



Seek The Old Paths

“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths. . . and walk therein”
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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THE TRUTH ABOUT WINE

Lloyd Gale

God has never given His approval of any mind-altering substance for recreational use. Every person involved in the manufacturing, distribution, selling, purchasing and consumption of alcoholic beverages will rue the day of their judgment.

Jesus said “*And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free*” (John 8:32). There was a time when God’s people did run well with their condemnation of the consumption of alcoholic beverages. The enemy of God’s people however has, due to a modern-day lack of knowledge, allowed many to be deceived. Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit, wrote to Timothy to “*study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth*” (2 Tim. 2:15). Jesus said: “*Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled*” (Matt. 5:6). Perhaps some who are unwilling to invest the time and effort to study this subject for themselves will take the time to read this article and learn the truth.

The word of God both praises and condemns the drinking of wine. I once had an elder of the church say that “wine is wine.” If one is speaking of the contemporary definition of wine, that may be true. Wine in our day, as the word is employed, indicates an intoxicating beverage. If, however, one is speaking of the word wine as found in the Bible, it does not always indicate an intoxicating beverage. There are ten Hebrew words and two Greek words that are translated wine

in the Bible. The Hebrew word *yanin* and the Greek word *oinos* are the two most frequently used words.

Here is where the mystery of the meaning of the word wine in the English translation is unraveled. Both *yanin* (Hebrew) and *oinos* (Greek) are generic words. They are similar to the English words “drink” or “beverage.” If you are a guest in my house and I offer you something to drink, it most certainly will refer to a non-alcoholic beverage. However, if someone is at a place where alcoholic beverages are served and is asked, “would you like a drink,” they are probably speaking of an alcoholic drink. The context determines the meaning of the word wine. For example, I drink a small glass of wine (grape juice) each morning. It has all the benefits of the “fruit of the vine” without the consequence of destroying brain cells and other bad physical effects of alcohol.

God is immutable (unchangeable) and cannot contradict Himself (Heb. 6:17-18). If there is any confusion, it is not with God. It is with a lack of knowledge on the part of man.

Some think they can solve the problem by claiming that what God intended was that alcoholic beverages, in moderation, is good, but in excess is bad. Really? Do you want

to see how such a doctrine, if consistent, would apply to other matters? A little bit of adultery is good but a lot of adultery is bad. A little bit of stealing is good but a lot is bad. A little bit of false doctrine is good but a lot of false doctrine is bad. I don’t believe we want to travel that road. You get the point. If the principle is sound, then it’s application to other matters would apply as well.

The truth of God is that He has never given His approval to any mind-altering substance for recreational use. God has not a single kind word to say about the consumption of alcoholic beverages for recreational use. Without exception, such is condemned because it is harmful to mankind. God is the good shepherd who has done everything possible to protect His sheep. Alcohol destroys *internally, externally and eternally*. Why would any rational person want to consume a substance that will cause their brain to malfunction? Hello! Are you listening?

Even if we did not have the word of God condemning alcoholic beverages, it is clearly observable that the consequences to the human race are devastating. Death, injury and de-

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The Truth About Wine...



Editorial...

SOLVING PROBLEMS AMONG BRETHREN #1

Garland M. Robinson

I can hardly think of a more needed study among the Lord's people than this one. All I have talked to on this subject, without exception, have expressed great interest in it.

People everywhere have problems. Brethren have problems. Problems cause division. Sometimes division is warranted (2 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 5:11), many times it is not (1 Cor. 3:3; 11:17-18); but none the less, brethren divide. Jesus prayed that it not be so among his disciples. ²⁰*“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;”* ²¹*“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me”* (John 17:20-21).

Many factors enter the picture when it comes to problems and solving them. However, there is only one right way to solve problems, the Lord's Way. Ignoring them or sweeping them under the rug is not solving them. Compromising the Truth in order to get along is not solving them. When brethren go through life and never solve their problems, we may rest assured the Lord will solve them at the judgment. Surely, no righteous person desires they be resolved this way? Then, it will be too late for at least one of the sides and perhaps both sides of a problem. The rich man saw that the other side of death was too late to make changes (Luke 16:19-31). Cry as he may, he could not change the fact that he was in torment. He could not go back to earth and make amends. He could not correct the wrongs he had committed nor the benevolent acts he neglected. It was too late!

