

Trends

Some alcohol use statistics:

- ☛ 23.4% of adults age 18 and over had at least one heavy drinking day in the past year.
- ☛ Number of annual alcohol-caused liver disease deaths: 19,388.
- ☛ Number of annual alcohol-related deaths, excluding accidents and homicide: 30,722.

—via Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Proverbs 23:31-32: "Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper."

Sentence Sermons

"O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains!" —Cassio (Act II, Scene iii) William Shakespeare, from *Othello*

Proverbs 23:33: "Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things."

News & Notes

Please pray for those mentioned in the announcements after services and others listed on the bulletin board in the foyer of the church building.

Pray for all the members at Westside! Please pray for Susan Ferrell and her family as she continues to recover from a brain tumor. Please pray for her and her family.

Please pray for Alan Jones. He underwent deep brain stimulation to hopefully relieve severe facial pain. Alan held a gospel meeting for us in October 2014. He's been unable to preach for several months due to his affliction. Pray for him and his family.

Sister Virginia Brown's hip replacement surgery was a success! Pray for a fast and complete recovery!

Pray for Larry Hafley as he faces major surgery to replace a heart valve.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many temptations in today's school environment.

Please keep sister Wilma in your prayers! She gives all of us so much encouragement! God bless her and Virginia! Remember both of them in your prayers.

There are many needy saints! Can you help?! Let me know.

If you know of any in need of our prayers please let us know!

Words of Life is published by the **Westside Church of Christ** meeting at 1301 N. Enterprise, Bloomington, IN 47404

Times of Service: Bible Study, Sunday 9:30 AM and Wednesday 7:00 PM; Worship, Sunday 10:30 AM and 5:00 PM

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Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

Feb. 12,
2017

Vol. 9,
No. 7

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You
have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



"Campbellites"
Larry Ray Hafley

Many of this generation of Christians have never heard the term, "Campbellite." However, in days gone by, Christians were regularly referred to as "Campbellites." Because a man named Alexander Campbell was a prominent preacher who called men back to the Bible, those who broke with traditional denominational dogma and determined "to speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent," were referred to as "Campbellites."

Occasionally, the term is used by some today, especially by those who feel the pinch and punch of truth. When they cannot defend their faith, or when they see that their teachings are in plain conflict with the word of God, they lash out with, "Campbellite!" Recently, two or three correspondents have referred to me as a "Campbellite." Generally, here is my response:

First, it is a name which I do not wear. I would not call a man a "Baptist" if he rejected the term. Second, there is nothing which I believe, teach, and practice which began with the teaching of a man named Campbell. If so, what is it? (1) Is it baptism "for the remission of sins?" No, Acts 2:38. (2) Is it the fact that I am a member of a local church of Christ? No, Romans 16:16, "the churches of Christ salute you." (3) Is it because disciples come together "upon the first day of the week" to break bread? No, Acts 20:7. (4) Is it because members of the church "lay by in store" upon every "first day of the week"? No, 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2. (5) Is it because members of the church refuse to wear human names and are referred to as "Christians," "disciples," "saints," "brethren," "children of God"? No, Acts 11:26; 1 Cor. 1:2; 3:1; Gal. 3:26.

Again, in order for me to be properly labeled as a "Campbellite," one needs to cite one item that I believe, teach, or practice that originated with a man named Campbell. Can he do it? If not, let him not call me a "Campbellite," for I reject anything and everything in religion for which I cannot find a "Thus saith the Lord" (1 Pet. 4:11).

Third, regarding the term, "Campbellite," from the *Encyclopedia Of Religion*, edited by Vergilius Fern, we note the following: "A term applied to the Disciples of Christ; (1) Whimsically by themselves; (2) Ignorantly by the non-church public;

(3) Viciously, as well as ignorantly by the less enlightened sects. Obsolescent, with the general advance of religious intelligence and interdenominational courtesy.”

Perhaps, one may use the term, “Campbellite,” in ignorance. As brother A. C. Grider used to say when one called him a Campbellite, “the man is either mean or green.”

Is One Beer Okay?

