

# What God's Word says about: Christians, Alcohol & Addictions; Gray Areas, Sin & Sanctification; Liberty & Legalism

Romans 14; Proverbs & Ephesians 5:18

As believers, God offers through His Word an entire philosophy of how to please God in the realm of gray areas, questionable things, liberty, and legalism; and all in the context of drinking alcohol and any other substance that takes away our ability to think clearly. That is our opening topic at the Q&A session Sunday night, Lord willing.

Whenever we seek an answer to what God says about any subject, our attitude must always be like the Bereans of **Acts 17:11**. They searched the Scriptures to see if what PAUL said was accurate. That is amazing. They did not just figure that if the big guy up front said something it MUST be Biblical.

## Alcohol & God's Servants

First off to answer this question I must confess that I do not drink alcohol in any form, by conviction. My convictions based on God's Word are:

1. First, I don't drink because **God always condemns drunkenness** in any and every form in His Word, so I want to stay away from participating in or encouraging others to participate in what God condemns.
2. Second, I don't drink because **God commanded that any priest who came before Him in the Tabernacle or Temple was not to drink**. Alcohol kept priests from being able to distinguish between holy & unholy, and clean & unclean (Lev. 10:9-10). So I never want to miss what God calls both holy and unholy.
3. Third, I don't drink because **God said that those who lead His people are to not drink** so that they aren't under any wrong influence when they make decisions. Alcohol diminishes a leader's ability to lead wisely (Pr. 31:4-5).
4. Fourth, I don't drink because **God led Paul to say that he would limit his freedom, and never eat meat or drink alcohol (Rom. 14:21) if it caused any believer to veer off God's path**, and I do not want my choices to make earnest or weak believers veer away from God.
5. Fifth, I don't drink because **God contrasts alcohol with the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18, I want to be known as a man that seeks the influence of the Holy Spirit, not alcohol**.
6. Sixth, I don't drink because **God said that elders have a higher standard than deacons or others in the church**. Normal believers are to never get drunk; and deacons are not to be drawn or given to wine; but elders are called to not stand near wine in I Timothy 3:3. The way to interpret what Paul meant was seen in his

best friend Timothy's life. Paul had to plead with him to use a little wine medicinally in I Timothy 5:23 because Timothy also wanted to obey God and not be near wine.

7. Finally, I don't drink because of ***our whole beer drinking, bar hopping, clubbing society that portrays alcohol almost always with things that displease God***, I do not want to: walk, stand, or sit with those that mock God (Psalm 1); nor befriend the world's ungodly cultural form of drinking (James 4:4-8); nor get conformed to the world (Rom. 12:2); nor love this tool the world uses (I John 2:15-17) to enslave so many, destroy so many, and lead so many into sin.

So those are my personal convictions as a Citizen of Heaven, living here on Earth.

Alcohol is portrayed in God's Word like many other things: both positively and negatively. Like a river many things, if: kept within God's boundaries they are wonderful, outside the boundaries they are destructive and damnable.

**Alcohol as described in the Scriptures:** God's Word mentions drinking what we would call wine or beer 256 x (199 times in a positive way, and 57 times in a negative way).

**First:** Alcohol has positive effects. Proverbs 31:6 "give strong drink to"; I Timothy 5:23 "a little wine for stomach". Also the joy of the harvest, new wine, wedding feast where Jesus made wine and people observed they had "saved the best" (John 2:10).

**Second:** Alcohol's negative effects can lead to eternal destruction, and anyone who surrenders to alcohol, or any other mind-altering substance (drugs, chemicals) is part of the list of those who have become dominated by sin and not Christ and thus are slaves to sin (and not to Christ) and thus are eternally damned.

Galatians 5:19-21 (NKJV) Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, <sup>21</sup> envy, murders, **drunkenness**, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

### ***Alcohol as to the strength or concentration in Biblical & Modern times:***

Wine was the most intoxicating drink known in ancient times. All the wine was light wine, i.e. not fortified with extra alcohol. Concentrated alcohol was only known in the Middle Ages when the Arabs invented distillation ("alcohol" is an Arabic word) so what is now called liquor or strong drink (i.e. whiskey, gin, vodka, etc.) and the twenty per cent fortified wines were unknown in Bible times. Beer was brewed by various methods, but its alcoholic content was light. [TWOT, (vol. 1, p. 865)].

The strength of natural wines is limited by two factors. The percentage of alcohol will be half of the percentage of the sugar in the juice. And if the alcoholic content is much above 10 or 11 percent, the yeast cells are killed and fermentation ceases. Probably ancient wines were 7-10 per cent. Drunkenness therefore was of course an

ancient curse, but alcoholism was not as common or as severe as it is today. And in an agricultural age, its effects were less deadly than now. Still, even then it had its dangers and Proverbs 20:1 and 23:29-35 are emphatic in their warnings. (T.W.O.T., p. 376)

How does our alcohol today compare with wine back then? According to the Alcohol Council Information Center:

Beer has 4% alcohol; wine has 9-11% alcohol; brandy has 15-20% alcohol; and liquor has between 40-50% alcohol (80-100 proof).

“The wine that was consumed in biblical times was not what we know as wine today. It was more of a concentrated grape juice with its intoxicating properties basically removed. You cannot defend wine-drinking today on the basis of wine-drinking in Bible times because the two are totally different.” (Living in the Spirit, p. 31, John MacArthur)

## **The Conclusion of God's Word on Alcohol & God's Servants**

**#1: God's Word always condemns drunkenness.** Drunkenness, and ongoing enslavement to drunkenness called alcoholism, is always condemned in God's Word as a mark of pagans, lost and foolish people, and deserving of eternal destruction.