The first seven verses of Acts chapter six provides vital information regarding solving problems. The early church had been enjoying peace and prosperity as is recorded in chapters 3-5 of Acts. Now, a situation

arose which posed a threat to their unity. Their peace and harmony was in jeopardy of being broken and destroyed. The number of the disciples was increasing greatly. The church began with about 3,000 (Acts 2:42), and by Acts 4:4, the brethren numbered five thousand men. *“Believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women”* (Acts 5:14). Many were poor and needed help. Those who were able, assisted those who had need of food, clothes and shelter (Acts 4:34-37). However, as population increases, problems arise. This is true in regards to any culture or situation. The more people in a congregation, the greater potential for problems among them.

Acts 6:1 reports that brethren were caring for one another daily by supplying food and necessities for needy widows. They were busy seeing to the needs of members and those who had need. But in this much needed work, murmuring, complaining, whispering, arose, particularly among the women of Grecian ancestry. Something needed to be done. To add to the problem at hand, brethren became divided along “class” or “ethnic” distinctions (6:1). The Grecians were Jews of foreign birth (Hellenists). Even if they were not from foreign lands they were of Greek descent and lineage. The Hebrews were those who did not have the influence of outside cultures. They were neglecting those of Greek influence. The solution was for everyone to be treated fairly. But their favoritism prevented that.

Prejudices (for whatever reason) ought to be non-existent among God's people. The church is a melting pot of every culture, background, language, age and color. *“For there is no respect of persons with God”* (Rom. 2:11) and neither should we be found guilty of it. *“My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

the Lord of glory, with respect of persons” (James 2:1). *“But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors”* (James 2:9). Many other verses show this to be true (Acts 10:34-35; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; James 2:1-9; 1 Peter 1:17).

The problem of neglect and partiality was approached with promptness (6:2). As soon as the situation became known to the apostles, they set out to correct the problem. The apostles, being wise and sound men, called the disciples together and determined that seven men be chosen to handle the situation (6:3). It was good that the brethren, not the apostles, select the ones from among themselves to settle the issue. The apostles simply prescribed the qualifications that such men should meet. Exactly “how” these men were chosen is not given. Whether it was by vote or balloting or if there were nominees chosen first, we simply are not told. The selection of such men should be left to the good judgment of each congregation.

This issue was something the apostles could delegate for other sound and sober men to handle (6:3). *“It is not reason”* (6:2), meaning it is not pleasing or agreeable, it is not fit or proper for the apostles to leave the work of preaching and teaching the Word. They had work to do for which they had been appointed. There was no reason for them to leave their work in order to “serve tables” (v.2). It's not that they considered themselves to good or important to stoop to such menial tasks, but, they had the knowledge, experience, expertise, responsibility, ability to work in matters where they were most qualified. They should not neglect or abandon the work of preaching the Word. Their primary responsibility was in giving themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word (6:4). The great work of evangelizing was not to be hindered. Any time there is a problem among brethren, precious time is taken away from teaching and preaching the Gospel.

Every member of the church has at least one talent (and usually several that have not yet been discovered; cf. Matt. 25:14-30). Each one must use what they have and never begrudge others for what they are able to do. It takes all in the Lord's

church to make a vibrant, living body to function as it should. Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 make this abundantly clear. We would do well to read these chapters often. *“For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? ... And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary”* (1 Cor. 12:14-17,21,22).

There’s work in the kingdom for every member. There were others who could handle the task of “serving tables.” Three qualifications were given in selecting those to take care of this problem. They must be men of “honest report,” “full of the Holy Ghost” and full of “wisdom” (v.3).

1) *They were to be of honest and good report.* They would be known by their reputation among the saints as well as those outside the Lord’s church as being fair, impartial, respectable men of integrity. Honesty and integrity are virtues desperately needed today; not only in the world, but especially in the church. Many verses teach us to be honest and deal honestly with all men (Rom. 12:17; 13:13; 2 Cor. 8:21; 13:7; 1 Thess. 4:12; Heb. 13:18; 1 Peter 2:12). We need more honest and good men who will mediate between brethren to help solve differences and difficulties.

