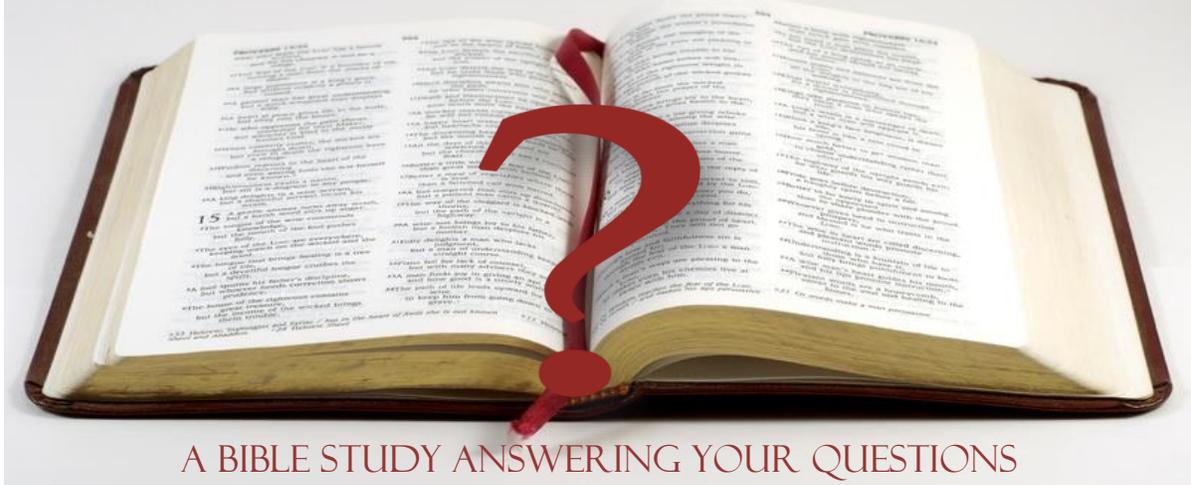


WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT...



Lesson 2

Alcohol, wine and the consumption of alcohol type beverages?

This topic stirs many debates. There are those who use Bible verses and arguments to support alcohol consumption, since Jesus himself drank wine...

The principles taught here will also apply to illegal drugs and or abuse of prescription drugs.

Then there are those who oppose drinking alcohol in any form as wrong and also have Bible verses to back it up.

I will present what the Bible says and show you how we use God's Word to teach solid principles.

There are Bible verses that seem to support allowance for consuming wine. We have to be careful not to suppose that positive statements in the Bible are an outright approval or acceptance of alcohol consumption.

Did wine in the Bible have "alcohol" in it? _____

(Answer, it did not have the chemical alcohol added, but it did "ferment" causing alcohol to develop naturally.)

If there were people who got "drunk" on wine, could they have gotten drunk on "grape juice"? _____

Did Jesus drink wine? _____

Did Jesus serve wine at the last supper and did the disciples drink it?

Did Jesus turn water into wine? _____

Should we assume that, since there are some verses that seem to allow consumption of alcohol (wine) that it is acceptable? _____

I am convinced that our teaching on the subject is completely supported in the Scripture however, I will try to present this in as balanced a manner as I can.

Here are some verses that seem to support consumption of wine:

1 Timothy 3:8 - "Deacons, in like manner, must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre."

1 Timothy 5:23 - "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." (Both sides use this text. One says that the text says it's acceptable to drink wine in moderation. The other says, "See. Paul had to tell Timothy to take wine medicinally because he would not use it otherwise.")

Genesis 27:28 Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:

Ecclesiastes 9:7 Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.

Psalms 104:14-15 He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; ¹⁵ And wine *that* maketh glad the heart of man, *and* oil to make *his* face to shine, and bread *which* strengtheneth man's heart.

Luke 7:34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

John 2:1-11 In these verses Jesus turns water into wine...

Titus 2:3 The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

John 2:10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now.

Proverbs 3:10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

Deuteronomy 7:13 And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

Genesis 14:18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

Information:

There are 231 references to wine in the Bible.

There are 22 verses in the bible that refer to strong drink. Every Bible reference to "strong drink" is a negative one, except one verse; Proverbs 31:6, that refers to giving strong drink to someone who is dying.

The above verses represent most of the Bible verses that seem to support consumption of wine.

