



Does the bible really say?

Part 5: "It is/isn't a sin to drink alcohol!"

1 Corinthians 10:23-24; *"Everything is permissible"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible"—but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others."*

1. Way back when

- I often wonder who the first human was that figured out there were substances that you could consume that could make you feel different?
- In ancient tombs & burials, archaeologists regularly discover remnants of beer or wine, either as **offerings** or **supplies** for the afterlife.
- We know that some form of beer or wine was made in most ancient civilizations & cultures, all over the globe.
- According to ancient writing & hieroglyphics, these beverages were consumed for several reasons: **medicinal** purposes, **nutritional** value, **social** interaction, religious **rituals**, and getting drunk.
- We have a record of the first human in the bible to be involved with the creation & consumption of wine, though it's likely to have predated his time, that being **Noah**.
- **Genesis 9:20-21;** *"Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard. When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent."*
- Not only do we read the first biblical record of alcohol, but we see the first biblical example of **drunkenness** & its **shocking** results.

2. More **recently**

- **Distilled** spirits or hard **liquor** became prevalent between the 1400s-1600s, especially in Europe.
- The creation of, and the scale of use, started to cause even greater societal issues. This spread to the United States after our founding.
- We know that **George Washington** was a distiller at Mt. Vernon.

- Born out of the **abuse** of alcohol came the **Temperance** Movement in the 1820s-1830s.
- This movement was started in local **churches** in America, where they asked the congregants to make pledges of **abstinence**.
- This movement was often spearheaded by **women** who saw the harmful effects alcoholism was having on the men they knew.
- This movement gained so much momentum that by **1917**, the 18th Amendment to the Constitution was introduced.
- This amendment, commonly known as **Prohibition** or the **Volstead** Act, effectively banned the manufacture, sale, transportation, & consumption of alcoholic beverages in the United States of America from 1920-1933.
- Eventually, the 21st Amendment repealed the 18th Amendment.

3. Not a **blanket prohibition**, but filled with **warnings**

- You will **NOT** find a bible verse that **prohibits** the consumption of alcoholic beverages.
- However, you will find many texts in both the O.T. & N.T. with **warnings** against the **misuse** of alcohol.
- Some scriptures discuss the **medicinal** benefits of alcohol & speak of it in **positive** light (Eccl. 9:7, Ps. 104:15, Amos 9:14, Is. 55:1, 1 Tim. 5:23).
- Jesus' **first** miracle was turning **water** into **wine** in **John 2:1-11**, where such wine was used for celebration.
- Jesus' **Last Supper** featured wine as symbolic of His blood shed for us, now making juice/wine an element of the Lord's Supper/Communion.
- Many would pause & say that the reason why Jesus drank wine & why the consumption was so common in Jesus' day was because the water was bad & the alcohol content, though low, killed bacteria in the water.
- While studies of ancient texts have confirmed that this was likely true & that wine in Jesus' day was much lower in alcohol content than today's wine, it was still an alcoholic beverage. Jesus **did** drink wine/alcohol.
- Paul told Timothy to stop only drinking water & to drink wine because he was having stomach issues.
- **1 Timothy 5:23**; *"Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses."*
- Therefore, it would be **incorrect** to say that having a drink is a sin according to the bible. Alcohol isn't sinful by its nature.
- However, the **preponderance** of bible passages (over **70**) deal with the dangers, ensnarement, & disaster of drinking & drunkenness.

- **Here are a few biblical examples:**
 - **Prov. 20:1**; *“Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise.”*
 - **Prov. 23:29-32**; *“Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaints? Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? Those who linger over wine, who go to sample bowls of mixed wine. Do not gaze at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly! In the end, it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper.”*
 - **Luke 21:34**; *“Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap.”*
 - **1 Cor. 5:11**; *“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.”*
 - **Galatians 5:19-21**; *“The acts of the sinful nature are obvious; sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*
- Scripture does not forbid Christians from having a drink, but it does prohibit **drunkenness** & **addiction**. Drunkenness **is** a sin!

4. **Three reasons to abstain**

- **Your walk with God; Jesus is enough!** We should consider the necessity & benefits of things such as alcohol. Why do we need to drink?
- **1 Cor. 10:23-24**; *“Everything is permissible”—but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is permissible”—but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.”*
- **1 Cor. 10:31**; *“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”*
- **James 1:22-25**; *“Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he*

looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.”

- **Your witness to others.**
- **Colossians 3:1-3**; *“Since then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.”*
- None of us wants to send a muddled picture of Christ to the world. We should examine our motivations for indulging in such earthly things.
- **Not becoming a stumbling block.**
- **Romans 14:13, 21-22**; *“Therefore, let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put a stumbling block or obstacle in your brother’s way.” “It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that would cause your brother to fall. So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves.”*
- We would never want to exercise our freedom, though under control, where another brother or sister may struggle with such control.



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- This movement was started in local _____ in America, where they asked the congregants to make pledges of _____.
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3. Not a _____, but filled with _____

- You will _____ find a bible verse that _____ the consumption of alcoholic beverages.
- However, you will find many texts in both the O.T. & N.T. with _____ against the _____ of alcohol.
- Some scriptures discuss the _____ benefits of alcohol & speak of it in _____ light (Eccl. 9:7, Ps. 104:15, Amos 9:14, Is. 55:1, 1 Tim. 5:23).
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