2) Being *full of the Holy Spirit* could either have reference to their ability to work miracles (which was given them through the laying on of the apostles hands, Acts 8:18), in which case would show evidence of their faithfulness in the Lord; or, it may simply have reference to their submission to the teaching of the Holy Spirit (I believe the latter is the correct understanding). This would be evidenced by them exemplifying the “fruit of the Spirit in their lives” (cf. Gal. 5:22-25). Such individuals would therefore be walking by the Spirit; i.e., living by and according to the teaching of the Spirit (Rom. 8:1,4). Either way, they would be men

of character and integrity to be chosen to such a noble and worthy task.

3) Being *full of wisdom* would show they possessed that practical good sense and judgment which would enable them to make fair and just decisions in accomplishing the work of the Lord. Wisdom has been spoken of as “applied knowledge.” Knowing the right ways of the Lord, they would have the good sense to apply that knowledge in a useful way to benefit the brethren, get the job done, while at the same time satisfying the Lord. There are often complicated problems to be worked through in relationships between brethren. Level-headed men are desperately needed to help settle these differ-

ences. They have the ability to see through the clutter and get to the heart of the matter. They would be more concerned with coming to a just solution to satisfy the Lord and His glorious work than they would be in catering to the feelings of those involved. However, they are able to use wisdom in carrying out the solution that would be the best for both sides in a disagreement.

For those who love the Lord and His church, their desire is to bring glory to God and the advancement of His Cause. Each will gladly submit to the just judgment of honest and fair brethren who mediate such affairs.

The Truth About Wine...

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struction, as a result of alcohol consumption, are so common place today that most arrests, accidents and deaths go unreported. I doubt we are able to open the eyes of the worldly, but surely members of the Lord’s church should not be deceived. Just because it has become socially acceptable to consume alcoholic beverages at business or social gatherings, a Christian must not be pressured into joining the crowd. Alcoholism and drug addiction are not diseases, they are self-imposed addictions. They are sin!

Smith’s Bible Dictionary defines the word wine as grape juice, syrup. That is the meaning of the word wine in it’s unfermented state. It is only when the pure juice of the grape or other fruits are fermented that they become alcoholic. God praises grape juice, but condemns alcoholic fermented juice of the grapes and all other forms of alcohol as a beverage.

Hear God’s words to Aaron. *“And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying, 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 forever throughout your generations. And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; and that ye may teach the children of Israel all of the statutes which the Lord God hath spoken unto them by the hand of*

Moses” (Lev. 10:8-11). The influence of alcohol is unholy and unclean.

The inspired writer of Proverbs describes the consequences of the consumption of alcoholic beverages. *“Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babblings? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the end it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things”* (Prov. 23:29-32).

My question is, who wants to subject themselves to such consequences, and by influence, on their loved ones? What father or mother wants their child to play with a deadly serpent or adder? There is no moderation in sin. Proverbs 20:1, *“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”* A person who is not wise is a fool. These words could be today’s headlines or lead story on the news every day.

In my lifetime, I have seen the day when the person who consumed alcoholic beverages was the exception. But today, the person who does not consume alcoholic beverages is the exception. However, I thank God for those who say “no thank you, I do

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The Truth About Wine...

HOW WE GOT THE BIBLE #6 TRANSLATION

Randy Kea

The number of people who would be able to read and speak fluently Old Testament Hebrew and New Testament Greek is minute. Essentially, all people depend upon a translation to read and understand God's Word. The fundamental point of all of the articles in this series is that the very *words* of the Bible are *inspired* and thus are *authoritative*. To have God's Word today we must have: 1) Verbal Inspiration, 2) Verbal Preservation and 3) Verbal Translation. God miraculously gave and confirmed His words and God providentially preserved His *words*. Why would anyone, therefore, want to use any translation that is not a **FORMAL** (parts of speech left intact) **VERBAL** (each word accurately translated) translation? This article in this series will maintain that the *King James Version* is superior to all other English translations. Here are the reasons we maintain and defend this position:

1. *The KJV is based on the correct text base for the Old Testament* — the traditional Masoretic Hebrew text, between 500-1000 A.D. — standardized by the Masoretes (whose job in life was to copy the Hebrew text with astonishingly strict rules — counting letters and words, etc.). Remember Jesus used the Hebrew Old Testament text, not the Septuagint or the Dead Sea Scrolls or other spurious sources (Luke 24:44; Matt. 23:35; 5:17-18; Rom. 3:1-2). These passages are internal inspired evidence, not conjecture from so-called textual critics. Remember Jesus never corrected the Hebrew text when He cited it.

