

“DO NOT LOOK ON THE WINE”

I. NOT ALL WINE IS THE SAME

- A. **Psalm 104:14-15** *“He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and vegetation for the service of man, that he may bring forth food from the earth, and wine that makes glad the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread which strengthens man's heart.”*

Verses like this speak of wine as a blessing. From that, many draw the false conclusion that all wine is equally approved and good.

- B. **Isaiah 65:8** *“New wine is found in the cluster.”*

New wine is in the cluster, still in the grape. It has not been fermented yet, but it is still called wine.

- C. **Proverbs 23:31** *“Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly.”*

A simple verse that shows wine-drinking as innocuous must not be construed to mean alcohol is harmless because some wine should not even be looked at.

II. GOD FORBIDS DRUNKENNESS

- A. **1st Corinthians 6:9-11** *“Do you not know that **the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God**? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor **drunkards**, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”*

Among other unrighteous types, drunkards are excluded from God's kingdom. They must be washed, sanctified, and justified in Christ and by His Spirit.

- B. **Galatians 5:17-23** *“The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are **contrary** to one another, so that you do not do the things*

*that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 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. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."*

Drunkenness prevents access to the kingdom because it contradicts the fruit of the Spirit.

1. Drunkenness contradicts **Love** because it places the gratification of fleshly desires above the welfare of others.
2. Drunkenness contradicts **Joy** because it substitutes intoxication for the genuine, enduring joy found in the Lord.
3. Drunkenness contradicts **Peace** because it provokes conflict.
4. Drunkenness contradicts **Longsuffering** because it diminishes patience and restraint, making one susceptible to anger and impulsiveness.
5. Drunkenness contradicts **Kindness** because it weakens consideration for others and can lead to hurtful behavior.
6. Drunkenness contradicts **Goodness** because it corrupts moral judgment and encourages conduct contrary to righteousness.
7. Drunkenness contradicts **Faithfulness** because it compromises the reliability and devotion to responsibilities toward God and others.
8. Drunkenness contradicts **Gentleness** because it removes inhibitions and can produce aggression.
9. Drunkenness contradicts **Self-control** because it intentionally impairs the ability to govern thoughts, words, and behavior.

- C. Drunkenness is plainly prohibited and that includes every point on the spectrum from “buzzed” to “wasted” and everything in between. None of it is acceptable.

III. DRINKING CAUSES VULNERABILITY

- A. **Proverbs 23:29-35** *“Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things. Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: ‘They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?’”*

In nearly every conceivable way, drinkers are vulnerable.

- B. **Genesis 9:20–25** *“Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. Then he drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness. So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him. Then he said: ‘Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants He shall be to his brethren.’”*

The vulnerability of drink caused Noah the shame of nakedness, led to Ham mishandling the situation, and further led to Canaan cursed by his grandfather.

- C. **Genesis 19:30-36** *“Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he*

and his two daughters dwelt in a cave. Now the firstborn said to the younger, 'Our father is old, and there is no man on the earth to come in to us as is the custom of all the earth. Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father.' So they made their father drink wine that night. And the firstborn went in and lay with her father, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. It happened on the next day that the firstborn said to the younger, 'Indeed I lay with my father last night; let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father.' Then they made their father drink wine that night also. And the younger arose and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father."

The vulnerability of drink caused Lot to impregnate his daughters and father his own grandchildren. Alcohol impairs one's awareness of threats of sexual exploitation.

- D. 1st Kings 16:9-10** *"In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel, and reigned two years in Tirzah. Now his servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him as he was in Tirzah drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, steward of his house in Tirzah. And Zimri went in and struck him and killed him in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his place."*

The vulnerability of drink caused King Elah to be assassinated. Alcohol impairs one's awareness of mortal danger.

IV. TEMPTATION MUST BE AVOIDED

- A. Romans 13:13-14** *"Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and **drunkenness**, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.**"*

Not only is drunkenness disallowed by God, but we are further admonished to not leave any room at all for getting to that point. *“No provision”* means not even taking the first sip.

B. Proverbs 22:3 *“A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself.”*

Having considered all the vulnerability attendant to the consumption of alcohol, the warnings can be accepted with wisdom or ignored with folly.

C. James 4:7 *“Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”*

Resistance means pushing back, not giving in. It means declining alcohol from the start, not seeing how much we can drink before we can feel it.

D. Romans 14:21 *“It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.”*

We not only must avoid temptations for ourselves, but also for others with reference to our influence.

V. THE EXCEPTION IS NARROW

A. 1st Timothy 5:23 *“No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach’s sake and your frequent infirmities.”*

1. *“No longer drink only water”* – Timothy’s habit had been one of total abstinence from wine until instructed otherwise by the apostle. This is as it should be. Without the exception provided in the passage under consideration, wine should be abstained from.
2. *“But use a little wine”* – In the limited circumstance in which the use of wine is permitted, its quantity must also be limited. Only a slight amount is here permitted for a specific purpose.
3. *“For your stomach’s sake”* – The specific purpose for which Timothy was permitted the slight use of wine was its health benefit. It was not given as a social beverage, but as medicine.
4. *“Your frequent infirmities”* – It was given for a remedy, not for prevention. The apostle suggested the use of a little wine to alleviate an

existing ailment. The regular use of wine to prevent illness is not under consideration and is nowhere authorized in scripture.

5. The exception that proves the rule means there are no other exceptions

- B. **Luke 10:34** *"So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him."*

Wine can serve a medicinal purpose as a topical application without being taken internally.

VI. GOD COMMANDS SOBRIETY

Abstinence from alcohol is so much more than seeing how much we can drink without getting drunk. It is about choosing the positive quality of sobriety.

- A. **Titus 2:11-13** *"The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, **we should live soberly**, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."*

God's saving grace toward man is a teaching grace and this grace particularly teaches sobriety, which is a quality necessary for a godly life in the present and for a realistic hope of heaven.

- B. **1st Peter 5:8** *"Be **sober**, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."*

We cannot fight the devil without sobriety. Of course, sobriety is so much more than merely the opposite of drunk, but it certainly includes that.

VII. ALCOHOL DISPLACES THE HOLY SPIRIT

- A. **Ephesians 5:18** *"Do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit."*

Every drop of alcohol displaces the Holy Spirit of God.

B. **Galatians 5:16** *“Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”*

I need to be in the Spirit and I need the Spirit in me if I am to prevail against sin, but there is only room for the Spirit or the drink, not both.