" in any of the passages
2. There was no drink in the Passover as instituted by God in Ex.12:3-28
3. Could possess no leavening at Passover time - Ex.12:15, 13:7 Wine was later associated with the passover but it could not have been an alcoholic beverage.
4. The "Cup" in the Lord's Supper was none alcoholic.
5. It is called "Cup" or "Fruit of the vine"
6. Mt. 26:27-29 Mk. 14:23-25 Lk. 22:17-20 I Cor.11:25,26

##### B. **Alcohol is a Poison**

1. Poison = "A substance that through its chemical action usually kills, injures or impairs an organism; something destructive or harmful."

2. Toxic means poison, and to intoxicate means to poison. An intoxicating drink is a poison drink. Therefore when a man is intoxicated he is poisoned. Not all persons die who are poisoned as it depends upon the extent of the intoxication.
3. Some hold that alcohol is only a poison when taken in large quantities.
  - a. This implies that it changes in substance with quantity
  - b. But alcohol is always a poison no matter how small the amount.

### **Conclusion**

1. Thomas Edison "I have better use for my brain than to poison it with alcohol. To put alcohol in the human brain is like putting sand in the bearing of an engine."

2. Rm. 12:1 **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."**

- a. Our bodies are sacred because they are God-given. We serve God through our Bodies.
- b. Therefore we should keep our bodies morally clean and healthy.

3. You cannot do what God says and drink!!!

4. Alcohol is condemned as an evil beverage!

5. **"Abstain from all appearance of Evil."** I Thes. 5:21

6. Alcohol destroys ....

....our Brain .....

.....our family.....

.....our lives.....

.....our soul...!!!