

Wisdom For Living Ministries, Inc.

Statement On Addictions

Since our approach is based upon the Scriptures, we do not hold to the disease model of alcoholism and addiction. From passages like 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, God tells us that drunkenness is a sin for which He holds people responsible, and for which His judgment will shut them out of His eternal kingdom. Many of us know what is right to do and James 4:17 says that if we do not do what we know is right (not to become drunk or take drugs or become addicted to something), it is sin. God also describes believers as those whose changed hearts have freed them from this sinful behavior through the justifying and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:19-21 lists drunkenness as one of the sins that manifests the fulfilling of the desires of the flesh, and thus it is also worthy of the judgment of God. Proverbs 23:29-35 describes the habitual response pattern of one who consumes alcoholic beverages in an improper way and for the wrong reasons. The consequences are fitting for that person who abuses alcoholic beverages and deceives himself by its effects.

Logically and spiritually, we must conclude that God would not condemn someone for a sinful behavior like drunkenness *if* the cause were a genetic or physical factor over which the person had no control. However, the Bible does indicate man has control over his decisions. Nowhere in Scripture does God relieve man of his personal responsibility to make the proper choices and obey Him through the help that He offers in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

These statements do not ignore the fact that the terms “alcoholism” and “drug addiction” describe a very complex and difficult condition that includes a physical and/or mental dependency upon the alcohol or drug. God’s mercy teaches us that He Himself recognizes that sinners are both victims as well as perpetrators of their own sin. He desires to reach down in love and deliver them through His saving and sanctifying grace. As God’s servants, the staff of Wisdom For Living Ministries aspire to minister Jesus Christ’s compassion and not be judges.

Psychology and the disease model remove hope through their elements of determinism, blame shifting, lack of personal responsibility, and dependence upon professional treatment. But the Scriptures offer tremendous hope, because alcoholism and drug addiction as sins can be forgiven and completely overcome through God’s provision in Christ. Our identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection has freed us from an obligation to fulfill the desires of our sinful flesh. We are not under the law, but under grace, with the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit to live God’s life out in our new nature.

The epistles clearly describe the process of putting off the old man, being renewed in our mind and heart, and letting go of our past and focusing on the general and specific goals God sets before each of us to reach our God-given destiny. It works for drunkenness and chemical dependency, just as it does for gambling, immorality, stealing, and many other sins which are often described today as “addictions” by the medical and psychological establishments.

We understand alcoholism and other addictions to be a habitual response pattern

that is firmly established in our sinful flesh. It is God's great work to deliver us from the power of indwelling sin and its effects in our thought life, emotions, and actions. Self-help, psychological and medical solutions can never address the true solution that is needed for a believer who is spiritually alive in Christ, but still defeated by the habitual patterns of sin.

At Wisdom For Living Ministries we seek to teach and minister spiritual healing by leading men and women into God's full forgiveness and restoration. We help them to find assurance of their salvation, to understand how to live their new life in Christ, and to discover their God-given destiny, as the basis for their transformation. And we address many areas of life that go beyond simply the "alcoholism" or "use of drugs" manifestation of the flesh. We teach them Biblical ways to think, respond and choose, and we equip them against Satan's attacks and schemes as well. We help them develop solid ways of rebuilding their life, character, and their dreams, so they may restore the important relationships with their families and develop new, healthy friendships. Our focus is not on the problem of alcoholism or drug addiction, but on Christ!

We may accept and use those ideas and methods that others have found to be helpful in working with alcoholics and drug addicts, but only if they do not conflict with our firm Biblical philosophy and approach. We do not adopt medical models to accomplish sobriety. Ours is a spiritual program. We have come to understand that God's love is the cure for whatever ails us! We focus on how to develop and deepen our love relationship with Christ, and then with others. Also, by discovering one's personal, unique God-given destiny, then purposeful, powerful and abundant living, combined with a deep love relationship with Jesus Christ, provides the motivation to avoid relapse.

Scriptures (The Amplified Bible)

Do you not know that the unrighteous {and} the wrongdoers will not inherit {or} have any share in the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived (misled): neither the impure {and} immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor those who participate in homosexuality, nor cheats (swindlers and thieves), nor greedy graspers, nor drunkards, nor foulmouthed revilers {and} slanderers, nor extortioners {and} robbers will inherit {or} have any share in the kingdom of God. And such some of you were [once]. But you were washed clean (purified by a complete atonement for sin and made free from the guilt of sin), and you were consecrated (set apart, hallowed), and you were justified [pronounced righteous, by trusting] in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the [Holy] Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

So any person who knows what is right to do but does not do it, to him it is sin. (James 4:17)

Now the doings (practices) of the flesh are clear (obvious): they are immorality, impurity, indecency, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger (ill temper), selfishness, divisions (dissensions), party spirit (factions, sects with peculiar opinions, heresies), envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you beforehand, just as I did previously, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21)

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness {and} dimness of eyes? Those who tarry long at the wine, those who go to seek {and} try mixed wine. Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the wineglass, when it goes down smoothly. At the last it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. [Under the influence of wine] your eyes will behold strange things [and loose women] and your mind will utter things turned the wrong way [untrue, incorrect, and petulant]. Yes, you will be [as unsteady] as he who lies down in the midst of the sea, and [as open to disaster] as he who lies upon the top of a mast. You will say, They struck me, but I was not hurt! They beat me [as with a hammer], but I did not feel it! When shall I awake? I will crave {and} seek more wine again [and escape reality]. (Proverbs 23:29-35)

Resource for the following article: <http://www.scionofzion.com/drinking.htm>

75 Bible References on Drinking Alcohol

Should Christians really totally abstain from alcoholic drinks? Or does God tell us we can drink moderately?