There are far less verses in the Bible which support consumption of wine than condemn it.

One very important question to ask is, "Is today's wine the same as two thousand or more years ago"?

The answer to that is "no". Today, a chemical drug called alcohol is added to wine as part of the manufacturing process.

Unpasteurized, products like wine, apple cider, fruit juice etc... will ferment causing the beverage to have alcohol in it or it may turn to vinegar.

The OT uses three key words for wine in Hebrew:

1. *tiyrowsh* -- This word is translated "wine" in the KJV and "new wine" in some newer versions. It refers to the initial squeezings of juice from the grape, and is *rarely* used of fermented wine. Its newness is confirmed by its application as part of the firstfruits dedicated to God (Deut. 14:23) and by its grouping with agricultural products as a victim of drought (Hag. 1:1).

The term itself suggests something *non*-alcoholic.

2. *yayin* -- This word is translated "wine" in most versions. In most contexts we will see that it refers to a drink that had naturally occurring alcohol in it. (One important note: The percentage of alcohol was far less that what comes in wine today.).

Fresh (non-alcoholic) wine before fermenting was called *yayin mi-gat*, or "wine of the vat," or from the press, while older and fermented wine was called *yayin yashan*, or if it was much older, *yayin meyushshan* or *yashan noshan*. *Yayin* often referred to fresh grape juice.

Anywhere where *yayin* is condemned refers to alcoholic wine, but anyplace where it is approved refers to grape juice.

Finally, it should be noted that according to the rabbinic sources the *yayin mi-gat* was in it's unfermented stage for only three days.

3. *shekar* -- this word does not appear often, but is translated in the KJV as "strong drink." The root of this word comes from a word meaning to be tipsy and is associated with strong alcoholic drink. It appears to have been a product of dates rather than grapes.

So now here's our debate...

Is wine (Biblical wine) an alcoholic beverage? _____

(Answer - Yes and No - New wine was grape juice, old wine which had fermented had naturally occurring alcohol in it.)

Is it acceptable to drink alcohol in moderation? _____

(I think the best way to answer this, is, if we were drinking what was considered Biblical wine, it might be acceptable in moderation. However,

because wine is much stronger now, and there is ample evidence that even biblical wine was watered down much of the time, and, because we might cause a brother to stumble, it's wrong to drink wine or alcohol today.)

Here are verses that speak against consumption of alcohol:

I will shorten many of the verses for time sake...

Ephesians 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

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

Proverbs 23:29-35 ESV Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who tarry long over wine; those who go to try mixed wine. Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. In the end it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart utter perverse things. ...

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.*

Leviticus 10:9 Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: *it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations:*

1 Timothy 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, **sober**, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

Isaiah 5:11 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, *that* they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, *till* wine inflame them!

Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹ Envyings, murders, **drunkenness**, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Hosea 4:11 Whoredom and **wine and new wine** take away the heart.

Romans 13:13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness,
.....

Numbers 6:3 He shall separate *himself* from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.

Luke 21:34

Luke 1:15 (Speaking of John the Baptist) For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

Proverbs 23:20-21 Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: ²¹
For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.

1 Corinthians 6:10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

Isaiah 28:7

1 Corinthians 5:11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

Don't fellowship with a brother who is among other things, "a drunkard".

Ezekiel 44:21

Proverbs 23:20

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

Habakkuk 2:15 Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to *him*, and maketh *him* drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!

Daniel 1:8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

Judges 13:4

Titus 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, **not given to wine**, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

1 Corinthians 3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.

Isaiah 28:7 But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

Proverbs 21:17 He that loveth pleasure *shall be* a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.

Genesis 9:21 ESV / He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent.

Matthew 24:49 And shall begin to smite *his* fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

Isaiah 5:11-12 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, *that* they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, *till* wine inflame them! ¹² And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

Proverbs 23:31-32 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright. ³² At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

Deuteronomy 29:6 Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink: that ye might know that I *am* the LORD your God.

Numbers 6:1-27

Leviticus 10:8-11 And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying, ⁹ Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations:

1 Corinthians 6:19 ESV Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own,

Isaiah 28:1 Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!

Information:

Both beer and wine were known in Biblical times. Wine was made from pomegranates, dates, honey and apples as well as from grapes.

The Bible makes it clear that these fermented beverages were intoxicating (Genesis 9:21; Isaiah 29:9; Jeremiah 25:27). However, they were not as potent as modern beers and wines.

Wine had many uses in the Bible:

- Wine was a common beverage and part of the daily fare in Palestine (Judges 19:19, 2 Chronicles 11:11), including by Jesus (Matthew 11:19, Luke 5:38-39, Luke 7:34)
- Wine was used at weddings and celebrations (John 2:1-3).
- Wine was used in worship (Exodus 29:40, Leviticus 23:13, Numbers 15:5).
- Wine was used in trade and for payment of debts (2 Chronicles 2:10, Ezekiel 27:18, Amos 2:8)
- Wine was used as a medicine (2 Samuel 16:2, Proverbs 31:6, Mark 15:23, Luke 10:34, 1 Timothy 5:23)
- **Wine in the New Testament, seems to have been mixed with water much of the time, thus, wine was being used to purify the water.**

There is no commandment in the Bible that we must drink, and many individuals and groups abstained from alcohol (Numbers 6:2-4, Daniel 1:8, Jeremiah 35:1-7, Luke 1:13-15).

The apostle Paul warned against using the freedom to drink, or any similar freedom, in a way that would be offensive to others or cause them to stumble into sin (Romans 14:19-22).

Drunkenness is strongly opposed in both the Old and New Testaments:

Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, And whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise. (NASU, Proverbs 20:1)

"Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. (NIV, Luke 21:34)

Many churches approve of moderate and responsible use of alcoholic beverages. However, alcohol is a drug with great potential for abuse and addiction, and many denominations including Apostolic Pentecostals oppose all use of alcohol.

Questions:

- (1) What does God have to say about those who drink alcohol?
- (2) Why Satan loves it when you drink and get high?
- (3) Just because something is natural, that does not mean that it is good!
- (4) Did you know that those who use mind-altering substances are disqualified from being used by God?

And even though society tells you that drinking is fun, that people who drink are social and attractive, and that a little wine is good for your health, the Bible tells us something very different:

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

Isaiah 5:11, 22 "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink."

Hosea 4:11 "Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart."

HOW DOES GOD WANT US TO LIVE?

Titus 2:11-12 tells us, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, **denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.**

God does not want us to even spend time with people who are drunkards.

"1 Corinthians 5:11, 13 "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one, no, not to eat... therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

Ephesians 5:18, "And **be not drunk with wine**, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Holy Spirit."

WHY SATAN LOVES IT WHEN YOU DRINK AND GET HIGH?

Maybe you never thought of this, but you should know that drug use opens you up to spiritual attack. Some Native Indians used to use peyote and other "natural" substances to get high so that they could speak to their spiritual guides.

Those "guides" weren't angels of God; they were Satan's devils.

Satan will use drugs and alcohol to get a stronghold in your life.

He loves it when you drink and get high. Satan wants you to be off guard and hallucinating. There are specific demonic spirits associated with liquor and marijuana and cocaine and heroin, and opium, etc., and every time you use these substances, you could unknowingly be opening the doorway for these demonic spirits to come into your life.

Ephesians 6:12 warns us of such things: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Satan loves it when you drink alcohol and use drugs because you are then in no shape to fight against his attacks. You are leaving yourself wide open to demonic possession.

And Satan loves it when you drink alcohol and use drugs because he knows that with your inhibitions lowered and your judgment gone, you will sin and get into things that you would have avoided had you not been intoxicated.

How many people have been killed because of drunk drivers?

How many babies have been aborted because two drunken strangers had sex that they later regretted?

How many men and women have committed crimes against their neighbors and friends because they had to get some money for a quick fix?

God's Word warns against these things. Romans 13:12-14, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: **but**

put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."

Isaiah 28:7, "But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink. They are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment."

Does satan love the way you drink and get high? Are you living sober? Are you on guard? Remember Ephesians 6:11 instructs you to "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

So if you are struggling with sin in different areas of your life, ask yourself, "Am I leaving the door wide open for satan by the things I involve myself with?" And ask yourself, "Do I treat my body like the temple of the Holy Spirit or more like a temple of devils?"

JUST BECAUSE SOMETHING IS NATURAL, THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT IT IS GOOD!

Eventually someone always brings up a certain verse to try to say that getting high by smoking weed is okay because "the Bible says that God made herb and that it is good."

I have even had a couple of teens specifically show me a verse in Genesis to try to justify their getting high.

