

1. The conclusions will not be uniformly clear.

Romans 14

Romans 14:22-23 *The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.*

2. How you answer the following key questions may determine your conclusion:

a. How dissimilar were the common wines in antiquity to modern alcoholic drinks?

b. Does the Bible speak positively about alcoholic beverages because of alcoholic euphoria or flavor/safety/hydration?

c. Which other biblical principles should be applied?

3. If you reach the conclusion that you may drink in moderation, study the biblical line very carefully.

4. Regardless of your personal conclusion, take seriously your role as God's light in a culture of drunkenness.

Introduction: this issue is unique, challenging, controversial, relevant, personal, and serious.

Alcohol in the Bible

1. Positive references to alcoholic beverages
a. In the Old Covenant laws

Ex. 29:40; Lev. 23:13; Numbers 15, 18, 28

Deuteronomy 14:22-27

b. As a provision of God for Israel.

Gen. 14:28-30; Judg. 19:19; 1 Sam. 15:18; 2 Sam. 16:1-2

Deuteronomy 7:13; Jer. 40:12; Amos 9:13-15; Zech. 9:17; Proverbs 3:10

Isaiah 55:1 *Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost.*

Proverbs 9:2

Psalms 104:10-17

Judges 9:13; Ecclesiastes 9:7; Zechariah 9:15, 10:7

Proverbs 31:6 *Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to him whose life is bitter.*

c. For all people in the Messianic promises.

Isaiah 25:6 *The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine.*

d. In the earthly ministry of Jesus.

John 2:1-11

Luke 7:33-34

Luke 22:18; Mark 14:25; Matthew 26:29

e. In the teaching for New Covenant believers

1 Timothy 5:23 *No longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.*

2. Negative references to alcoholic beverages or drunkenness

a. Examples of voluntary abstinence.

Numbers 6; cf. Jeremiah 35

b. Drinking alcohol as an illustration of receiving judgment from God.

Psalms 75:8; Revelation 14:10

c. Real-life stories of the damage from drunkenness.

Genesis 9, 19, etc.

d. General warnings.

Proverbs 23:32 *at the last it bites like a serpent And stings like a viper.* (cf. Isaiah 28:1-8, Prov. 23:20-35)

e. Warnings about specific aspects of alcohol's influence.

- i. Don't drink in a way that lowers your self-control and moral sensibility (Gen. 19:32).
- ii. Don't drink in a way that influences you to be a mocker (the most hopeless category of person in Proverbs) (Prov. 20:1).
- iii. Don't drink in a way that turns you into a quarrelsome brawler (Prov. 20:1).
- iv. Don't drink in such a way that you begin to love alcohol (Prov. 21:17).
- v. Don't associate with heavy drinkers of wine (Prov. 23:20; Matt. 24:49; 1 Cor. 5:11).
- vi. Don't drink in a way that leads you to lose control of your speech, such as complaining, arguing, or saying perverse things (Prov. 23:29-30, 33).
- vii. Don't linger long over wine (Prov. 23:30).

- viii. Don't drink in a way that makes you forget important things (Prov. 31:4-5).
- ix. Don't drink in a way that makes you pervert the rights of others (Prov. 31:4-5; Is. 5:22-23; Joel 3:3).
- x. Don't drink in a way that keeps you away from home (Hab. 2:5).
- xi. Don't drink in a way that distracts you from the LORD (Is. 5:11-12).
- xii. Don't try to be a "hero" or "valiant" in drinking or mixing alcoholic drinks (Is. 5:21-22).
- xiii. Don't be overcome with wine (Is. 28:1).
- xiv. Don't drink in a way that causes you to be confused or lose understanding (Is. 28:7; Jer. 25:16; Prov. 23:29-30, 33; Hos. 4:11).
- xv. Don't drink in a way that leads to a loss of physical control (Is. 28:7).
- xvi. Don't drink in a way that hinders your leadership, work, or other responsibilities (Jer. 13:13; Lev. 10:8-11; Prov. 31:4-5; Is. 28:7; 1 Tim. 3:1-8).
- xvii. Don't drink enough to make yourself sick (Hos. 7:5; Is. 19:14).
- xviii. Don't drink in a way that lowers your commitment to modesty (Hab. 2:15-16; Genesis 9:21).
- xix. Don't participate in drinking parties (1 Pet. 4:3-4).

f. Drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Cor. 6:9-10 *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators ... nor drunkards ... will inherit the kingdom of God.*

Gal. 5:19-21 *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these ... 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.*