

WINE AND STRONG DRINK

A Study of the Curse of Drink and the Christian's Response

Lesson Seventeen

Memory Verse: *Romans 12:11*

Lesson Verse: *Proverbs 20:1*

"Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Proverbs 20:1

I. Introduction

- A. The Bible has never been unclear about the important issues in life. The problem is always that people play ignorant instead of taking the time to "search the Scriptures" (John 5:39) for **the right answer** about how to live, and what is **right** to do. This is true with what we are about to study.
- B. Wine, and strong drink have plagued mankind from the time of Adam and Eve's fall in Genesis 3 up to today. It has affected even the best of people - see Genesis 9:20-22, where "Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: And he drank of the wine, and was **drunken**; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the **nakedness** of his father." So began the sad tale of alcohol's influence!
- C. This study will show that the correct use of wine and strong drink is not to be "in moderation" but **only as a medicine** - it is definitely not for social entertainment or pleasure -- "He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth **wine** and oil shall not be rich" (Proverbs 21:17).
- D. From the very start of this study, let the Scriptures make it very clear that "**Wine IS a mocker, and strong drink IS raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.**" (Proverbs 20:1). It is not an issue of whether wine can "become" a mocker when abused, but that its very nature IS mockery to the Christian life, and that **it deceives all who think they can handle it!**
- E. This study is designed to present *God's view* of wine and alcoholic drink. You will need to fill-in the answers to the questions from the Scriptures presented. Please study **all** the Scriptures presented, and then fill in the blanks.



II. Study Outline on Alcoholic Drinks

A. The Different Kinds of Wine and Alcoholic Drinks

1. Did you know that there are **TWO** types of "wine" in the Bible?
 - a. _____ - squeezed from the grape. Simple grape juice (Lk 5:37,38)
 - b. _____ - fermented - alcoholic grape drink (Lk 5:39).

The word "wine" in the Bible can refer to either **fermented** (alcoholic), or **unfermented** (pure) grape juice. The word 'wine' is a general term. It is the surrounding context of each verse that tells you which kind of wine God is talking about.

2. There is also a drink referred to as "_____ drink" (Prov 20:1).
3. Let's look in detail at each of these three drinks:
 - a. The Fruit of the Vine - called, "New Wine" - Juice of the Grape.

- 1) It is not found in the “vat” but in the “_____” (Isa 65:8). It is fresh from the grape - simple juice with nothing added!
 - 2) God’s people **never** drank alcoholic wine (Dt 29:5,6; 32:14)!
 - 3) God’s blessings are found in “_____” wine (Pr 3:9,10), not in fermented drinks. We will study fermentation a little later on.
 - 4) Wine is compared to “*blood*” in the Bible, and God's people are supposed to only drink the “_____ *blood of the grape*” (Dt 29:6; 32:14). There should never be anything added.
 - 5) New wine is a refreshing beverage, not an intoxicating drink (Ps 104:13-15)!
 - 6) Jesus drank “_____” wine at His last supper (Mt 26:29). **Jesus never drank alcoholic wine, or any strong drink!**
- b. Fermented Wine - called “Old Wine” - what we call '*Liquor*'
- 1) Old wine is made by man. It is not natural. Let’s look at how fermented wine is made, and what makes it “old”:
 - a) It must be allowed to “decay” or spoil (the natural starches in the juice are allowed to break-down into sugars and alcohol).
 - b) The temperature, and sugar content must be regulated. If the decaying process is not carefully controlled, then it will sour, and be bitter, and therefore not enjoyable.
 - c) Yeast (“*leaven*” in the Bible) is added to enhance the decaying process. This is referred to as “mingling” wine with additional ingredients. Mingled wine may have sugars and other seasonings added during the fermentation process to enhance the flavour (Pr 23:29,30) for "special meals"
 - d) When kept under pressure, the resulting *carbon dioxide* from the fermentation is retained in the liquid until opened, producing a “pop” and resulting in all the carbonated bubbles, as well as the “head” on beers.
 - 2) Old wine in the Bible is only used **as a drug**, not a refreshing beverage (1Tim 5:23; Luke 10:33,34).
 - 3) It is referred to as an “intoxicating” beverage because it has the power to render someone senseless, or with less sense. Paul tells Timothy to “_____ *a little wine*”, not **drink** a little wine. Use it like you would a modern medicine. Old wine cleanses cuts and bruises, and can be used to purify water under extreme circumstances. People kept it around for “using”, not drinking. You would NEVER take glass-fulls of medicines, yet people do with alcohol, and they do it to their hurt!
 - 4) Fermented wine is only the beginning of a path that leads to stronger liquor! Alcoholic drink is never satisfying (Hab 2:5)!
 - 5) Old wine is only permitted to be drunk in the following situations:
 - a) When about to _____ - to not worry, and be able to ignore pains and past haunting memories (Pr 31:4-7).
 - b) As a medicine, alcoholic wine could be used as:
 - i) A psychological drug (Prov 31:6,7) to calm the overburdened mind - like using a sleeping tablet.

- ii) A physical drug (1Tim 5:23; Lk 10:34) to ease pains, and clean out wounds.
 - c) **Important note** – there are so many better medicines today than the use of alcoholic drink, that are designed to address pain, or infection, and are controlled in their dispensing so that people can't easily abuse them like they can drink!
 - d) So, unless you are living on a deserted island somewhere with no medicines except alcoholic drink, there is no need for alcoholic drink in your home or life – period!
- 6) The love of *old wine* is wrong (Prov 21:17), and is therefore a fleshly lust that “_____ *against the soul*” (1 Peter 2:11) - it keeps the person from ever conquering sin and self, and being able to be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18).
- c. Strong Drink
- 1) Strong drink (like whisky and rum) is harder drink than alcoholic wines and beers. These drinks have been referred to as “spirits” due to all the “extra” alcohol that is added to them for a greater “punch.”
 - 2) Hard liquor is a picture of God's **wrath** and judgment on a nation (Ps 75:8; Mt 26:39; Jn 12:27; Rev 14:9,10). **It is NOT a blessing!**

B. The Results of Drinking

1. If you drink *New Wine* - It refreshes, and makes a person's heart and health good (Ps 104:15, "*And wine that maketh glad the heart of man*"). Grape juice is good for digestion, variation (variety is the spice of life), supply of vitamins, natural sugar and extra energy intake.
2. If you drink *Old Wine* or *Strong Drink*:
 - a. It numbs the brain making the person “think” that things are great. It is Satan's counterfeit of new wine, and of the joy of the Lord that comes from enjoying natural foods.
 - b. It impairs your ability to make right decisions (Pr 31:4,5).
 - c. Liquor and **immoral sex** always go hand in hand (Gen 9:20-24; Hab 2:15,16; Lam 4:21). It enhances the *domination* of the flesh!
 - d. Liquor and **violence** go hand-in-hand (Hab 2:5,17).
 - e. Watch how the Lord in **Proverbs 23**, describes the life of someone who spends their time enjoying a few drinks:
 - 1) They have troubles (woe), and _____, and arguments (contentions) - (Prov 23:29,30)
 - 2) They don't make sense when they talk (they babble, 23:29).
 - 3) They have wounds from fights they don't remember (23:29)
 - 4) They look terrible - not healthy and robust (23:29)!
 - 5) Alcoholic drinks have a **hypnotic** affect when you stare at it for a while (23:31).
 - 6) Ultimately, the drinker finds himself in all sorts of trouble:
 - a) **Bitten** with **addiction** to its poison (23:32)! Its effect is disastrous, not beneficial!

