

Statement on the Use of Alcohol

First Baptist Church of Middleville - Accepted January 29, 2017

As Christians, we seek to live wisely in this world and to reject any practice that the Bible identifies as sin. Regarding the use of alcohol or other addictive or mind-altering substances, the Bible is clear that some uses are prohibited. The Bible consistently identifies drunkenness as sin. Illegal uses of these substances are also sin.

In addition, there are many times in which wisdom and love will cause a Christian to curtail his or her Christian liberty for the good of others. We want the people of our church, and those we influence, to avoid the destruction that often comes through abuse of alcohol—to themselves, their families, and others. Therefore, in many situations abstinence or near abstinence is the wisest option. In all cases we insist on self-control, concern for others, use of wisdom, and discretion.

Biblical Instructions:

The Bible is clear that drunkenness is sin.

Ephesians 5:18

And do not get **drunk** with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.

Romans 13:13

Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and **drunkenness**, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.

Galatians 5:21

Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,²¹ envy, **drunkenness**, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Peter 4:3

For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, **drunkenness**, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.

1 Corinthians 5:11

But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, **drunkard**, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. (See also 1 Cor. 6:10.)

The Bible warns of the many serious problems that often come from consumption of alcohol.

Proverbs 20:1

Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.

Proverbs 21:17

Whoever loves pleasure will be a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not be rich.

Proverbs 23:20-21

Be not among drunkards or among gluttonous eaters of meat,²¹ for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and slumber will clothe them with rags.

Proverbs 23:29-35

²⁹Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes?

³⁰Those who tarry long over wine; those who go to try mixed wine. ³¹Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. ³²In the end it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. ³³Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart utter perverse things.

³⁴You will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, like one who lies on the top of a mast.

³⁵"They struck me," you will say, "but I was not hurt; they beat me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake? I must have another drink."

Isaiah 5:22

Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine, and valiant men in mixing strong drink.

We are not to let ourselves become slaves to wine.

1 Tim. 3:8

Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain.

Titus 2:3

Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good,

Isaiah 5:11

Woe to those who rise early in the morning, that they may run after strong drink, who tarry late into the evening as wine inflames them!

1 Corinthians 6:12

¹²“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything.

Illegal uses of alcohol or drugs are sin since we are commanded to obey the laws of the government unless they contradict God’s laws.

Romans 13:1-2

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.

Christian love means showing concern and often practicing restraint for the sake of those who may be negatively impacted by our example, even in areas of Christian liberty.

Romans 14:20-23

²⁰Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. ²¹It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. ²²The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. ²³But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

1 Corinthians 8:7-13

⁷However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? ¹¹And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. ¹²Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

1 Corinthians 10:23-24

²³“All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up. ²⁴Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.

1 Corinthians 10:31

³¹So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. ³²Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, ³³just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.

We must always look closely at our actions, their effects, and our motives.

Ephesians 5:15

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,

Colossians 4:5

Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time.

Proverbs 16:2

All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirit.

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Possession or use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or recreational drugs is not allowed on church property or church functions.