

The Rise in Beer Drinking

by Wayne Goff

It is a real tragedy in America that as young people turn their hearts away from God that they are being led to drinking – and even making – customized beer. It is all the craze, but it will have lasting consequences.

“And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,” (Ephesians 5:18)

Wine-Drinking

The apostle Paul warns against getting drunk with wine (**oinos**). This is *new wine*, or *must* which creates a grape juice drink when mixed with water. I suppose even drinking too much of this mild concoction could cause one to get drunk. Drunkenness is a sin, a work of the flesh, which will cause a child of God to lose his soul (Gal. 5:21). So when one *begins* to drink alcoholic beverages of any kind, he is traveling down a slippery slope!

If you think you are the exception to the rule, then think again. No person I ever knew or heard about **purposefully decided** to become a drunk or alcoholic! It happens when one becomes *dependent* upon the sedative for emotional help.

Many people think that today's **wine** has a low alcohol content. In fact, most American wines have 10.5-12% alcohol content! A fair representation of biblical wine would make it no stronger than 3-5% alcohol. And the **context** of many Old and New Testament passages clearly shows that often “*wine*” is “grape juice.”

Beer Drinking

The average beer on the American market today contains about 4-5% alcohol. But everyone knows that two or three beers will cause most people to become drunk! In fact, some doctors will affirm that when you take one drink, you are “one-drink drunk”! That's because alcohol has an immediate effect once it enters the blood stream. It creates a “sludging” effect on the blood which can lead to numerous health problems. So beware of the many internet articles today which are trying to make biblical “*wine*” very intoxicating!

In the Old Testament, “**strong drink**” (**shekhar**) was about 7-10% alcohol, and the Bible absolutely forbids its use! “*Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise*” (Prov. 20:1). “*Give strong drink to him who is perishing, and wine to those who are bitter of heart*” (Prov. 31:6). “*They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink is bitter to those who drink it*” (Is. 24:9). See also Isaiah 5:11, 22; 28:7, 9; 56:12; etc.

“Sober”

The New Testament words translated “**sober**” suggest either (1) a sound mind (**sōphroneō**); or (2) calm, collected in spirit (**nephō**). One who becomes drunk is neither of these. But also those who drink strong drink have a difficult time remaining “*sober*,” as we all know.

Conclusion

My personal advice as a Christian and gospel preacher is that it is extremely wise to avoid alcoholic drinks altogether. Whether or not you believe the Bible forbids alcoholic drink altogether, it is a sound observation that no teetotaler ever became an alcoholic, whereas many “social drinkers” became drunks and alcoholics without ever intending to do so. If you are struggling with this personal decision, then visit an **Alcoholics Anonymous** sometime and see the havoc strong drink has caused in the lives of so many people. I have been a teetotaler all of my life, and I can strongly recommend the lifestyle. There are plenty of other ways to “have fun” without harming your health, your life, your reputation, or your eternal future!

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