In God's Word drunkenness is associated with tragedy. Whenever the Bible talks about drunkenness it shows that it is the manifestation of depravity. Every illustration of drunkenness in the Bible meets with disaster:

- **Noah** became drunk and in his nakedness acted shamelessly (Gen. 9:21);
- **Lot** became drunk and his daughters committed incest with him (Gen. 19:30-36);
- **Nabal** became drunk and at a crucial time God took his life (1 Sam. 25:36-37);
- **Elah** became drunk and he was murdered by Zimri (1 Kings 16:9-10);
- **Ben-hadad** and all of his allied kings became drunk, and all were slaughtered except Ben-hadad who escaped (1 Kings 20:16-21);
- **Belshazzar** became drunk and had his kingdom ripped right out from under him (Dan. 5); the
- **Corinthians** became drunk at the Lord's table and the Lord made some of them sick and some He executed (1 Cor. 11:21-34). Drunkenness in the Bible is always associated with terrible things – unrestrained living, immorality, dissolute behavior, and reckless, wild behavior.

**#2: God's Word teaches that drunkenness disqualifies a man from spiritual service.** Remember that drunkenness is always described as a sin, and any tendencies towards that sin, are disqualifiers from spiritual services.

In the Old Testament, priests were not to drink when they were involved in any way with the worship of the Tabernacle or Temple. The lapse and severe judgment that

Nadab & Abihu experienced in **Leviticus 10**, made a statute for priests from then on. They offered the sacrifices “under the influence”, did so “strangely” and God struck them dead.

In fact, the standard is so high for NT leaders that Paul goes so far as to note two aspects about an elder.

- First in **1 Timothy 3:2-3, 8** Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, **temperate**<sup>1</sup>, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, **3 not given to drunkenness**<sup>2</sup>, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. **8** Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain.
- Then in **Titus 1:7** Since an overseer is entrusted with God’s work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, **not given to drunkenness**<sup>3</sup>, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.

### ***#3: God's Word teaches that drunkenness is not a part of a citizen of heaven while on earth.***

- First, God says that if someone claims to be a believer and is a drunkard, expel them from the fellowship of the Church in **1 Corinthians 5:9-13** I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—**10** not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. **11** But now I am writing you that **you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler.** With such a man do not even eat. **12** What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? **13** God will judge those outside. **“Expel the wicked man from among you.”**
- Second, God says that drunkenness is a sign of lostness and of a life heading to eternal destruction in **1 Corinthians 6:9-11** Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders **10** nor thieves nor the greedy **nor drunkards** nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. **11** And **that is what some of you were.** But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
- Thirdly, drunkenness (or alcoholism) is never to be a part of the life of a citizen of Heaven. in fact, in **Galatians 5:19-21** we can note the very sobering words: “shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.” So is drunkenness (alcoholism) a sickness or disease, or is it a sin? It is a sin that leads to physical deterioration and dependence. But God can save and change. Galatians 5:19-21 (NKJV) Now the

---

<sup>1</sup> nephalion – temperate or “unaffected by, not using”; this verb speaks of abstaining from wine or anything else that clouds the senses. The emphasis is upon staying alert. In Classical Greek this word was used for abstinence from alcohol.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7: me paroinon – “not drunken” or “not beside wine, staying near”.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7: me paroinon – “not drunken” or “not beside wine, staying near”.

works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,<sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,<sup>21</sup> envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

- Finally, God's Word speaks of drunkenness in a believer's life as being in the past tense in **1 Peter 4:3** For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, **drunkenness**, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. Conclusion from these three passages: drunkenness is a disqualifying sin and a damning lifestyle.

#4: Recreational drinking with lost people who drink to drunkenness is not what pleases God in our lives.

- With 18 million Americans alcoholics or drunkards, as the Scriptures not so softly call them; and with 81% Roman Catholics and 64% Protestants not opposed to drinking. And, with the constant need to teach doctrine for us to live by, we are considering the Christian and alcohol – should drinking alcohol have a place in our lives? Here's an inspired snapshot of a drunkard; and God by inspiration describes him.
- So, God's Word in the Old Testament teaches: **drunkenness is sinful**, displeasing to God, and not to be a part of His servants lives; **social drinking is unhealthy for our spiritual lives** (frequenting bars where people go to get intoxicated, since it is a place they go to sin, and because the atmosphere is not encouraging sanctification but discouraging it: Psalm 1 says we who love the Lord are not to walk, stand, or sit in the "way of sinners"; and **drinking undiluted wine is not godly** as Proverbs 23:31 = straight 7=10% wine. So those are Old Testament principles that governed until the time of Christ.
  - Proverbs 20:1 Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is **led astray** by them is not wise.
  - Proverbs 23:20-21 Do not **join those who drink too much wine** or gorge themselves on meat, 21 for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags.
  - Proverbs 23:29-35 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaints? Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? 30 Those who **linger over wine, who go to sample bowls of mixed wine**. 31 Do not gaze at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly! 32 In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper. 33 Your eyes will see strange sights and your mind imagine confusing things. 34 You will be like one sleeping on the high seas, lying on top of the rigging. 35 "They hit me," you will say, "but I'm not hurt! They beat me, but I don't feel it! When will I wake up so I can find another drink?"

- Proverbs 31:4-7 “It is not for kings, O Lemuel—not for kings to drink wine, not for rulers to crave beer, 5 lest they drink and forget what the law decrees, and deprive all the oppressed of their rights. 6 Give beer to those who are **perishing**, wine to those who are in **anguish**; 7 let them drink and forget their poverty and remember their misery no more.

## APPENDIX:

Quickly – What about the controversy when people (believers often) say that I am not drunken, I am just drinking. The church has within this family of God those who say drinking in moderation is okay, others who say any amount of alcohol is sin. The two sides within the church are poles apart. Is there any clear teaching from the Scriptures on this matter?