2. *The KJV is based on the correct text base for the New Testament* — the traditional Greek text (or Received Text) underlies the New Testament in the King James Bible. Although there were 30 editions of the Received Text made over the years with slight inconsequential differences such as spelling, accents and breathing marks, word order, etc, they are essentially the same. KJV

translators had all this evidence before them. In 1881, Westcott and Hort, two liberal and modernistic theologians of the Anglican church, rejected and decided to modify the traditional Greek New Testament text. They changed the Textus Receptus in over 5,600 places involving almost 10,000 words. This is why modern versions have those distressing marginal notes that cast doubt on the integrity of certain passages (as an example, the last twelve verses of Mark and the confession of the eunuch in Acts 8:37). Clearly, they had no regard for the verbal inspiration and preservation of the Bible, and yet, modern translations use a text type that is basically the same as the Westcott and Hort text for the New Testament — i.e. the Nestle-Aland Greek text or Critical Text. If you defend the critical text, you must abandon the belief in verbal preservation.

3. *The KJV is the result of the translating work of the greatest and most qualified linguists ever assembled, before or since.* The KJV translators are incomparable and unsurpassed even today in linguistic scholarship. I simply do not have time or space to adequately give examples of their superior qualifications. This is a study within itself which I urge all of our readers to investigate. Sometimes I hear people say, even in the church, Bible translators today are more “scholarly” than the KJV translators. Anyone who would make such a statement speaks from ignorance on this matter and is probably just repeating what they have heard someone else say. Let me mention two out of multiple examples. Lancelot Andrews was conversant in fifteen languages. It would be interesting to look for some modern translator who was so qualified. John Bois, by the time he was six years old, could write Hebrew legibly and had read the Old Testament through in Hebrew. Some 54 translators started out the process (some died before the completion of the

translation). This left 47 by the end. All of these men had similar remarkable qualifications and capabilities.

4. *The KJV used a verbal and formal equivalence method of translating.* By verbal, of course, we mean each word in the original was considered and translated as reliably and accurately as possible into English. By formal is meant that the part of speech was retained in the translating process as closely as possible (nouns translated as nouns, adjectives as adjectives, prepositions as prepositions, etc). Modern speech translations to one degree or another are based on the “dynamic equivalence” method of translation. Dynamic equivalency is best summarized in the preface of the NIV (New International Version). The preface says of its own translators: “They have striven for more than a word-for-word translation.” Later the preface says: “To achieve clarity the translators sometimes supplied words not in the original texts...” The word dynamic means “change” or “movement.” Do we want translators to change and move away from the very words of God, or do we want them to stay as close as possible to a verbal process? We certainly know how God feels about the matter. The Bible teaches that we are not to “add unto,” “take away from,” or “pervert” in any way His words (Gal. 1:6-9; Rev. 22:18-19; Prov. 30:5-6; Deut. 4:2; 12:32). Again, why would anyone who claims to respect the Bible use or promote in any way translations which are not verbal and formal in their translation technique?

5. *The KJV translation process was unique and meticulous.* Textual scholar D. A. Waite describes this process: “It was a team effort. So there were the seven original individual translations, one time as a group, five more times by the other groups. Then, at the end of the work, two men from each of the six groups got together and made a final revision as to what wording should

stand. No less than fourteen different times the translation for each book was gone over... This is an unusual, and so far as we know, a never before and never afterward team technique that was used." There are no inspired translators; however, when a translator brings the Hebrew or Greek word that has been in-breathed by God (2 Tim. 3:16) over into English accurately and reliably, it is just as much the Word of God in English as it is in the original language.

6. *There is fatal error in modern translations.* This is the type of error that has eternal consequences if taught and believed. Here is a sampling (many more could be noted) from some of the more prominent and well-known translations:

The **NIV** (New International Version) teaches the false doctrine of "faith only" in Romans 1:17. The Calvinistic doctrine of inherited sin is written right into the text (Psalm 51; Rom. 8). Man is not born with a sinful nature.