- b) **Lustful, and remorseful** for all the things you end up doing and saying when you drink (23:33)!
 - c) **Physically sick**: dizzy and unable to stand or walk straight (23:34).
 - d) **Emotionally sick**: blaming everything and everyone around you instead of blaming yourself (23:35)! You will wish it was all a bad dream!
 - e) **Addicted** - dependant upon it, and not able to escape its hold on you! (23:35)!
- f. Liquor and **self-centeredness** go hand-in-hand. Drinking has the habit of becoming more important than even the welfare of your own children (Joel 3:3) - people will end up selling almost anything in order to get a drink!
 - g. Liquor and **religion** go hand-in-hand (Isaiah 28:7,8) - almost all the world's religions use either drugs or alcoholic drink to enhance their "spirituality" in the worship of their god.
 - h. Drinking in moderation *is possible*, but rarely maintained, and **always** ends in disaster! Just as with anything, it IS possible to do something, and it not hurt you (1Cor 6:12). But that is not the way to tell if you should do it or not! We have to do what is RIGHT by God's standards, and not what we can get away with!
 - i. Drinking liquor drives you away from your _____ and family (Hab 2:5) because it never can satisfy the emptiness of the heart!
 - j. Drinking liquor is usually pushed upon people (Hab 2:15). People don't normally go after the drink unless it is greatly advertised and pressured upon them (see any conversation at a pub between those who are drinking and those who are just sitting at the bar).

C. What about Beer?

1. Beer is made using basically the same process as that of wine, except, instead of using grapes, barley grain is used.
2. The purpose of drinking beer is the same as that of wine - to help a person "*relax, and unwind.*" A Christian does not need a beer or a glass of wine to help them end a day, anymore than a child does. An adult who looks to ANY drink for help at the end of the day (to relax) is only looking for a cheap substitute to prayer and fellowship with God. **They are carnal, and backslidden, and need to repent!**
3. Even though the alcoholic content of beer is low, that is not a reason to drink it - *most people who do drink beer, drink a lot of it* - not just a sip or two. At the end of the evening, the beer drinker is full of alcohol, and is usually unfit to drive - **and is unfit to be a Christian!**

D. Biblical Warnings about Liquor:

1. Drink is like a "god" to some people (Isa 5:11). **They live for it!**
2. Drink is made out to be a proof of manhood and strength (Isa 5:22).
3. Drink is not to be a social event in your home or anywhere (Hab 2:15).
4. God says wine and drink will make a mockery out of you (Prov 20:1). In other words, the person who drinks, is **dumb, dumb, DUMB!**
5. **Drink is not a disease**, but an act of the will against God (Pr 23:35)!

E. **The Usual Reasons for Drinking** - why people drink intoxicating liquors:

1. To forget troubles and heartaches - Sometimes God **wants** you to have your troubles, to get you to see you are only "*reaping what you _____*" (Gal 6:7,8). To try to remove God's payback for your sin is to ignore God, and to reap more troubles. Then there are the times when you are called upon to suffer for being in the right (Philippians 1:29). Who would run to a bottle to "cope" with God's blessing (Mt 5:11,12)?

For a Christian to try and use anything other than *Christ* to cope with problems, is like a married man running to a *harlot* to help him cope with his life's problems! *It is just as wicked in God's eyes!*

2. Because they don't have anywhere else to turn
 - a. All humans are sinners by nature - we sin naturally. The core of our being is sinful in God's eyes. We are not pure, and holy.
 - b. Our sinfulness is the source of our emptiness, and lustful desires for wrong things.
 - c. The desire for Drink, is just one of many many sins that can take over a person's life.
 - d. So many have been presented with *religion* as the answer to their sins, and sorrows, only to find it too is empty. So they turn to drink. But **only Christ** will satisfy when we turn to Him for the real help we need (Isa 53:4-6).
3. Because they would rather **take the risk with drink**, than with drugs - Don't take *either* risk, since there is sure help with Christ (Jn 10:10)!
4. Because of pressure. Friends and family are too important to you if they can pressure you into doing what God condemns (Mt 10:37)! What if they talk you into stealing, or lying (*it is all the same*) **you have no excuse, no matter how much pressure you feel!**
5. Because people think there is no other way to have a good time.

F. **The Lie about Drinking in "Moderation"**

1. Nobody can "handle" fermented liquor in moderation unless the following conditions can be met:
 - a. You have to first *give* a person a drink, which violates Hab 2:15. Read it and see that it is wicked to give a friend a drink (Isa 5:22)!
 - b. The person has to first drink "to excess" to find out where their limit is - this then violates the first rule of "drink" because you have to get yourself "drunk" to know when enough is enough!
 - c. The person then has to *keep drinking* in order to develop and maintain their tolerance of drink, so that they can handle more and more without getting drunk.

All of this is just a balancing-act that God never intended the Christian to get into. The Christian stays clear of things that can hinder their ability to serve their Lord!

"Abstain from all *appearance* of evil." (1Thes 5:22)

2. *Moderation* is anybody's guess because a person does not usually know when they have exceeded their own personal limit of drink until someone else sees it, or they kill someone on the highway!

3. Alcoholic drink affects a person's **alertness**, and yet the apostle Peter says in **1Peter 5:8**, "**Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour**"
4. God expects a Christian to **stop drinking** completely at salvation:

*"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: **neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such **WERE** some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."*** (1 Cor 6:9-11)

5. None of the listed people are "Christian" in their actions at all! The thing to ask yourself as you re-read the list is: **Can I do ANY of those things, IN ANY AMOUNT and it be right with God?** (Read this question again and again until you get the meaning!)

- a. **Fornicators** - Fornication is sex before marriage. If we can drink in moderation, then it is ok when we commit fornication in moderation! **NO!** Fornication is wrong from the start!
- b. **Idolaters** - Idolatry is completely wrong. A person cannot be a Christian and still have just a few idols (1 Cor 10:14)! Neither can a Christian hold onto just a few drinks (as we shall see).
- c. **Adulterers** - Adultery is sex with another partner besides your spouse and is completely wrong - No Christian is right with God if they even commit adultery ONCE (Heb 13:4)! They must repent, confess, and FORSAKE the sin - not just "reduce" it!
- d. **Effeminate** - Being effeminate is when a man acts like a female, and is beginning down the road to homosexuality. God says that it is wrong for a man to stop being masculine, and says acting like a woman even in moderation is wicked!
- e. **Abusers of themselves with mankind** - This is homosexuality, and is not condoned in the slightest! It is an abomination to God (Lev 20:13; Rom 1:26,27)!
- f. **Thieves** - Thievery is wicked, and wrong even in the slightest amount for a Christian (Eph 4:28)! You cannot separate petty theft from big-time stealing. Stealing is wrong in all amounts!
- g. **Covetous** - Covetousness is wrong, and is not OK for the Christian just as long as that Christian doesn't let it take control of their life - it is just completely wrong (Ex 20:17)!

h. **Drunkards** - Most people when they come to this verse read all the above descriptions correctly, but when they get to the word "**drunkards**" they only imagine that God does not want a Christian to get "plastered" drunk, and that it is OK if they drink *a little*. Sorry! Just as with ALL the other words, **God has no tolerance for the Christian even dabbling in any of this sin!** God considers a person who drinks even "in moderation" the same as a person who gets drunk. To "take" just one item from a store brands you as a "thief." To kill just one person brands you as a **murderer!** To drink just ONE alcoholic drink identifies you in God's eyes (maybe not in people's eyes), but in God's eyes as a **DRUNK!**

- i. **Revilers** - A reviler is a bad tempered man or woman, and God says that the Christian is NOT to lose their temper **at all!**
- j. **Extortioners** - Extortion is the illegal gain of money. A Christian is never to obtain money illegally, even in "moderation!"

6. None of the above people “*shall inherit the kingdom of God.*” And so the Bible continues, “*And such _____ some of you: but ye **are** _____ (cleansed from the sins), but ye **are** _____, but ye **are** justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*” (1Cor 6:11). Christians in Corinth had at some time in the past been sinful in one or more of the above areas, but **NOW**, because of Jesus Christ saving them, they are different - they surely WERE that way, but are NOW washed, sanctified, and justified by Christ - and they were not supposed to try and “cut back” on adultery, idolatry, thievery, homosexuality, or drunkenness. They were supposed to **stop all of it completely**, and live for Jesus Christ - the One who saved them “_____ *their sins*” (Mt 1:21), not saved them to be able to remain IN their sins.
- G. **Questions from Other Scriptures** - Here are some verses that people quote to prove drinking in moderation for a Christian is permissible:
1. **Ephesians 5:18** The question is, whether the “*excess*” is in being **drunken** (which is usually thought), or in the **wine** itself (see Pr 20:1)?
 - a. Look at 1 Peter 4:4. Is it ok if a Christian does just a "little" rioting, as long as it is in moderation? NO! The **riot itself** is excessive, just like *wine itself* is excessive!
 - b. The Christian has been *converted* at salvation from sin's power to the power in the life of Jesus Christ, and therefore, the person's **desires** have been converted - they have been changed from seeking satisfaction in wine, money, rebellion (riot) and pleasures, to seeking the things of God, and especially the Holy Spirit!
 - c. Most "Christians" only dabble in yielding to the Holy Spirit because they want to continue to "dabble" in yielding to the desire for wine, beer and strong drink! God help us to get on one side or the other. Jesus said in Rev 3:15,16, "*thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art _____, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*"
 2. **1 Timothy 3:3** The question here is whether “*given*” can only mean “intoxicated” or “addicted” to something. Look at verse 2 where “*given to hospitality*” is not intended to mean “intoxicated” with it, but open, and welcoming it to happen in your daily life. **The Christian is commanded NOT to welcome drink into their life**, nor to be open to drinking AT ALL! In other words, don't even desire it!
 3. **1 Timothy 3:8** “*...not given to much wine*” is referring to home use where you CAN use old wine in medicinal uses, but the Christian is to be careful not to get used to having it in everything you eat and drink. People can abuse a drug that was meant to aid medicinally, and end up getting addicted to it - like modern kids “sniffing glue!” Glue is good to have around your home - but make sure that you don’t find yourself buying loads of it to sustain someone’s “habit!” The wine here is like the wine of Romans 14:21, (“*It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak*”), where the Deacon must be above question, and careful not to allow in his home what would cause others to stumble, including even grape juice. Remember, the same kind of "bottles" that held intoxicating wine, also would at other times hold fresh, grape juice. The problem would be for the new believer to discern whether "deacon so and so" was drinking alcohol, or new wine (the bottles weren't probably labelled).

4. **Titus 1:7** It is the same thing as **1Tim 3:3**, but especially notice the words “*not _____ to filthy lucre*” - if we can drink to moderation, then, as long as we are moderate about it, we can partake of filthy *lucre* (money obtained wrongfully)! The Bible is its own interpreter. The words "not given to" means "not desiring it, and not open to it."
 5. **Titus 2:3** “*not given to much wine.*” See **1 Tim 3:8** above. The problem here is whether a person is allowed to drink as long as "much" is not consumed. No - The command is that the older women of the passage were to resist the constant pressure of the day to turn to wine, and to teach the younger women GOOD things, to be SOBER, holy - **not how to drink!**
 6. **Acts 2:12,13** “*drunk with new wine*” - Those who doubted the supernatural nature of the events of Pentecost came up with some illogical conclusions about why it was happening:
 - a. Some said this was “crazy” (saying this event had no meaning).
 - b. Others thought they were **drunk** with “_____ *wine*,” which is only a derogatory statement. Nobody can get drunk on NEW wine because grape juice does not have any intoxication. It is like saying they were *drunk* because of drinking buttermilk - being unable to handle anything more than milk. The world just brands things that they don't understand as crazy, or immature. That's how they treat most of history, and the Bible.
 7. **1 Peter 4:3** “*excess of wine*” - This implies that as long as you don't get caught up in drinking wine “to excess” (where you get drunk), then you are right with God. According to **Ephesians 5:18**, the excess is IN the fermented wine to begin with - it is built into wine. The thing that Peter points out in this verse is that these Christians were no longer caught-up in the excess of wine - they had been saved, and their thirst for liquor had been converted to a thirst for God and His Holy Spirit! For further proof, look at verse 4, where the excess is found IN the “*rioting*”! Things that by nature are excessive include: **riot, murder, rape, and drink!!!**
 8. **John 2:1-11** “*the water that was made wine*” - This is usually where everyone refers when they want to justify their desire to drink alcoholic wine, never imagining that the wine these people were drinking might actually be just fresh grape juice!
 - a. Can you imagine Jesus showing up three days into a drunken binge, and offering them MORE liquor? Go on, think about it! Jesus would be violating His own rules if He gave His neighbour alcoholic “drink” (**Hab 2:15**).
 - b. Jesus made extra special tasting pure grape juice that was enjoyed by all the members of the wedding party because they still had their discerning senses even though they had been drinking “wine” for three whole days! They were not drunk with fermented alcoholic liquor, but were enjoying refreshing grape juice!
 - c. Jesus never drank wine that was mixed with anything else (**Mk 15:23**), but was always, only fresh from the vine (**Mk 14:25**)!
- H. **How To Overcome the Addiction, and Attraction to Liquor** - The following is a list of basic things a person has to do to win over the addiction of alcohol - for a more thorough study, contact your pastor.
1. **Accept** the fact that no one is born an alcoholic, but rather we are all born sinners, and therefore sin - some by drinking, and others by thieving, etc. Without the salvation that

