

The Folly of Strong Drink (The Sin of Sipping Saints)

Proverbs 20:1; 23:20-21; 23:29-35

This is not one of my favorite topics to preach about. However, the Bible has much to say about it (over 300 references to wine, drunkenness, and strong drink). If I'm going to be true to God and the Bible, I must preach it.

It is a sin that I do not take lightly. My wife's dad was a drunkard and died of cirrhosis of the liver.

I. The **DECLARATIONS** against strong drink.

- Isaiah 5:11, 22—*Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! ... Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:*
- Isaiah 28:7—*But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine...*
- Daniel 1:8—*Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank...*
- Habakkuk 2:15—*Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also...*
- Luke 1:15—*For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink...*
- Ephesians 5:18— *...be not drunk with wine...*
- 1 Corinthians 5:11— *I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.*
- Billy Sunday said, "*Whiskey and beer are all right in their place... but their place is in hell.*" He called the liquor business "*The most damnable, corrupt institution that ever wriggled out of hell and fastened itself on the public.*" He referred to those who sold booze as "*peanut-brained, weasel-eyed, hog-jowled, beetle-browed, bull-necked lobsters.*"
- Abraham Lincoln said: *Alcohol has many defenders but no defense.*

II The **DESCRIPTIONS** of strong drinkers (Prov. 23:29-35). Not a pretty picture.

- A. *Who hath woe? who hath sorrow?* [SADNESS / SORROW]
- B. *who hath contentions?* [STRIFE]
- C. *who hath babbling?* [SLURRED SPEECH]
- D. *who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?* [SORENESS
- falling down, cut themselves, bang into doors] *They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, [TOTAL ABSTINENCE] when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.*
- E. *At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.* [SNAKE / STUNG]
- F. *Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.* [SOUSED / STONED / SICK— **Makes you puke.** Isaiah 19:14 —...*they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.*]
- G. *They have _____ me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not:* [STRICKENED]
- H. *when shall I awake? I will seek it _____ .* [SLAVED / ADDICTED]

III. The **DANGER** of strong drink.

- A. It **defiles** the body, **dulls** the mind, **drains** the finances, and **destroys** the family.
 1. Last year our highways were stained with the blood of 16,000 victims of this toxic poison belched up from hell.
 2. How many of you know of someone who has been hurt by strong drink?
- B. Most sadly, there are even some Christians who engage in drinking **intoxicating** beverages. Paul warned CHRISTIANS of the danger of losing their inheritance in the Kingdom of God through drunkenness.
 - 1 Corinthians 6:10— *Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*
 - Galatians 5:21— *... drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

- C. Liquor, beer, booze, (call it what you will—Hell juice; demon drink; barf beverage) has no place in the life of a Christian.
1. Social drinking is wrong—A Christian who “sips socially” is often one who slips shamefully.
 2. God demands nothing less than TOTAL ABSTINENCE. *Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink (Isa. 5:22). Romans 14:21—It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.*

IV. The **DERISION** of strong drink.

- A. It mocks.
1. By creating in them a thirst for more while not satisfying that thirst.
 2. By giving them a false sense of happiness and security.
- B. It makes people into fools.
1. Wine made a fool out of **Noah**. It made a fool out of **Lot**. It made a fool out of **Nabal**. And it will make a fool out of you.
 2. Wine is no respecter of position, sex, age, race, or social status. Its victims include politicians, lawyers, mechanics, actors, singers, soldiers, fathers, mothers, children, and yes, even preachers.
 - It makes you **talk** foolishly— *“who hath babbling”* – sound like a idiot and get yourself in trouble.
 - It makes you **think** foolishly—*“... they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment”*— One said, “A drunk is like a bottle—all neck and belly, but no head.”
 - It makes you **toil** foolishly – working for the next paycheck only to blow it at the tavern while the children go hungry and the cupboard stays empty.
- C. Wise people never take that first drink.

One out of every eighteen people who take that “first drink” become confirmed drunkards. Would you board an airplane if the airline warned that one seat out of every eighteen would fall through the floor before the flight was over? Only a fool would board that plane!

V. The **DECEPTION** of strong drink (Prov. 20:1).

- A. Deceived into thinking, “One drink won’t hurt.” “I can stop anytime.”
➔Someone has said, “Man takes a drink... drink takes drink... drink takes man.”
- B. The Bible treats drinking “*strong drink*” as sin (Hab. 2:5).

People say, “Isn’t coffee a strong drink?” I know of no one who abused his wife and children because he drank too much coffee. I don’t know of any traffic fatalities caused by a driver drunk on coffee. How many divorces have been caused by too much coffee drinking? Only a fool would try to put coffee in the same category as liquor!

- C. In 1944 the American Medical Association declared alcoholism to be a “disease.” A.A. adopted that deception.
- ➔It is **NOT** a disease—Paul refers to it as a **sin of the flesh** (Gal. 5:21).
1. If drunkenness is a disease, then God would be unjust to punish it. If it is an illness, I cannot be held responsible.
 2. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that...
 - is bottled and sold;
 - requires a license to propagate it;
 - requires outlets to spread it.
 - produces revenue for the government;
 - provokes crime;
 - is habit forming;
 - brings violent death on the highways;
 - is spread by advertising;
 - is without a germ or virus that causes it.

SUMMATION: Alcohol: The Effective Solvent

It will remove stains from designer clothes. It will also remove the clothes off your back. If used in sufficient quantities: It will remove furniture from the home and food from the table, lining from the stomach, and vision from the eyes, as well as judgment from the mind. Alcohol will remove good reputation, good jobs, good friends, and happiness from children's hearts. Alcohol will remove sanity, freedom and spouses' relationships. Alcohol will remove life itself.

As a remover of things — alcohol has no equal! (*Sword of the Lord*- 5/1/98)