Yes, and it is biblical, logical and powerful.

Not because I said so, or the church said so, but the Bible does not forbid wine. However, it gives specific guidelines to follow. To drink you must first answer these questions with me –

Are we talking about the same type of alcoholic beverage? Quoting from MacArthur Study Guide (Living in the Spirit p. 10). The biblical words for wine:

1. OINOS/YAYIN – The most common word in the New Testament for wine is the Greek word oinos. It is a word that simply refers to the juice of grapes. In fact, this word was used to refer to the grape as it hung on the vine – “hanging wine.” The word oinos was a general word and didn’t specify whether the wine was fermented or unfermented. It just simply referred to the juice of the grape – any kind. The Old Testament equivalent to oinos is the Hebrew word yayin, and is used 141 times. The root for the word yayin means to “bubble up” or “boil up.” According to The Jewish Encyclopedia (1901), yayin means “mixed wine.” This mixing was not with other wine but usually with water. Sometimes it was mixed with honey, herbs, or myrrh; but even then, it could also be mixed with water. Even though oinos was a general word for wine, it also predominately has to do with wine mixed with water.
2. GLEUKOS/TIROSH = new wine or fresh wine still fermenting, just out of the grape, without refrigeration, would ferment very rapidly and was potentially intoxicating. Now if the wine had just been taken from the grape, it obviously wouldn’t be fermented. But the word gleukos, or “new wine,” referred to wine that could have been days, weeks, or a few months from absolute freshness – and would still be fermenting. The Old Testament word for “new wine” is the Hebrew word tirosh. In Hosea 4:11 it says that “new wine” (tirosh) could create drunkenness. So, “new wine,” tirosh or gleukos, could create drunkenness.
3. SIKERA/SHAKAR – Shakar is the Old Testament Hebrew word for “strong drink” and means “unmixed.” The equivalent Greek word in the New Testament is sikera.

So – There are various biblical words and they can mean fermented and unfermented.

They are used often interchangeably in the 256 biblical references to wine.

Now, let's go to the further study of what they drank then. To prepare you to for the historical data – let me say wine then does not always equal wine/alcohol today!

Why? Some wine in Old and New Testament times was unfermented and un-intoxicating! Professor Samuel Lee, of Cambridge University, says that **yayin** [Hebrew word] or **oinos [Greek word] for** ("mixed wine") does not refer only to intoxicating liquor made by fermentation, but more often refers to a thick, un-intoxicating syrup or jam produced by boiling to make it storable. Boiling caused evaporation of the liquid. When the liquid was gone, the fermentation capacity was lost, and a storable type of paste was left. This was the most common way of storing wine because it was not as bulky as the liquid wine would be. So he concludes, "Mixed wine in ancient times was either intoxicating wine mixed with spices or more often a thick, un-intoxicating syrup or jam produced by boiling to make it possible to be stored."

So, just to say they drank so I can isn't valid. Now, what about #2?

1. Fermented Wine

**#1 – What was it they drank in Bible times?**

In Bible time, there were two kinds of wine available:

1. un-intoxicating
2. intoxicating

On the first type, this was

- fresh grape juice
- boiled grape paste

But, the presence of intoxicating wine is everywhere in the scriptures. That's why it is referred to 256 times. 199 times positive, 57 times negative

Now, a recent survey showed:

- 81 % of Roman Catholics drink
- 64 % of Protestants drink

We know drunkenness "anytime that the alcohol takes over the faculties of a person."

The point is wine today is not necessarily the same as wine consumed in Bible times. Let's look at fermented wine.

Usually diluted with water

*Christianity Today*, (6/20/75) Robert Stein: "The liquid wine which was used on a daily basis would be stored in large jugs called amphorae. From the amphora, they would draw out the pure unmixed wine and pour it into large



bowls called kraters, where it was mixed with water. From these kraters, it would be then poured into the kylix, or cups. They never served wine directly from the amphora to the kylix without first being mixed with water in the krater. In other words, they didn't serve unmixed wine. And according to history, the mixture could be anywhere from 20:1 to 3:1."

Only uncivilized people drank it straight –

Unmixed was barbaric – Drinking unmixed wine was looked upon, even by unsaved people, as barbarian. Robert Stein in his article quotes Mnesitheus of Athens as quoted by Athenaeus: "The gods have revealed wine to mortals, to be the greatest blessing for those who use it aright, but for those who use it without measure, the reverse. For it gives food to them that take it and strength in mind and body. In medicine it is most beneficial; it can be mixed with liquid and drugs and it brings aid to the wounded. In daily intercourse, to those who mix and drink it moderately, it gives good cheer; but if you overstep the bounds, it brings violence. Mix it half and half, and you get madness; unmixed, bodily collapse."

MacArthur Study Guide on Ephesians, (Living in the Spirit p. 10): "So, as a beverage, **wine was always thought of as a mixed drink**. The ratio of water might vary, but **only barbarians drank it unmixed**. Even a 1:1 mixture was considered to be "strong drink" and was frowned upon. The point is this: **unmixed wine was unacceptable to that culture**.

So what is the answer to "What was it they drank in Bible times?"

1. Sometimes, unfermented grape juice
2. Often, diluted wine
3. Barbarians or those acting like it, only full strength wine

Quickly, let's conclude with –

The answer to question #1 – **Are we thinking about the same thing today as what they drank?**

No

So, just to drink wine, beer and stronger because they did is not valid!

Now you may ask – is it a disease? No, God describes it as a chosen sin (1 Cor. 6:9). Just as sodomy is not a result of poor family life, it's a choice.

**So – drunkenness is a chosen sin that leads to physical deterioration and dependence.**

Does God hate that sin? Yes. But He loves the sinner.