The **RSV** (Revised Standard Version) teaches the false doctrine of "faith only" (Rom. 11:20). The word "only" is not in the text at all in this passage, but was inserted by the RSV translators. It attacks the deity, sonship, and virgin birth of Christ. The translators changed "virgin" to "young woman" in Isaiah 7:14. They changed "only begotten" to "only son" in John 1:17, 3:16, etc. They changed Mary's statement, "I know not a man"

to "I have no husband."

The **ESV** (English Standard Version), according to the preface, is adapted from the RSV. It is based on a faulty text type (Nestle-Aland). John 7:53-8:11 and Mark 16:9-20 are placed in brackets, casting doubt on the integrity of these passages. Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 change "fornication" to "sexual immorality" which is too broad and inclusive.

The **ASV** (American Standard Version), **NIV**, **NASV**, and **RSV** all omit "firstborn" in Matthew 1:25 which refers to the virgin birth of Christ. They do this because they use the Critical Text instead of the traditional Received Text.

The **NASV** (New American Standard Version) uses the general terms "unchastity" and "immorality" instead of the specific word "fornication" in Matt. 5:32 and Matt. 19:9. By definition, this would allow divorce for other reasons than what the Lord said.

The **NKJV** (New King James Version) uses the general term "sexual immorality" in Matt. 5:32 and 19:9. This is still too general. Lasciviousness is sexual immorality, but not a scriptural reason for divorce.

The **ASV**, **NIV**, **NASV**, and **RSV** all omit the word "God" in First Timothy 3:16, again attacking the deity and virgin birth of Jesus. The Critical Text is used, not the Received Text.

Because they use the Critical Text, the **ASV**, **NIV**, **NASV**, and **RSV**

all cast doubt upon the integrity of Mark 16:9-20 by setting this section apart with brackets or by some comments in the marginal notes.

CONCLUSION

The King James Bible is trustworthy, reliable, and accurate. It continues to be, in spite of its critics, the superior English translation for the above reasons and more. We recognize that on occasion we must go back to the original language for clarification and full meaning with difficult passages. Nevertheless, it is the best in English yet today.

Modern translations from the ASV forward are based on a faulty text type, significantly different from the text of the KJV, plus they use the deadly and dangerous dynamic equivalence technique in the translation process. We sometimes hear people say, "All translations have errors." May I kindly point out that the issues with the King James Bible (archaic words, etc) are not in the same category as the error found in modern translations. An archaic word is not error — it's old. The textual foundation and verbal accuracy of the KJV stands solid and stable.

(I am thankful to Garland Robinson for encouraging and allowing me to present this series in STOP)

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not drink alcoholic beverages." Stop and think. If Aaron and his sons went into the tabernacle under the influence of alcoholic beverages, the penalty was death. After all of God's warnings about drinking alcoholic beverages; what about those seeking entrance into heaven under the influence of alcohol?

JESUS CHANGED WATER INTO WINE John 2:1-11

After the wedding guests and the governor had consumed the wine the bridegroom had provided, the taste buds of the director of the wedding was still able to determine that the

wine Jesus prepared was better than the first which was an indication that the wine the bridegroom had provided was grape juice and not alcoholic wine which dulls taste buds. He mistakenly concluded that the bridegroom had not served the best wine (grape juice) first. Most likely, however, the bridegroom had served his best wine first (which was all he had). The governor did not know the source of the wine Jesus had prepared.

There is evidence that Mary (the mother of Jesus) had been asked to assist in the marriage feast. Both Jesus and his disciples had been invited to the wedding. We learn that the amount of wine that had been provided for the wedding feast had been consumed and that it was Mary who assumed the responsibility to provide more. She turns to Jesus with confi-

dence that he both could and would provide more wine. The response of Jesus was, my hour has not yet come. Mary, ignoring the response of Jesus, tells the servants to do whatever Jesus tells them to do. What Mary told the servants is good advice for us as well — whatsoever Jesus tells us to do, do it.

There were six waterpots that were able to contain between two or three firkins apiece. They were filled up to the brim with water. Vine's defines a firkin as about nine gallons. Calculating an average size of the waterpots, it would amount to 45 gallons of wine (180 quarts). If we are to believe that the wine served at this wedding feast was an alcoholic wine, then Mary, Jesus and his disciples were all participants in a drunken feast. That would mean Je-

sus sinned and could not have been the atoning sacrifice for our sins because a sacrifice had to be without spot or blemish. By what authority do I make that statement? By the authority of the word of God. Jesus lived under the Old Testament law of Moses and kept it perfectly. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, without spot or blemish (Heb. 7:26; 1 Peter 1:19).

Under the law of Moses, the prophet Habakkuk was inspired to teach: *“Woe unto them that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth the bottle to him, and maketh him drunk also..”* (Habakkuk 2:15). God puts a curse on those who would give their neighbor intoxicating drink. In another manner of speaking, any person supplying alcoholic beverages to their fellowman is guilty of sin and deserving of the curse of God.

We know therefore that Jesus did not turn water into intoxicating wine because Peter was inspired to de-

scribe Jesus as being without sin. *“Forasmuch as ye know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as a Lamb without spot or blemish”* (1 Peter 1:18-19). Those who accuse Jesus of turning water into intoxicating wine, wrest/twist the Scriptures and condemn themselves.

Satan encouraged Eve to believe a lie concerning the forbidden fruit. Many today are deceived concerning the consumption of mind altering substances for recreational use. The agents of Satan actually accused Jesus of being a “wine bibber” which was true if our understanding of the word wine bibber means one who drinks wine, but the wine Jesus consumed was grape juice, not intoxicating wine. That fact you can take to the judgment with you and hear well done, well understood.

Every person involved in the manufacturing, distribution, selling, purchasing and consumption of alcoholic beverages will rue (lament, regret) their day at the judgment. *“You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”* (John 8:32).

Only those who have closed their eyes and stopped their ears refuse to understand the price the human race pays for the consumption of mind altering substances. The so called “good people” who only use alcoholic beverages in “moderation” are enablers and abettors of the of elixir of Satan known as alcohol.

How sad that many who claim to be Christians can be found with their refrigerators containing alcoholic beverages. The drink God’s people are to be advocating and dispensing is the water of life (John 4:14). Serve it in abundance and with much love.

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WARNING YOUTH ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

Jon Gary Williams

How much of an impression do we leave on our young people when warning about the dangers of alcohol? Are we telling them what they really need to know? Do we give them sufficient reason to abhor the use of alcohol? If not, we are not doing our job.

At no time in the history of the world has there been a greater need to educate youth (and everyone else) about alcohol. It is a thief of the soul. Before they find themselves being tempted to drink, they need to be impressed with the terrible consequences of what could develop in their lives.

But, the question is this — are we ourselves prepared to tell them what they really need to know? Consider the following.

THE PROBLEM

The drinking/use of alcohol, and the resulting complications of alcoholism, is one of our nation’s greatest social and moral problems. Literally hundreds of thousands of homes have

been ruined because of this problem. Broken lives by the millions lie in the wake of this tool of Satan. Suicides due to problem drinking are ever increasing. More than 100,000 U.S. deaths are caused by excessive alcohol consumption each year. Direct and indirect causes of death include drunk driving, cirrhosis of the liver, falls, cancer, and stroke. Each year more than 30,000 lives are lost on the highways because of drunk drivers.

It is impossible to say exactly how many United States citizens suffer from an alcohol-use disorder, but the best sources estimate the number to be at least 30 million, and of that number it is estimated that 17 million are alcoholic. This means that about one out of every twenty Americans is an alcoholic. And to make matters worse, the number of young people who drink alcohol regularly continues to rise. Among growing numbers of high school youth, drinking alcohol is the popular thing, and this trend is evermore reaching into the junior high (middle school) level.

The sad thing about this is that these young people don’t know where they may be heading — to a life of alcoholism!

THE FACTS

We must tell our young people the facts about alcoholism. We must make this so clear that they cannot misunderstand! We must leave an indelible impression on their minds! Often, however, we only touch the surface and fail to get at the heart of the matter. We tell them it is sin — but they already know this. We quote Biblical warnings against drunkenness — but they have already heard them.

In addition to emphasizing the lack of spirituality in drinking alcohol, we should give these youngsters some hard facts they can relate to. Let’s impress on their minds some things they won’t forget. Well, what are these hard facts?

1) No One Knows If He Or She Will Become An Alcoholic. Obviously, no one ever set out to be an al-

coholic. A brother who works with alcoholic rehabilitation programs once asked a group of teenagers, “What do you plan to be?” They responded with different answers: teacher, policeman, preacher, doctor, and so on. He then asked, “How many of you plan to be an alcoholic?” The room was silent.

The fact is, no one plans to be an alcoholic. Well, if no one wants to be addicted to alcohol, why are there millions of alcoholics? Furthermore, can anyone know if he or she will become an alcoholic? No. The fact is, there are no tests that can determine if one will become an alcoholic, and there are no signs which indicate it. The only way to find out is to engage in the practice of drinking and continue doing so! There is no other way. Those who study the problem of alcohol addiction tell us that as many as one out of every seven people who begin drinking and continue on a somewhat regular basis, will become an alcoholic.

Imagine a well of water so contaminated with poison that one out of every seven people who drink from it will be infected with an incurable disease. Such a well would be avoided like the plague. Alcohol is such a “well.”

Anyone who believes they can drink alcohol socially, as long as they do not drink to “excess,” is playing a dangerous and deadly game. There is only one way to be completely safe from alcoholism — never begin drinking.

2) It Usually Takes Several Years To Become Alcoholic. This shows the subtle influence of alcohol. It may take as many as ten to fifteen years to become an alcoholic, so, people may be in their early to mid thirties before realizing they are addicted. During their twenties, people who drink might think, “Well, I can take it or leave it.” And, they may be able to. But then, they finally reach the “point of no return” — at which they can’t leave it. Simply because people detect no apparent alcohol-use “disorder,” is no indication they are not becoming addicted. Indeed, the bottle is subtle!

During recent decades it has been observed that as the age for beginning drinkers has lowered, the average age of becoming an alcoholic has also lowered. More people are

discovering they are addicted to alcohol as early as their mid to late twenties.

3) There Is No Cure For Alcoholism. Is this true? Yes it is. There is no cure! Once people become an alcoholic they will die an alcoholic. This fact ought to frighten anyone.

Now, this is not to say that such people are beyond hope. They can find help, but they can never take another drink, not even a social drink. The best they can hope for is to become what Alcoholics Anonymous refers to as a non-drinking alcoholic. They must live their lives one day at a time. If they succeed in resisting the temptation to drink one day, they are successful that day — but tomorrow is another day. This is no way to live. Young people need to know this. They need to be taught about this. There is no cure for alcoholism!

4) Very Few Succeed In Becoming Non-drinking Alcoholics. For every person who becomes a non-drinking alcoholic, there are thousands upon thousands who fail to acknowledge their problem and will not seek recovery. And of those who do identify their problem and want to do something about it, the chance they will continue in a recovery program is extremely slim.

These are the facts. We need to get them before our young people, and in such a way that they will not forget them. Maybe, just maybe, we will save some of these precious young souls from ruin.

Remember these facts:

- 1) No one can know if they will become addicted to alcohol.
- 2) Becoming an alcoholic is a slow process, usually taking several years.
- 3) There is no cure for alcoholism. All alcoholics will die alcoholics.
- 4) Very few who reach the “point of no return” will be successful in becoming “non-drinking” alcoholics.

The ultimate remedy of beverage alcohol and the lasting effects of alcoholism is to repent and become a Christian (Acts 2:37-41; Rom. 6:3-6). Some who became members of the church at Corinth had repented of drunkenness and obeyed the Gospel (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Or, if you’re already a Christian, repent, ask God’s forgiveness and be restored to faithfulness in the Lord’s church (Acts 8:22).

