

THE WORLD'S BIBLE #12

By Keith Greer

"THE SOCIAL DRINK." PART 2

While most of us can agree that drunkenness is condemned in the scriptures, where some of us disagree is in the defining of "drunkenness". Many brethren believe that the passages we have previously studied forbid "excessive drinking" only.

As Christians, can we still be "children of light" if we drink a glass of wine at a party or at dinner? Are we "hurting anyone" if we drink alcohol in the privacy of our own home?

For those who try to justify drinking alcohol in moderation, there are various scriptures that are used in what they believe "proves" their position. Unfortunately, if we look at what these passages mean exactly, and in their proper context, I do not believe that we can honestly arrive at that conclusion.

In Ephesians 5: 17,18, the Christians at Ephesus were told, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;"

Paul had just admonished the Ephesians in the preceding verses to "be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; ... For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:" (Ephesians 5:1-11) Did the apostle Paul tell these Christians that they could drink wine - just not to drink to excess? Is a little drinking okay as long as we don't proceed to the state of drunkenness?

Paul uses an interesting word in this passage - the Greek word, "methusko". Thayer defines "methusko" to mean "to make drunk, to get drunk, or to grow drunk. To become intoxicated." Can we look at these definitions and ignore the fact that the Ephesians were being told that they should not engage in the process that will lead to drunkenness?

From a medical point of view, alcohol is absorbed into the blood stream immediately. Even with "one drink", every drop of alcohol begins to have an effect on us. Many who started on the road to drunkenness, started out with "one drink" - "just to relax". There would be no point in drinking alcohol at all if a person did not like the effect that it has on him. The medical research has more than proved that any amount of alcohol has damaging effects on the body - the amount of damage depends simply on the amount of alcohol that is consumed.

Friend, ask any alcoholic what he regrets most and the answer will always be the same—"THE FIRST DRINK I EVER LET PASS MY LIPS!" No person knows what effect alcohol will have on them until they take the first drink. Harmless behavior, just "sowing one's wild oats." Tell that to a drunk who has destroyed his health, family, his whole life and seeks nothing more than finding the resources for the next drink!

If you are drinking with a friend, does your friend know when to stop - the way that you think that you can? Think about this parents – do you want to set the example of “drinking” in front of your children? What if they cannot stop and become addicted – but will take the risk because he saw you drink. How could a parent who truly loves his child ever take such a risk? And ... if a Christian is drinking just to be socially acceptable and not to be "different", then, as a Christian, what kind of example are you setting? God’s word tells us not to set a “stumbling block before a weak brother”, Romans 14:13. Want to take the risk? ***