Ezk. 36:26 – wants to give new heart and enabling

Ps. 103 – wants to forgive, forget, and remove sin

Is. 48:18 – O had hearkened, Peace as river, Righteousness as waves

But so many (20 million) in USA take this dreadful imitation of peace, following a false road to happiness and forsaking God's offer of casting all cares on Him to be cared for (1 Pet. 5:7).

## Romans 14 & Questionable Things

In Romans 14 Paul explains how to co-exist with believers who have all different degrees of convictions that extend beyond what the Scriptures plainly say. Here is his explanation:

1. Romans 14:1-13 ***In Christ we are under the Law of Liberty.*** We as believers don't judge the convictions of others, instead, we receive them with understanding.
  - v. 1: We as brothers & sisters will differ.
  - v. 4: We each will stand before God to answer for ourselves, not others. Therefore, don't judge those whose convictions differ from yours.
  - v. 5: We must each be fully convinced in our own minds of what God has directed us to do.
  - v. 6: We each serve God in what we do.
  - v. 10: We must trust in Christ's judgment, not our own.
2. Romans 14:14-23 ***In Christ we are under the Law of Love.*** We are to intentionally build up one another and not intentionally grieve each other.
3. Romans 15:1-7 ***In Christ we are to Bear Each other's burdens, following Christ's Example.***

Questionable things: In deciding about whether or not to participate in any behavior that is doubtful, the following principles make a good checklist to follow.

1. **Expediency: Is this activity one that profits me for eternity or just for a moment?** "All things are lawful for me," Paul says, "but not all things are profitable," or expedient (1 Cor. 6:12). Is what I want to do helpful and useful, or only desirable?
2. **Edification: Will this activity strengthen or weaken my spiritual life?** Will I be built up and matured in Christ; will I become spiritually stronger? "All things are lawful, but not all things edify" (1 Cor. 10:23).
3. **Exaltation: Is this activity clearly described as a pathway to magnifying God?** Will the Lord be lifted up and glorified in what I do? God's glory and exaltation should be the supreme purpose behind everything we do. "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31).
4. **Evangelism: Will this activity increase my evangelistic ability or decrease it?** Is my testimony going to be helped or hindered? Will unbelievers be drawn to Christ or turned away from Him by what I am doing? Will it help me conduct

myself “with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity” (Col. 4:5)?

5. **Example: Will others who seek to follow my example be helped or hindered by this activity?** Are we setting the right example for others, especially for weaker brothers and sisters? If we emulate Christ, others will be able to emulate us, to follow our example (1 Tim. 4:12).
6. **Excess: Is this activity a weight that can trip me up that needs to be laid aside?** Is the activity or habit necessary, or is it merely an extra that is not really important? Is it perhaps only an encumbrance that we should willingly give up (Heb. 12:1)?
7. **Emulation: Is this activity something that Jesus would do or not do?** “The one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked” (1 John 2:6). If we are doing what Christ would do, our action not only is permissible but good and right. 4

## Justification: The Greatest Doctrine In the Bible

The theological term for salvation by grace, through the sacrifice of Christ Jesus on the Cross, is justification by faith. Justification is the "**act of God whereby He declares the believing sinner righteous in Christ on the basis of the finished work of Christ on the cross**". Each piece of this definition must be considered carefully.

First, justification is an act of God, not a process in our lives. Justification has no degrees; each believer gets the same righteous standing before God.

Next, God alone can justify, we are helpless and can only believe. But, justification does not mean that God makes us righteous, but that He declares us righteous. Justification is the legal recording of Christ's righteousness onto the record of our life, and the record of our sinfulness onto Him. Nothing can change this legal event.

Finally, justification begins sanctification. Sanctification is the life-long process whereby God makes each believer more and more Christ-like. Our sanctification will vary from day to day, but our justification never varies. The moment we trusted Christ, God declares us righteous, and His declaration can never be repealed. Once justified, God forever looks at us as if we had never sinned!

Just before we read what Paul wrote, may I again remind you of the two sides of the coin of salvation. We could call the two sides faith and works as James does. Another way would be to use Paul's words from Romans—justification and sanctification. To best understand what Paul is asking us to do in Colossians let me contrast and explain justification and sanctification.

- **Justification** is what Christ did for me on the cross--  
**sanctification** is what Christ is doing in me because of the cross.
- **Justification** is immediate and was completely finished in me the instant I was saved—**sanctification** is an ongoing process never completed on earth until I meet Jesus face to face at death or His coming.
- **Justification** is activated the moment I trust in the Person of Christ Jesus and His finished sacrifice of the cross—**sanctification** grows with each obedient choice I make empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- **Justification** is my position declared right in God's sight—**sanctification** is my practice made right by becoming more conformed to His image.

As we were saved only by the accomplishment of Christ's sacrifice on the cross—so we live each day 'by faith' (the same faith by which we were saved). We are always dependent upon Christ's gracious death upon the cross that saves and keeps us!

**"Sanctification** is a process—the process of becoming more like Christ, of growing in holiness. This process begins the **instant you** are converted and will not end until **you** meet Jesus face-to-face. Through the work of His Spirit, through the power of His word and fellowship with other believers, God peels away **our** desires

for sin, renews **our** minds, and changes **our** lives. Sanctification is **about our own choices and behavior** . It involves work. Empowered by God's Spirit, we strive. **We fight sin. We study Scripture and pray, even when we don't feel like it. We flee temptation. We press on; we run hard in the pursuit of holiness.**<sup>5</sup>

Colossians 3 is built around 14 imperative commands. Remember that **God never commands me to do what He hasn't already given me the grace to accomplish by faith through His Spirit!**

"Our participation in the process of **sanctification** comes only after we've been totally accepted and made right before God through faith in Jesus. **So yes, we work hard at obeying God's word. We read our Bibles. We pray. We meditate on Scripture. We memorize Scripture. We share the gospel. We serve in our church. We fast. God commands us in His Word to do many things, and our obedience is both pleasing to Him and brings His blessing to our lives. But not one adds to our justification, our standing before God, our eternal life. Only grace sustains lasting change and sanctification** . Through the cross we overcome not only the guilt of sin, but the power of sin as well<sup>6</sup>.

