

THE CHRISTIAN AND ALCOHOL

The Complexity of the Issue

INTRODUCTION:

When it comes to the question, “Is it wrong for a Christian to have a drink of alcohol?”, many Christians blurt out a quick “yes” or “no” without really thinking through the complexities of this question.

I. THE COMPLEXITY OF THE ISSUE: Why is it difficult to answer the question, “*Is it wrong for a Christian to have a drink of alcohol?*”

A. Because of the Varied Picture of Wine Drinking in the Bible

1. Positive
2. Negative

B. Because of the Absence of an Explicit Universal Command Against Drinking Wine

1. The absence of such a command is not necessarily a problem.
2. The absence of an explicit universal command against drinking does not necessarily grant for its allowance today.
 - a. *yayin*: יַיִן = wine
 - b. *shēkār*: שֶׁכָּר = strong drink; intoxicating drink; beer.
 - c. *chomets*: חֹמֶץ = sour wine; vinegar.
 - d. *mishrah enab*: מִשְׁרַח עֵנָב = lit. liquid of a grape or grape juice.

C. Because of the Lack of Understanding about Wine, its Production and its Preservation in Bible Times

1. The biblical teaching of *wine* itself

Wine is a flexible term. It is the fluid or juices squeezed from grapes regardless of how fermented the fluid or juice might be.

It is associated with the *blood of grapes* (Gen 49:11; Deu 32:14); called *a grape* (Num 6:4); grape juice (Isa. 16:10); identified as vinegar or sour wine (Psa 69:21, cf. Matt 27:34; Mark 15:23; Luke 23:36). Wine is also associated with strong drink some 17 times in the Old Testament. When used together, the intoxicating properties are assumed for both.

2. Production of Wine

tirosh: תִּירוֹשׁ = fresh wine; new wine; wine; grapes.

3. Preservation of Wine

- a. Filtration
- b. Subsidence
- c. Fumigation

Question: Does the wine as understood biblically & historically contain alcohol?

Answer:

Question: Is the wine of today the same as the wine of the Scriptures?

Answer:

Question: Do the Scriptures permit the drinking of wine by believers?

Answer: