

Is it a Sin for a Christian to Drink Alcohol?

Romans 14:20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food

“Is it a sin for a Christian to have a glass of wine or a beer?” My answer is no.

“Did Jesus drink real wine?” It has been debated by the best, but it reads in the Bible that He did. He even turned water to wine.

It has been written that wine was part of the everyday culture and commerce in Jesus day. While the wine was not grape juice, it would not be classified with today’s alcohol (beer and wine) which some have considered as hard liquor by comparison.

While He was accused falsely by the religious leaders of being one, Jesus was not a drunkard or an alcoholic. Paul gives instructions concerning leadership:

1 Timothy 3:2-3 A bishop then must be blameless ...not given to wine,

1 Timothy 3:8 Likewise deacons must ... not given to much wine ...

1 Timothy 3:3 in different translations gives us an understanding of what being “given to wine” is:

- (The Message) *not be over fond of wine,*
- (NCV) *He must not drink too much wine*
- (DARBY) *not given to excesses from wine*
- (NASB95) *not addicted to wine*

Paul shares with all believers:

Ephesians 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

Things that concern me:

- People who can’t have a good time unless they have alcohol
- People who regularly try to remedy stress or a bad day with alcohol
- People who have liver and kidney problems but still persist in drinking alcohol
- Christians who brag about their freedom to drink as if to justify themselves or recruit others to their activity
- Christians who drink indiscriminately and have no concern for the conscience, testimony or results it could produce in the life of another

Things to consider:

- Alcohol is addictive. Indiscriminate, regular consumption can result in alcoholism. I have seen lives ruined from its control. Nobody ever starts drinking thinking they will be an alcoholic. Alcoholics Anonymous was founded for a reason.
- Drinking and driving can ruin your life physically, financially and socially. Two quick beers greatly impair judgment and motor skills, and in California will make you legally drunk and land you in jail.
- Some people are so free to drinking any type of alcohol they are actually in bondage to it. There are Christians, and a surprising number of ministers, who are closet alcoholics. No one would know by their behavior most of the time.

Galatians 5:13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

- One person shared with me, "It is hard to win the world if you act like them." One beer leads to two beers to three beers to four ... A sobering truth:

1 Corinthians 6:10 - *drunkards ... will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

- I have heard many say "In France (England, Europe, Spain, you name the country) they have wine for breakfast, lunch and dinner and don't have hang ups about it as Americans ~ they also have a higher percentage of alcoholics.

My personal philosophy:

- I don't have to have it.
- I won't destroy the work of God over it.
- I don't want alcohol as part of the culture and fabric of our local church. I encourage all Christians not to serve or consume alcohol at any church sponsored function, home group, picnic, camp out, restaurant, event, etc. We must be aware of our testimony and never know when there may be one of "weaker conscience" there to observe our "freedom". Even those who say they are "okay" with it often aren't and are stumbled.

I recently heard of a church campout where couples brought wine and several of them became drunk. One mother, who personally isn't against someone drinking, said she was never going on a trip with this group again because she didn't need for her kids to see this example.

- I don't judge others who partake of alcoholic beverages in their personal lives.
- I am not the Pentecostal Police. Each of us is responsible for our own lives and live within the conscience God speaks through to us.
- I think it is best we not be a stumbling block to new Christians and young people in the body who may be coming out of a lifestyle of alcohol or have a family background of alcoholism. Our lives are not our own. We live this life for Him first and others second.

Romans 14:13-21 *Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way.*

14 *I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.*

15 *Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.*

16 *Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil;*

17 *for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

18 *For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men.*

19 *Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.*

20 *Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense.*

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.*