The verse is Genesis 1:11-12, which reads, "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good."

First of all, the "herb" or "grass" that this verse makes reference to is talking about the plants which are food for man and cattle and other beasts (**not marijuana**). (Refer to Genesis 1:29-30, Exodus 12:8, Deuteronomy 11:15, 1 Kings 18:5, Proverbs 15:17, Romans 14:2).

Secondly, just because God made something, that does not mean that He wants you to use that thing in a way that would harm yourself or others.

God made many mushrooms that spring forth out of the ground and are poisonous. Do you think God wants you to eat these poisonous mushrooms? God made poisonous fish like the "puffer fish" that can kill you if you eat it... Does God want you to eat it?

When Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, there was a tree there that God had created. It was the tree that bore the fruit that would reveal knowledge about good and evil. It was a tree pleasant to the eye. It was also a tree that God told Adam and Eve to stay away from. God created this tree, but He did not want His children to have anything to do with it.

But satan came along and whispered in Eve's ear and told her that the fruit from this tree would make her wise and that eating from the tree would not harm her. Foolishly, instead of listening to God's instructions, Eve listened to the devil. We all know what happened next.

How many of you foolishly believe the devil's lie that smoking weed will give you knowledge, for example, make you more creative? How many of you are deceiving yourselves by saying, "but it is natural"? The forbidden tree in the Garden of Eden was "natural," too.

How many of you are trying to prove something to your so-called friends and fit in with them instead of heeding God's warning to stay away from those substances that alter your behavior and damage your mind?

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS DISQUALIFY YOU FROM BEING USED BY GOD!

Don't you want to be used by God? How can God use you as a witness to others if you have no self-control, are setting a bad example to others, and are behaving just like the world by drinking and getting high? **God's Word tells us that for us to be used by God, we must be sober and avoid intoxicating substances.**

Titus 1:7-8, "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine...But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just holy temperate.

Titus 2:2-6, "That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children... Young men likewise exhort to be soberminded.

This is what God's Word tells us about a great man of God, John the Baptist: Luke 1:15-16, "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.'

And this is what another great man of God, Daniel, did when given the opportunity to drink wine: Daniel 1:8, "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank."

These men were used by God in a mighty way. God was able to use them because they did not defile their bodies or minds with alcohol or drugs. Do you think anyone would have listened to John the Baptist or Daniel or the disciples if they would have been hanging out at the bar during happy hour and getting drunk?

Should Christians Drink Alcohol?

[Drinking in the Bible] befuddled the mind (Isa 28:7), prevented rulers from acting wisely in their roles as lawmakers and judges (Prov 31:4-5), caused sorrow and quarreling (23:29-35), and led to outright humiliation, as the drunken behavior of Noah and Lot illustrates (Gen 9:21; 19:30-38)." (Elwell, Walter, ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd edition. "The Drinking of Alcohol," pp. 40-42. Grand Rapids: Baker Books House Company, 2001).

This is precisely what the writer of Proverbs 20 referred to when he warned that *sekar* ("strong drink" in the KJV) is "raging" and that it easily deceives (Proverbs 20:1).

John MacArthur, a bestselling author, pastor, and theologian, offers up a third view, namely that the wine in the Bible, while mostly fermented, was done so at a much lower concentration. In fact, positive uses of wine in the Scriptures were to purify water. According to MacArthur, early Christians "drank [wine] diluted because it purified the water. In fact, in the early church an interesting note: unmixed wine was found unacceptable. Always it had to be mixed with water." ("What is the right Christian stand on drinking?" by John MacArthur).

The Apostle Paul says drunkenness originates from one's sinful nature (Galatians 5:21). He says Christians are not to be drunk with wine, but rather be "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18).

So, although there are some verses in the Bible that seem to support drinking wine in moderation, there are far more verses that clearly teach against consuming alcohol.

I teach, based on thorough study of the Bible that we should not consume any alcohol.

After all, Jesus at the last supper said: **Matthew 26:29** But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

I think we ought to agree to the same...

After all, wouldn't it be better that we abstain from alcohol in light of the Word of God. Second, we should not be the cause of others falling because we drank it. Lastly, since Jesus pledged that He wouldn't drink it till He drinks it "new with us in His Father's kingdom" can't we wait till then.

Bible Study: Pastor Warren Tryon