Christ purchased on His cross, there is no victory available over drink or any other sin in your life!

2. **Get saved** (Mt 1:21; 11:28,29). You cannot win over addiction without the victorious power of Christ in your life! This cannot be over-emphasized: an alcoholic must not seek to become sober, or become a better husband, or anything but a defeated sinner who surrenders to the saving power of Jesus Christ (Rom 6:11; 10:13)! You must come to the living SAVIOUR, and only then will you find rest in your SOUL!
3. **Surrender** your entire life over to the Lordship of Jesus Christ (Mt 7:24-27) - Let HIM be the authority that tells you how to live your life - no longer live for your own appetites! Don't be a *slave* to your habits - instead, be a *prisoner* of Jesus Christ from now on (Eph 4:1)!
4. **Repent** of drink as a wicked and evil sin against both God, and the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is your body (1 Cor 3:17; 6:19,20). This means more than being sorry - it means forsaking the sin of drink, and replacing it with the Holy Spirit of God (Pr 28:13)!
5. **Replace** the drink with the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18). Fast and pray through the struggles of depression, anxiety, and nervousness that got you dependant upon drink in the first place! Seek God's Holy Spirit to fill each of those holes in your life that you used to try and fill with alcoholic drink! Progressively saturate your life with God's word in study, and with God's work, as you yield to right living! Remember, sin (even drink) "*shall not have _____ over you.* (Rom 6:14)"
6. **Become accountable** to a mature Christian who will help you through the times you used to rely on the liquor for. **This is a must.** You at least need a godly, Bible-preaching pastor to whom you can rely upon for straight biblical counsel, and rebuke when needed. You also need good friends who will be there when you struggle and want to give in.
7. **Get busy serving the Lord** in your life - quit having so much time to spend drinking, and get out dealing with people about Christ!

III. Brief Summary of Conclusions

- A. There are two kinds of wine - new (fresh squeezed) and old (alcoholic).
- B. God forbids and warns against the distribution of old wine, unless it is only for medicinal purposes.
- C. Jesus never drank old wine - He always drank it new, fresh from the grape.
- D. Drinking wine and strong drink "in moderation" is impossible for a Christian, just like committing adultery in moderation is impossible!
- E. Drinking beer is the same as drinking wine in God's eyes.
- F. The Christian who seeks to be filled with God's *Holy Spirit* MUST **abstain** (stay totally away) from *intoxicating "spirits"*.
- G. There is a CURE for addiction to alcohol - becoming a slave to nothing and nobody outside of Jesus Christ through His perfect word!
- H. Therefore, the only way out of addiction to alcohol is found in repentance, and surrender to Christ on a daily basis, seeking to be filled with the Spirit as you study, and live by the perfect words of the living God - the Bible!

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