<b>SALVATION</b>	<b>SANCTIFICATION</b>
<i>Romans 3:21–5:21 &amp; Galatians 1:4:</i>	<i>Romans 6–8 &amp; Galatians 2:20</i>
who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,	"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
<b>Substitution:</b> He died for me	<b>Identification:</b> I died with Him
He died <i>for</i> my sins	He died <i>unto</i> sin
He paid sin's penalty	He broke sin's power
<b>Justification:</b> righteousness is imputed (put to my account)	<b>Sanctification:</b> righteousness is imparted (made a part of my life)
<b>I WAS Saved</b> by His death	<b>I AM Saved</b> by His life

<sup>5</sup> C. J. Mahaney, *The Cross Centered Life*, Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2002, p. 31-34.

<sup>6</sup> C. J. Mahaney, *The Cross Centered Life*, Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2002, p. 31-34.

**If.....** it came in pill form, it would be called a tranquilizer. It would be available by prescription only. The prescription bottle would bear warning labels: "Causes drowsiness--do not take this drug while operating machinery." "Do not use this drug if you are pregnant." Since it effects every system in the body, it would be inadvisable to consume if you have any health concerns, especially diabetes, liver, or heart disease. You would be given only a small supply at a time. You would be cautioned to watch for potentially serious side effects, and advised to discontinue its use if you experienced any. Your dosage would be carefully monitored, and you would be watched for signs of abuse or addiction. Instead, this drug, a central nervous system (CNS) depressant, is freely available, self-administered, and widely abused, regardless of potentially deadly short and long-term effects. It is addictive. It carries no warning labels, and its manufacturers spend millions yearly to promote its use.

***What is it?***

**Alcohol... $C_2H_5OH$ , ethanol, booze,  
liquid courage, social lubricant...**

Rev10/99

***What are the effects of alcohol?***

The effects of alcohol are related to dose, rate of intake, body size and percentage of body fluid, expectations, social environment, physical conditions (disease or more common hormonal cycles or sleepiness can be factors), enzyme differences, concentration of alcohol in a drink and whether carbonated mixes were used.

Most individuals can tolerate one standard drink per hour with no significant impairment if of average weight and in good health. To make educated decisions about drinking, the following chart can help with estimating a blood alcohol level.

Please note: Do not use this chart to see how much you can consume before you are "legally drunk." State Laws for DUI/DWI vary, but many states can arrest under-age drinkers for any Blood Alcohol Reading (BAL) or "of-age" drinkers whose driving is impaired but their BAL is under the legal limit which is 0.08 in North Carolina.

### **Calculation of Estimated Blood Alcohol Level (BAL)**

**Body Weight:** Calculations are for people with a normal body for their height, free of drugs or other affecting medication and neither unusually thin nor obese.

#### **Drink Equivalents**

- 1 DRINK =** 1.25 oz rum, rye, scotch, brandy, gin, vodka, etc.
- = 1 12-oz bottle of domestic beer
- = 3.5 oz fortified wine
- = 5.5 oz unfortified/table wine

**Using the chart:** Find the appropriate figure using the proper chart (male or female), body weight and number of drinks consumed. Then subtract the time factor (see Time Factor Table below) from the figure on the chart to obtain the approximate BAL. For example, for a 125-lb. woman who has had 4 drinks in two hours, take the figure .162 (from the chart for males) and subtract .030 (from the Time Factor Table) to obtain a BAL of .132%.

Time Factor Table

Hours since first drink	1	2	3	4	5	6
Subtract from BAL	.015	.030	.045	.060	.075	.090

**MALES**

Number of drinks

Body Weight	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
100	.043	.087	.130	.174	.217	.261	.304	.348	.391	.435
125	.034	.069	.103	.139	.173	.209	.242	.278	.312	.346
150	.029	.058	.087	.116	.145	.174	.203	.232	.261	.290
175	.025	.050	.075	.100	.125	.150	.175	.200	.225	.250
200	.022	.043	.065	.087	.108	.130	.152	.174	.195	.217
225	.019	.039	.058	.078	.097	.117	.136	.156	.175	.195
250	.017	.035	.052	.070	.087	.105	.122	.139	.156	.173

**FEMALES**

Number of Drinks

Body Weight	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
100	.050	.101	.152	.203	.253	.304	.355	.406	.456	.507
125	.040	.080	.120	.162	.202	.244	.282	.324	.364	.404
150	.034	.068	.101	.135	.169	.203	.237	.271	.304	.338
175	.029	.058	.087	.117	.146	.175	.204	.233	.262	.292
200	.026	.050	.076	.101	.126	.152	.177	.203	.227	.253
225	.022	.045	.068	.091	.113	.136	.159	.182	.204	.227
250	.020	.041	.061	.082	.101	.122	.142	.162	.182	.202

Alcohol first affects the most complex area (the frontal lobe) of the brain. This area controls higher functions of the brain such as judgment and social inhibitions (survival skills for group functioning). These complex functions are more sensitive to alcohol than the brain stem functions of respiration or heart rate. Therefore judgment and self control are the first abilities to be suppressed by alcohol. The following chart illustrates the effects of varying blood alcohol level (BAL).

Blood Alcohol Level	Alcohol's Effects on Thinking, Feeling, and Behavior
.02-.04	Few obvious effects; slight intensification of existing moods; some impairment of judgment or memory.
.05-.06	Feeling of warmth, relaxation, mild sedation, exaggeration of emotion and behavior;



	slight increase in reaction time, impaired judgment about continued drinking; visual and hearing acuity reduced; slight speech impairment; minor disturbance of balance.
<b>.07-.09</b>	More noticeable speech impairment and disturbance of balance; impaired coordination; feeling of elation or depression; definite impairment of judgment and memory; major increase in reaction time; may not recognize impairment. <i>Legally intoxicated at .08 BAL.</i>
<b>.10-.13</b>	Noticeable disturbance of balance; uncoordinated behavior; major increase in reaction time; increased impairment of judgment and memory.
<b>.14-.17</b>	Major impairment of all physical and mental functions; difficulty in standing, talking; distorted perception and judgment; cannot recognize impairment.
<b>.20-.25</b>	Confused or dazed; major body movements cannot be made without assistance.
<b>.30-.35</b>	Minimal perception and comprehension; general suspension of cognitive abilities.
<b>.40</b>	Unconscious/coma.
<b>.41+</b>	Deep coma/death.

Tolerance may play a part in the effects of alcohol and the above functions; however, tolerance is an indication of the body's adjustment to regular drinking and is a warning sign of alcohol abuse. High tolerance can be an inherited function, which many researchers think is a sign of genetic predisposition to alcoholism

## EFFECTS OF SHORT-TERM ALCOHOL ABUSE

Specific body functions and body organs can be influenced directly or indirectly by alcohol. Short-term effects include:

### Sensation and Perception

- decreases in both visual and hearing acuity
- altered sensitivity to odors and taste
- reduced sensitivity to pain
- altered sense of time: time appears to pass more rapidly
- underestimation of speed of moving objects

### Emotions

- decreased fear/anxiety
- increased risk-taking behaviors
- increased likelihood of aggressive humor
- reduced inhibitions

### Sleep

- sleep disturbance and tiredness upon awakening

### Body Organs

- increased urinary output due to the diuretic effect of alcohol on the pituitary hormones
- temporary increase in heart rate and blood pressure; with higher dosages, decreased heart rate
- dilated peripheral blood vessels in arms and face. This blood vessel expansion leads to loss of body heat, while producing a feeling of added warmth. Hyperthermia can occur in cool water as well as cool air. (Starting at 50°F)
- constricted arteries supplying the heart, decreasing the supply of oxygen to the cells which may contribute to arrhythmia
- decreased ability of the blood to transport oxygen to the brain and muscles

### Motor Skills

- impaired performance, although individual susceptibility varies at Blood Alcohol Level (BAL) of 10% or below
- decreased balance
- interference with coordination, as in tracing a moving object
- slowed reaction time
- impaired ability to focus on two or more behaviors at a time

### Hangovers

- temporary, acute physical and psychological distress following excessive consumption. Nausea, abdominal pain, fatigue, headache, and anxiety are reminders of disrupted body functions that could not be felt while intoxicated.

### Sexuality

- small doses may facilitate sexual activity by overcoming inhibitions. But while alcohol may provoke desire, even moderate amounts spoil the capacity to perform and respond.
- decreased levels of testosterone have been measured in young males after as few as 4-12 ounce beers.
- dehydration leads to less lubrication in the vaginal canal, which increases potential painful intercourse and condom breakage

#### Effects of Alcohol on Sexuality

	Women	Men	Women & Men
<b>Small Dose</b>	Increased enjoyment of foreplay; feelings of warmth; increased quality of orgasm	Increased arousal; control of premature ejaculation lost	Release of inhibitions; increased aggression; increased desire
<b>Moderate Dose</b>	Fewer or no orgasms; decreased quality of orgasms	Increased time needed for erection to form; difficulty maintaining erection; uncertain orgasm; decreased penile rigidity	Longer foreplay
<b>Large Dose</b>	No orgasms; lethargy; no lubrication	Erectile impotence, ejaculatory impotence; thoughtlessness; unpleasant or painful ejaculation; aggressiveness	
<b>Alcoholism</b>	Loss of menstruation; frigidity; infertility	Loss of sexual satisfaction; erectile impotence; decreased testosterone; infertility; breast development; decreased body hair; shriveled testicles	Loss of sex drive

### Synergism

Perhaps the most dangerous alcohol/drug interaction is related to synergism, in which the combined effect of two drugs taken together is greater than the sum of the effects of the two drugs alone. Mix alcohol, a CNS depressant, with another CNS depressant, and the pharmacologic effect on the body is multiplied or exaggerated. Sometimes the result is drowsiness and difficulty in walking, talking, driving, and thinking. Breathing and heart rate can be depressed to dangerous levels. Some combinations of alcohol with barbiturates, tranquilizers, and prescription painkillers can be fatal.

## DOUBLE TROUBLE: MIXING DRINKS WITH OTHER DRUGS

Drug interaction is the phenomenon that occurs when one or more drugs present in the body alter the actions or effects of another drug present in the body at the same time. Some of the interactions may be minor and some disastrous. The *consequence* of the interaction is the important thing to remember.

Alcohol is primarily a central nervous system depressant. When combined with other drugs with similar depression action on the central nervous system, an additive or synergistic effect occurs. This is the most important type of interaction between alcohol and other drugs.