In the 1800's and early 1900's the church in America took a bold stand for total abstinence. People read research about the word "wine;" Bible studies showed the truth about alcohol. The result was Prohibition with its great benefits. But the prohibition amendment was repealed, and the church began to weaken its conviction against alcohol. Today some pastors say, "What's wrong with a six pack? Why get hung up on a little wine at a wedding?"

The Bible is the same "yesterday, today, and forever." What godly Bible teachers said in the past is true today. Dr. Robert Teachout, A Semitic scholar who, in 1979, wrote his doctorate on *The Use of Wine in the Old Testament*, stated, "Alcohol is never approved by God in any amount for the obedient Christian."

Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi, author of *Wine in the Bible*, 1989, says, Drinking Alcohol is...a moral issue. It is...a transgression of God's law."

FACTS TO KNOW

1) The Bible does teach total abstinence from alcohol. Both the main Hebrew word for wine and the Greek word for wine can mean either fermented grape juice or intoxicating wine. The English word wine originally had two meanings also - unfermented juice or alcoholic drink.

2) In the Bible, verses to show God approves of wine are speaking about unfermented juice. Verses that expose the evils of wine are speaking about intoxicating wine.

3) The Bible says alcoholic drink is evil. It is not just the amount one drinks that makes drinking a sin. God condemns the drink itself. (Prov 20:1 KJV) Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

4) God does not lead us into evil; He delivers us from it. He does not teach us to practice evil in moderation. Jesus did not make, use, approve, commend, or tell us to use intoxicating wine.

5) God made man to have fellowship with Him. Alcohol goes directly to the brain, the communication center of the body. It interferes with God's purpose for mankind.

75 WARNINGS

There is more Scripture condemning the use of alcoholic beverages than will be found on the subjects of lying, adultery, swearing, cheating, hypocrisy, pride, or even blasphemy

- 1) Genesis 9:20-26 - Noah became drunk; the result was immorality and family trouble.
- 2) Genesis 19:30-38 - Lot was so drunk he did not know what he was doing; this led to immorality.
- 3) Leviticus 10:9-11 - God commanded priests not to drink so that they could tell the difference between the holy and the unholy.
- 4) Numbers 6:3 - The Nazarites were told to eat or drink nothing from the grape vine.
- 5) Deuteronomy 21:20 - A drunken son was stubborn and rebellious.
- 6) Deuteronomy 29:5-6 - God gave no grape juice to Israel nor did they have intoxicating drink in the wilderness.
- 7) Deuteronomy 32:33 - Intoxicating wine is like the poison of serpents, the cruel venom of asps.
- 8) Judges 13:4, 7, 14 - Samson was to be a Nazarite for life. His mother was told not to drink wine or strong drink.
- 9) 1 Samuel 1:14-15 - Accused, Hannah said she drank no wine.
- 10) 1 Samuel 25:32-38 - Nabal died after a drunken spree.
- 11) 2 Samuel 11:13 - By getting Uriah drunk, David hoped to cover his sin.
- 12) 2 Samuel 13:28-29 - Amnon was drunk when he was killed.
- 13) 1 Kings 16:8-10 - The king was drinking himself into drunkenness when he was assassinated.
- 14) 1 Kings 20:12-21 - Ben-Hadad and 32 other kings were drinking when they were attacked and defeated by the Israelites.

- 15) Esther 1:5-12 - The king gave each one all the drink he wanted. The king was intoxicated when he commanded the queen to come.
- 16) Psalm 75:8 - The Lord's anger is pictured as mixed wine poured out and drunk by the wicked.
- 17) Proverbs 4:17 - Alcoholic drink is called the wine of violence.
- 18) Proverbs 20:1 - Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging.
- 19) Proverbs 23:19-20 - A wise person will not be among the drinkers of alcoholic beverages.
- 20) Proverbs 23:21 - Drunkenness causes poverty.
- 21) Proverbs 23:29-30 - Drinking causes woe, sorrow, fighting, babbling, wounds without cause and red eyes.
- 22) Proverbs 23:31 - God instructs not to look at intoxicating drinks.
- 23) Proverbs 23:32 - Alcoholic drinks bite like a serpent, sting like an adder.
- 24) Proverbs 23:33 - Alcohol causes the drinker to have strange and adulterous thoughts, produces willfulness, and prevents reformation.
- 25) Proverbs 23:34 - Alcohol makes the drinker unstable.
- 26) Proverbs 23:35 - Alcohol makes the drinker insensitive to pain so he does not perceive it as a warning. Alcohol is habit forming.
- 27) Proverb 31:4-5 - Kings, Princes, and others who rule and judge must not drink alcohol. Alcohol perverts good judgment.
- 28) Proverbs 31:6-7 - Strong drink could be given to those about to perish or those in pain. Better anesthetics are available today.
- 29) Ecclesiastes 2:3 - The king tried everything, including intoxicating drink, to see if it satisfied. It did not. (Ecclesiastes 12:8)
- 30) Ecclesiastes 10:17 - A land is blessed when its leaders do not drink.
- 31) Isaiah 5:11-12 - Woe to those who get up early to drink and stay up late at night to get drunk.
- 32) Isaiah 5:22 - Woe to "champion" drinkers and "experts" at mixing drinks.
- 33) Isaiah 19:14 - Drunken men stagger in their vomit.
- 34) Isaiah 22:12-13 - The Israelites choose to drink; their future looks hopeless to them.
- 35) Isaiah 24:9 - Drinkers cannot escape the consequences when God judges.

- 36) Isaiah 28:1 - God pronounces woe on the drunkards of Ephraim.
- 37) Isaiah 28:3 - Proud drunkards shall be trodden down.
- 38) Isaiah 28:7 - Priests and prophets stagger and reel from beer and wine, err in vision, and stumble in judgment.
- 39) Isaiah 28:8 - Drinkers' tables are covered with vomit and filth.
- 40) Isaiah 56:9-12 - Drinkers seek their own gain and expect tomorrow to be just like today.
- 41) Jeremiah 35:2-14 - The Rechabites drank no grape juice or intoxicating wine and were blessed.
- 42) Ezekiel 44:21 - Again God instructed the priests not to drink wine.
- 43) Daniel 1:5-17 - Daniel refused the king's intoxicating wine and was blessed for it along with his abstaining friends.
- 44) Daniel 5:1 - Belshazzar, ruler of Babylon; led his people in drinking.
- 45) Daniel 5:2-3 - The king, along with his nobles, wives, and concubines, drank from the goblets which had been taken from God's temple.
- 46) Daniel 5:4 - Drinking wine was combined with praising false gods.
- 47) Daniel 5:23 - God sent word to Belshazzar that punishment would be swift for the evil he had committed.
- 48) Hosea 4:11 - Intoxicating wine takes away intelligence.
- 49) Hosea 7:5 - God reproves princes for drinking.
- 50) Joel 1:5 - Drunkards awake to see God's judgment.
- 51) Joel 3:3 - The enemy is judged for selling girls for wine.
- 52) Amos 2:8 - Unrighteous acts of Israel included the drinking of wine which had been taken for the payment of fines.
- 53) Amos 2:12 - Israel is condemned for forcing Nazarites to drink wine.
- 54) Micah 2:11 - Israelites are eager to follow false teachers who prophesy plenty of intoxicating drinks.
- 55) Nahum 1:10 - The drunkards of Nineveh will be destroyed by God.
- 56) Habakkuk 2:5 - A man is betrayed by wine.
- 57) Habakkuk 2:15 - Woe to him that gives his neighbor drink.

- 58) Habakkuk 2:16 - Drinking leads to shame.
- 59) Matthew 24:48-51 - A drinking servant is unprepared for his Lord's return.
- 60) Luke 1:15 - John the Baptist drank neither grape juice nor wine.
- 61) Luke 12:45 - Christ warned against drunkenness.
- 62) Luke 21:34 - Drunkenness will cause a person not to be ready for the Lord's return.
- 63) Romans 13:13 - Do not walk in drunkenness or immorality.
- 64) Romans 14:21 - Do not do anything that will hurt your testimony as a believer.
- 65) 1 Corinthians 5:11 - If a Christian brother is a drinker, do not associate with him.
- 66) 1 Corinthians 6:10 - Drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- 67) Galatians 5:21 - Acts of the sinful nature, such as drunkenness, will prohibit a person from inheriting the kingdom of God.
- 68) Ephesians 5:18 - In contrast to being drunk with wine, the believer is to be filled with the Spirit.
- 69) 1 Thessalonians 5:6-7 - Christians are to be alert and self-controlled, belonging to the day. Drunkards belong to the night and darkness.
- 70) 1 Timothy 3:2-3 - Bishops (elders) are to be temperate, sober, and not near any wine.
- 71) 1 Timothy 3:8 - Deacons are to be worthy of respect and not drinkers.
- 72) 1 Timothy 3:11 - Deacons' wives are to be temperate and sober.
- 73) Titus 1:7-8 - An overseer is to be disciplined.
- 74) Titus 2:2-3 - The older men and older women of the church are to be temperate and not addicted to wine.
- 75) 1 Peter 4:3-4 - The past life of drunkenness and carousing has no place in the Christian's life.