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[EDITOR’S NOTE: This article is not saying it is alright to consume alcohol as long as you do not become addicted. It is simply pointing out another consequence of reaching a point in sin that is extremely difficult to overcome. — gmr]

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

in the March/18 issue of *Seek The Old Paths*: 'Is the Book of Mormon from God' and 'How we Got the Bible #3, Confirmation.' I don't know the authors, but I hope you pass on the praise. When I taught at Faulkner University for more than ten years, I regularly taught on Mormonism. I'm old and seldom preach, but teach some Bible classes. If so, I will use a great deal of this article. Our brethren know so little on the cults. I finished a course on cults with Islam in February quarter. Didn't have many students, but this course could whet more appetites. God bless you in your work"

...**Martel Pace, Montgomery, AL.** "I pray God will bless you for teaching the Truth of his Word. You are in my prayers. So thankful for *Seek The Old Paths*"

...**Lorene Wilson, Binger, OK.** "Hewell Mayo has passed away"

...**Crestview, FL.** "Dear brother Robinson, staff and Leoni Church of Christ. I want to commend you for putting the article (Who Pulled The Trigger) in the April 2018 issue of *Seek The Old Paths*. In my opinion, God and anything pertaining to Christianity, taken from our society, is the reason for all the violence of recent years. Yes, Christians are to blame too! I've seen grandparents sitting with their Grandchildren beside them in worship, playing with an iPad. This president and his cabinet have done more to head this nation back toward the principles found in God's word than any administration of recent years. I'd like to suggest that every Christian, or anyone with Christian principles, vote for these people when it comes time again. Righteousness still exalts a nation (Prov. 14:34). We Christians still have a big job to do (Matt. 13:15)"

...**TN.** "Greetings in Christ! I wish to comment on the issue of STOP dated January 2018. I was home sick one Sunday morning and took advantage of the opportunity to catch up on some reading as a means of studying and learning more about God's word. I am always edified and stimulated and encouraged by reading this publication. Thank you for your efforts as well as for those who contribute to the paper. The topics that deal with what the Bible teaches about divorce, remarriage, and the only acceptable means of receiving forgiveness for the sin of adultery were particularly compelling to me. There is so much error being taught and accepted these days about this subject. Thank you for your editorial in which this matter is very clearly and correctly discussed in light of the plain and clear teaching about it found in God's word. These things need to be said, preached, taught and proclaimed over and over again. It is obvious that God's teaching on this subject is rejected or ignored everywhere, and sadly, that includes within the Lord's church! What Denver Thomas had to say in his elder's column is absolutely spot on. As the Bible teaches, elders will certainly be called upon to give an account for their responsibility to be accountable for what is preached and taught and allowed within the congregation that each has the oversight of. Your editorial, as well as the other articles and comments in this issue of STOP clearly and concisely detail exactly what God's word teaches about the subject. The information was delivered in a way impossible to misunderstand and without malice or unkindness. From what I know about you,

"Thanks for the work you put into this: some really good articles. This 'trickle down apostasy' (Feb/18) could continue in a lot of different directions"

...**Richard Bowman, Carthage, TN.** "It was with great joy I read the two articles

it was delivered with Christian love, as it must be, and is for me a very valuable resource for my own efforts to speak God's truth in love so that those with whom I discuss these matters with are not left uninformed. As we both know, what they do with the information they receive is up to them, but it is critical for us to know that they have heard the truth, nothing more or less, and are without excuse. The things I have read for several years now that are contained in the STOP publication have been extremely beneficial to me. I have become better able to teach about these kinds of things in a way that does not cloud the issue or leave room for real dispute. I have grown spiritually a great deal as a result, and for that, I am grateful. I know that the work you are doing does not always return positive comments. But I appreciate your stand for the truth. Your example to me of unflinching faithfulness in your preaching and teaching and the printed words in this publication have not gone unnoticed nor unappreciated. Keep up the good work! May God bless your efforts and strengthen your resolve to preach and teach the Word! Thank you for the encouragement that I have received from you and this publication to do the same thing, with your good mentoring to help confirm that I am also on the straight and narrow when giving an answer for the faith that lies within me. I just wanted you to know that your efforts in this regard are appreciated and have been of great benefit to me! Keep up the good work!"

...**Kenneth Thompson, Lubbock, TX.**

Seek The Old Paths is a monthly publication of the **Leoni Church of Christ** and is under the oversight of its elders. It is FREE, being supported by the contributions of both individuals and congregations. Its primary purpose and goal in publication can be found in Jude 3, 2 Tim. 4:2, Titus 1:13, Titus 2:1 and 2 Peter 1:12. All mail received may be published unless it is marked "not for publication." The church building is located at: 6818 McMinnville Hwy, Woodbury, TN 37190.

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