

DRINKING

"Wine is a mocker, intoxicating drink arouses brawling, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise." (20:1)

INTRODUCTION—The problem of drinking and drunkenness today is ‘staggering.’ Wine has a hypnotizing quality—it is delectable, sparkling and smooth, and seduces the unwary man, much like the seductress (23:31; 6:24-25). Both fascinate and offer the same promise of pleasure and enjoyment... but both have the same fatal sting “*in the end*” (23:32; 5:4). We must beware!!

I. REASONS FOR DRINKING

- A. Momentary Pleasure (23:31; Ecclesiastes 10:19).
- B. Escape Problems and Forget (31:7). It may bring **temporary** relief, but then comes the bitter return to reality.
- C. Bitterness (31:6). It releases anxieties and burdens.
- D. Friends (23:20-21). Social drinking is the manner in which most people begin drinking.

II. EFFECTS OF WINE (23:32)

- A. Produces Woe and Sorrow (23:29). For the one who drinks and for his family.
- B. Produces Contention (23:29; 20:1). Wine releases one’s inhibitions. Thinking he now possesses greater strength, he becomes boisterous and obnoxious.
- C. Physical Problems (23:29).
- D. Hallucinations (23:33). Loses touch with reality, becoming prey to fantasies and illusions.
- E. Dulls the Senses (23:34-35). Even though he is lying still, he feels like he is tossed about and swaying. He is anesthetized and beyond sensations of pain or feeling.
- F. Addicting (23:35). The greatest sting is wine’s addictive power.
- G. Breeds Irresponsibility (31:4-5). Distorts thinking and perverts justice. Sober bodies and minds are essential for ruling and leading.
- H. Brings One to Poverty (23:20-21; 21:17). Wine is a **taker** not a **giver**.
- I. Leads One Down the Wrong Path (23:19-21). The “way” which is mentioned here, is the way of wisdom which calls for a clear head and steady walk (23:19). The implied contrast is with the ‘staggering’ way of the drunkard (23:20-21).

III. DRINKING

- A. Drunkenness is a Sin (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13; Romans 13:11-14). It is always condemned as excessive, indulgent, uncontrolled and sensual!
- B. Social Drinking is a Sin (1 Peter 4:3-4; Romans 12:1-2).
- C. Does the Bible Say Taking a Drink is a Sin? Yes or no? What does the Bible say about taking a drink?

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1. Wine is one of the good things **God** gave to cheer the heart (Judges 9:13; Psalm 104:14-15; Ecclesiastes 10:19). When they drank wine, they were rejoicing in the fruits of their God-given harvest. What little alcohol was in it was incidental. When men drink alcoholic beverages today, the emphasis is on the alcoholic content and the effects it will have on him, rather than glorifying God.
 2. Does man have a license to drink whenever and whatever he wants (Romans 14:15,17,21)?
 3. With so many negatives associated with wine, is it any wonder Paul had to convince Timothy to take just a little? Timothy refused to drink any until then (1 Timothy 5:23; Titus 1:15).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS—

- 1) *How are men deceived by the influence of strong drink (20:1)?*
- 2) *How does wine “sting like a viper” (23:32)?*
- 3) *Why are just a few drinks deceptive?*
- 4) *How can alcohol bring one to poverty?*
- 5) *What positive effects does drinking have? What negative effects?*
- 6) *Am I **ever** the **only** person affected by my drinking?*
- 7) *Why are leaders not to be “given to wine” (31:4-5; 1 Timothy 3:2-3)?*
- 8) *Explain how wine can be one of the good things God has given us, yet we are condemned for drunkenness or social drinking.*
- 9) *Should we indulge ourselves in an occasional beer or glass of wine? What would be the advantages? What would be the disadvantages? Which outweighs the other?*
- 10) *What do you believe about social drinking in light of what the Bible says?*
- 11) *What should a Christian do when he finds himself in a situation where he is encouraged to drink socially?*