Selected Alcohol-Drug Interactions

Drugs Interacting with Alcohol	Mechanism	Effect	Significance
Acetaminophen (Tylenol, Anacin-3, Panadol, etc.)	Metabolism of drug or	risk of liver impairment	Moderate
Antidiabetic agents	Interfaces with glycogen production in the liver; enhances the effect of diabetic medicines	Increased low blood sugar	Moderate
Antihistamines (Benadryl, Actifed, & most over-the-counter cold medicines contain antihistamines)	Enhances the effect of antihistamines	sedation	Minor to moderate
Antimicrobials			
Isoniazid (INH)	Metabolism of drug enhanced with use of alcohol		Moderate
Flagyl, griseofulvin, chloramphenicol		Hypotension, flushing, vomiting	Minor
Aspirin and salicylates	effect of medicine	damage to gastric mucosa	Moderate
Narcotic analgesics; Demerol, percodan, tylox, codeine, Tylenol #3, codeine cough syrups	effect of medicine	depression of central nervous system	MAJOR
Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs: Ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil, etc.	effect of medicine	Damage to gastric mucosa	Minor
Sedative-hypnotics: barbiturates, benzodiazepines, others	Metabolism of drug enhanced with acute alcohol intoxication	depression of central nervous system	MAJOR
Tranquilizers	effect of medicine	Impaired coordination and depression of central nervous system	Minor

### EFFECTS OF LONG-TERM ALCOHOL ABUSE

Prolonged, heavy consumption of alcoholic beverages can result in one or more serious, often life threatening consequences.

- infectious diseases
- nutritional deficiency
- cancer
- liver disorders & diseases

- muscle disease
- hypoglycemia
- nervous system diseases
- mental disorders
- endocrine system disorders
- cardiovascular diseases
- gastrointestinal system disorders
- alcohol/drug interactions and diseases
- deprivation of rapid eye movements (REM) or dreaming sleep, results in anxiety, chronic tiredness, and impaired concentration
- alcohol use may aggravate migraine sufferers' tendency to vascular headaches

### ***What are blackouts?***

Blackouts are lapses in memory during intoxication; they are not a loss of consciousness. Whether lasting a few minutes or hours, blackouts are unpredictable but usually happen when the blood alcohol level is high. A blackout usually occurs after ingestion of large amounts of alcohol and for most social drinkers, it is a learning experience. Continued drinking patterns that produce blackouts indicate a high risk for alcohol problems.

---

## **HANGOVERS**

### **Hangover Theories**

The hangover is a mild manifestation of alcohol withdrawal. In the earlier stages, it is the all too familiar "hangover headache." This is more likely related to vascular changes and has nothing to do with the brain. The brain itself has no pain receptors. So, any headache pain must be from the nerves surrounding the lining, skin, vessels, or muscles. Although the alcohol has been eliminated, the body's chemical balance has been upset, digestive organs have been abused, and an overpowering fatigue is felt. There is a lack of consensus among researchers on the causes of hangovers. The explanations most frequently cited are described below.

#### ***What are the causes of a hangover?***

##### **Central Nervous System (CNS) Rebound**

Alcohol has a depressant effect on the CNS. With abstinence, this depressant effect is removed and there is a "rebound" of sensitivity to stimuli. An area of the CNS particularly affected is the reticular activating system which oversees the general arousal level and CNS activity.

##### **Congeners**

The congeners or chemicals added to color, flavor, preserve, or stabilize alcoholic beverages may cause headaches.

##### **Dehydration**

Alcohol suppresses the hormone regulating the amount of urine produced, therefore, too little of the hormone is released and the kidneys form excessive urine. The kidneys' capacity to reabsorb water is diminished and water is excreted from the body. Therefore, intoxication causes the body to lose water (including vitamins and minerals). This produces the sensation of thirst or "cotton mouth."

##### **Depleted Body Blood Sugar/Glucose**

Alcohol depletes the body of its blood sugar causing a hypoglycemic state. In this state there is a reduced concentration of blood sugar. The brain is deprived of its proper nourishment. Symptoms include hunger, weakness, nervousness, sweating, headache, and tremor.

### **Deprivation of Brain Oxygen**

The brain is the organ most sensitive to alcohol. It also receives less oxygen when alcohol is present, which adds to the feeling of fatigue the following morning.

### **Stomach Irritant/Digestion Rebound**

Alcohol is an irritant which produces the flow of gastric juices in the stomach lining, causing nausea and vomiting. The next morning, a "rebound effect" is produced as the stomach works extra hard to neutralize the gastric acid. This may cause an upset stomach.

### **Sleep Disturbance**

Alcohol alters the neurochemical balance within the brain. Although some people fall asleep faster with a drink, alcohol depresses REM (Rapid Eye Movement or dreaming) sleep and causes more sleep disturbance later at night. REM sleep is an important component of a healthy sleep cycle. Even if people think they sleep well, the loss of REM sleep makes people want to sleep longer in the morning and would then feel tired during the day.

Deprivation of REM sleep is what causes people to feel tired.

### **Vascular Changes**

Alcohol is a vasodilator. It increases blood flow to the extremities. One reason for morning chills may be a rebound effect. As the blood vessels constrict, there is a reduced blood flow to the extremities, and therefore less warmth. These vascular changes have also been related to the hangover headaches. Migraine sufferers should avoid alcohol because use may aggravate their tendency to vascular headaches.

### ***Are there any cures for a hangover?***

The simple cause is too much alcohol. The only prevention is to avoid drinking too much, too fast. There is no cure for a hangover. Once excessive drinking has taken place, only time will cure a hangover--none of the many popular home remedies have been shown to be cures.

---

<http://h-devil-www.mc.duke.edu/h-devil/http://h-devil-www.mc.duke.edu/h-devil/http://h-devil-www.mc.duke.edu/h-devil/interact/comments.htm><http://h-devil-www.mc.duke.edu/h-devil/interact/comments.htm><http://h-devil-www.mc.duke.edu/h-devil/drugs/drugs.htm><http://h-devil-www.mc.duke.edu/h-devil/drugs/drugs.htm><http://h-devil-www.mc.duke.edu/h-devil/help/help.htm><http://h-devil-www.mc.duke.edu/h-devil/help/help.htm>

---

## **Healthy Devil Online**

---

Copyright © 1994-99 Duke University. All Rights Reserved.

