

The Bible provides important spiritual reasons for not drinking alcoholic beverages.

- Care of the body is important for Christians because the Holy Spirit indwells them.

"Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:1-2)

"Do you not know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit...?" (1 Corinthians 6:19)

"For we are the sanctuary of the living God.... Therefore, come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord; do not touch any unclean thing, and I will welcome you. I will be a Father to you, and you will be sons and daughters to Me, says the Lord Almighty. Therefore dear friends, since we have such promises, we should wash ourselves clean from every impurity of the flesh and spirit, making our sanctification complete in the fear of God." (2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1)

- A Christian's life should not be an impediment to others.

"Therefore, let us decide... not to... put a stumbling block or pitfall in your brother's way.... It is a noble thing not to eat meat, or drink wine, or do anything that makes your brother stumble." (Romans 14:13, 21)

"But be careful that this right of yours in no way becomes a stumbling block to the weak." (1 Corinthians 8:9)

- Christians should always be in control of their minds and actions.

"So then, we must not sleep, like the rest, but we must stay awake and be sober." (1 Thessalonians 5:6)

"Therefore, get your minds ready for action, being self-disciplined...." (1 Peter 1:13)

"...be clear-headed...." (1 Peter 4:7)

"Be sober! Be on the alert! Your adversary the Devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour." (1 Peter 5:8)

Conclusion

Both general Bible principles and specific Bible teachings encourage today's Christians to abstain from this dangerous drug called alcohol. In place of a life controlled by the mind-numbing, destructive influence of alcohol, the Bible presents the model of a lifestyle characterized by inner peace, joy, and love through the Holy Spirit. Additionally, the Bible encourages Christians, as salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16), to deliver society from alcohol's devastating personal and social effects.

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT

Alcohol



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People have been drinking fermented beverages since at least the days of Noah. The Bible states that after the flood, Noah planted a vineyard, made wine, and got drunk (Genesis 9:20-21). In New Testament times, Jesus turned water into wine at the marriage feast at Cana (John 2:1-11), and Paul admonished Timothy to “use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses” (1 Timothy 5:23). After the introduction of distilled spirits with their much higher alcohol content (up to eight times higher than wine) in the Middle Ages, the problems caused by alcohol increased significantly. Today, alcohol abuse has caused catastrophic problems and brought suffering to millions of people worldwide. Because the use and abuse of alcohol continues to plague our world, the Bible’s teachings on the subject are as relevant today as they have ever been. The following Bible passages speak clearly on some important matters related to alcohol.

The Bible identifies total abstinence from alcohol as an expression of devotion to God.

- The Nazarite vow included abstinence from alcohol. “The Lord instructed Moses: ‘...When a man or woman makes a special vow, a Nazarite vow, to consecrate himself to the Lord, he is to abstain from wine and beer.... He is not to eat anything produced by the grapevine, from seeds to skin, during his vow.’” (Numbers 6:1-4)
- Daniel made a personal choice to abstain from drinking alcohol. “Daniel determined that he would not defile himself with the king’s

food or with the wine he drank. So he asked permission from the chief official not to defile himself.” (Daniel 1:8)

- John the Baptist abstained from drinking alcohol. “But the angel said to him: Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. There will be joy and delight for you, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord and will never drink wine or beer. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother’s womb.” (Luke 1:13-15)

The Bible recognizes the dangers of alcohol.

“Wine is a mocker, beer is a brawler, and whoever staggers because of them is not wise.” (Proverbs 20:1)

“Listen, my son, and be wise; keep your mind on the right course. Don’t associate with those who drink too much wine.” (Proverbs 23:19-20)

“Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has conflicts? Who has complaints? Who has wounds for no reason? Who has red eyes? Those who linger over wine, those who go looking for mixed wine. Don’t gaze at wine when it is red, when it gleams in the cup and goes down smoothly. In the end it bites like a snake and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, and you will say absurd things.” (Proverbs 23:29-33)

“These also stagger because of wine and stumble under the influence of beer: priest and prophet stagger because of beer, they are confused by wine. They stumble because of beer, they are muddled in [their] visions, they stumble in [their] judgments.” (Isaiah 28:7)

The Bible Condemns Drunkenness.

“For the drunkard and the glutton will become poor, and grogginess will clothe [them] in rags.” (Proverbs 23:21)

“Let us walk with decency, as in the daylight: not in carousing and drunkenness....” (Romans 13:13)

“Do not be deceived: no sexually immoral people, idolaters... [nor] drunkards... will inherit God’s kingdom.” (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

“Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and anything similar, about which I tell you in advance—as I told you before—that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Galatians 5:19-21)

“An overseer, therefore, must... not [be] addicted to wine.” (1 Timothy 3:2-3; see also Titus 1:7)

“Deacons, likewise, should... not [be] drinking a lot of wine.” (1 Timothy 3:8)

“And don’t get drunk with wine, which [leads to] reckless actions, but be filled with the Spirit.” (Ephesians 5:18)