

“Is ‘Social Drinking’ ok?” Proverbs 23

Granted, the Bible does not include a commandment that reads, “Thou shall not consume alcohol!” However, it certainly provides numerous principles and examples of the dangers of alcohol. Warren Wiersle treats this subject in a clear, well presented way in his *Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*.

The Bible warns against Strong Drink. (The concerned father tells his son what evil results will take place in his life if he takes to drinking alcohol:)

- I. POVERTY (vv. 20-21; 21:17)
 - A. False advertising. It’s made to look and sound glamorous when it is just the opposite.
 - B. Neglect of family necessities. It consumes a lot of rent, food and clothing money.
 - C. Lost income. It can result in days lost in the labor force resulting in higher consumer prices for everyone and threatened employment for the drinker.

- II. MISERY (vv. 29-32)
 - A. A great deceiver (cf. 20:1). A very unwise decision.
 - B. Drunk driving. Over 55 percent of fatal auto accidents involve drinking drivers.
 - C. Major health problems. Alcoholism is the #3 health problem in the U.S., after heart disease and cancer.

- III. IMMORALITY (vv. 26-28, 33)
 - A. Loss of virtue (for both men and women). Think proms and parties!
 - B. Alcohol is not a stimulant. It is a narcotic (lose in brain control).
 - C. Alcohol is not a food. It is a poison (destroying many vital organs).

- IV. INSTABILITY (vv. 34-35)
 - A. Physical instability (staggering drunk)
 - B. Mental instability (unusual thoughts, poor judgment)
 - C. Social instability (public embarrassment)

- V. ETERNITY IN HELL (cf. I Corinthians 6:9-10)
 - A. Unrepentant, unsaved drunkards go to hell.
 - B. Once addicted, an alcoholic is very unlikely to be converted.

Often, Jesus’ miracle of “turning water into wine” (John 2) is used to justify drinking alcohol or at least using “real wine” with communion. In Matthew 26:29, following the Passover with his disciples, Jesus says, “I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on...” Sounds like Jesus is a total abstainer! We will save ourselves a lot of pain and judgment if we will take that same position. If we can preach sexual abstinence before marriage, surely we can preach alcohol abstinence as well.

— rrc