Questionable things: In deciding about whether or not to participate in any behavior that is doubtful, the following principles make a good checklist to follow.

**Expediency: Is this activity one that profits me for eternity or just for a moment?** “All things are lawful for me,” Paul says, “but not all things are profitable,” or expedient (1 Cor. 6:12). Is what I want to do helpful and useful, or only desirable?

**Edification: Will this activity strengthen or weaken my spiritual life?** Will I be built up and matured in Christ; will I become spiritually stronger? “All things are lawful, but not all things edify” (1 Cor. 10:23).

**Exaltation: Is this activity clearly described as a pathway to magnifying God?** Will the Lord be lifted up and glorified in what I do? God’s glory and exaltation should be the supreme purpose behind everything we do. “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).

**Evangelism: Will this activity increase my evangelistic ability or decrease it?** Is my testimony going to be helped or hindered? Will unbelievers be drawn to Christ or turned away from Him by what I am doing? Will it help me conduct myself “with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity” (Col. 4:5)?

**Example: Will others who seek to follow my example be helped or hindered by this activity?** Are we setting the right example for others, especially for weaker brothers and sisters? If we emulate Christ, others will be able to emulate us, to follow our example (1 Tim. 4:12).

**Excess: Is this activity a weight that can trip me up that needs to be laid aside?** Is the activity or habit necessary, or is it merely an extra that is not really important? Is it perhaps only an encumbrance that we should willingly give up (Heb. 12:1)?

**Emulation: Is this activity something that Jesus would do or not do?** “The one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked” (1 John 2:6). If we are doing what Christ would do, our action not only is permissible but good and right.  
**MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983, First Corinthians 8:13**

## **My Convictions from God's Word about Alcohol & Me as God's Servant**

First off to answer this question I must confess that I do not drink alcohol in any form, by conviction. My convictions based on God's Word are:

1. First, I don't drink because **God always condemns drunkenness** in any and every form in His Word, so I want to stay away from participating in or encouraging others to participate in what God condemns.
2. Second, I don't drink because **God commanded that any priest who came before Him in the Tabernacle or Temple was not to drink**. Alcohol kept priests from being able to distinguish between holy & unholy, and clean & unclean (Lev. 10:9-10). So I never want to miss what God calls both holy and unholy.
3. Third, I don't drink because **God said that those who lead His people are to not drink** so that they aren't under any wrong influence when they make decisions. Alcohol diminishes a leader's ability to lead wisely (Pr. 31:4-5).
4. Fourth, I don't drink because **God led Paul to say that he would limit his freedom, and never eat meat or drink alcohol (Rom. 14:21) if it caused any believer to veer off God's path**, and I do not want my choices to make earnest or weak believers veer away from God.
5. Fifth, I don't drink because **God contrasts alcohol with the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18, I want to be known as a man that seeks the influence of the Holy Spirit, not alcohol**.
6. Sixth, I don't drink because **God said that elders have a higher standard than deacons or others in the church**. Normal believers are to never get drunk; and deacons are not to be drawn or given to wine; but elders are called to not stand near wine in I Timothy 3:3. The way to interpret what Paul meant was seen in his best friend Timothy's life. Paul had to plead with him to use a little wine medicinally in I Timothy 5:23 because Timothy also wanted to obey God and not be near wine.
7. Finally, I don't drink because of **our whole beer drinking, bar hopping, clubbing society that portrays alcohol almost always with things that displease God**. I do not want to: walk, stand, or sit with those that mock God (Psalm 1); nor befriend the world's ungodly cultural form of drinking (James 4:4-8); nor get conformed to the world (Rom. 12:2); nor love this tool the world uses (I John 2:15-17) to enslave so many, destroy so many, and lead so many into sin.

So those are my personal convictions as a Citizen of Heaven, living here on Earth.

### ***Alcohol as to the strength or concentration in Biblical & Modern times:***

Wine was the most intoxicating drink known in ancient times. All the wine was light wine, i.e. not fortified with extra alcohol. Concentrated alcohol was only known in the Middle Ages when the Arabs invented distillation ("alcohol" is an Arabic word) so what is now called liquor or strong drink (i.e. whiskey, gin, vodka, etc.) and the twenty per cent fortified wines were unknown in Bible times. Beer was brewed by various methods, but its alcoholic content was light. [TWOT, (vol. 1, p. 865)].

The strength of natural wines is limited by two factors. The percentage of alcohol will be half of the percentage of the sugar in the juice. And if the alcoholic content is much above 10 or 11 percent, the yeast cells are killed and fermentation ceases. Probably ancient wines were 7-10 per cent. Drunkenness therefore was of course an ancient curse, but alcoholism was not as common or as severe as it is today. And in an agricultural age, its effects were less deadly than now. Still, even then it had its dangers and Proverbs 20:1 and 23:29-35 are emphatic in their warnings. (T.W.O.T., p. 376)

How does our alcohol today compare with wine back then? According to the Alcohol Council Information Center:

Beer has 4% alcohol; wine has 9-11% alcohol; brandy has 15-20% alcohol; and liquor has between 40-50% alcohol (80-100 proof).

"The wine that was consumed in biblical times was not what we know as wine today. It was more of a concentrated grape juice with its intoxicating properties basically removed. You cannot defend wine-drinking today on the basis of wine-drinking in Bible times because the two are totally different." (Living in the Spirit, p. 31, John MacArthur)