Mike Thomas

It is clear that God condemns drunkenness. His word warns, *“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God”* (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Regardless of what anyone else says, God says no drunkard is going to heaven without repenting. Thus, *“Do not be deceived!”*

However, is it wrong to have just one beer at a party or one glass of wine at a business meeting? Does God also condemn moderate, recreational drinking? In answering these questions, let us at least acknowledge what God’s word clearly says about alcohol. *“Wine is a mocker, intoxicating drink arouses brawling, and whoever is lead astray by it is not wise”* (Proverbs 20:1). And, *“Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper”* (23:31-32).

At the very least, we should see He is telling us to not be lured by the pleasure of drinking, right? What else can *“not look on the wine”* mean? Put it this way, if He had said the same thing about chocolate (*“whoever is lead astray by it is not wise”*), would we interpret that as an invitation to eat chocolate in moderation? Fortunately, He has not placed that restraint on us (like He has intoxicating drink), but based on how people treat His teachings on wine I am not sure it would matter. I believe there would be Christians consuming chocolate even if God said to not look upon it.

“But what if I don’t get drunk? What if I only have one or two beers? Is that still a sin?” Yes, it is. Peter addressed this very thing in 1 Peter 4:3 when he condemned *“drunkenness, revelries, and drinking parties.”* “Revelries” refers to the celebratory use of alcohol (like after winning the game), while drinking parties refers to casual, social drinking without the intent of getting intoxicated. All of these condemn a recreational use of alcohol and drugs. The only exception the Bible gives is when we must use intoxicants for medical purposes (*“a little wine for the stomach’s sake,”* 1 Timothy 5:23). Other than that, we have no permission from God to use intoxicants.

Some will use Jesus’ miracle of turning water into wine (John 2:1-11) to justify drinking and getting high, but that interpretation places Jesus in violation of other Bible passages. While it is true that wine is mentioned often in the Bible, it is also true that any juice of the grape was referred to as wine (Isaiah 65:10; Jeremiah 48:33). This distinction is seen in cases like Hannah, who had neither *“wine nor intoxicating drink”* (1 Samuel 1:15). This passage shows that some *“wine”* could be non-intoxicating drink, which is likely what Jesus made

when He turned water into wine. If He did not, and He actually made intoxicating drink for a crowd, He violated the Scriptures. Isaiah said, *“Woe to men mighty at drinking wine, Woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink”* (Isaiah 5:22). “Woe” is a warning of judgment against ungodly behavior. It is used here of people who mix intoxicating drink for recreational drinking. So, either Jesus violated this passage in creating liquor or He made a wine (beverage of the grape) that people could consume without getting drunk. You can believe what you want, but I choose to believe Jesus was not *“valiant for mixing intoxicating drink.”* I do not see Him contributing to a drinking party.

Besides all this, God tells Christians to be sober-minded (Titus 2:2, 6). There is no way a person is sober after one drink, which is why airlines do not permit pilots to operate a plane after one beer or why school systems do not let bus drivers haul kids around after one glass of wine. These individuals may not be stumbling drunk, but neither are they sober and fully capable of making sound judgment. If such is the case in flying a plane or driving a bus, why would it not also be true for those who are to represent God to a lost and dying world? How can we commune with Him if we are consuming the very thing He said to not even look upon?

For those who are still looking for ways to justify a moderate use of alcohol and drugs, consider these final questions:

1. Are you setting a godly example in purchasing and consuming intoxicants? As a Christian, you are supposed to be the *“light of the world”* in glorifying God in *“good works”* (Matthew 5:13-14). Are you doing that when you are seen drinking at a bar or buying alcohol at a liquor store? If a mother with small children was seen doing these things, she would be viewed with contempt. Would you be viewed any differently if people knew you were a song leader, Bible class teacher, or preacher? Are you an example *“in conduct”* and *“in purity”* while visiting these places or in acting this way?
2. Can you take God’s word with you while out drinking, without being an offense? If not, how can you say you represent what it teaches?
3. Would you have one beer before worship or teaching a Bible class? Would you be coming before God with a sober mind if you did? Would other Christians approve of you if they knew you did?
4. Does drinking make you a better Christian? Are you more spiritually-minded and closer to God by having a drink? If so, why are you afraid of certain people finding out that you drink?
5. Are you ready to meet God while drinking?

I have said enough. If these thoughts are not enough to convince you to obey God’s command to *“not look upon”* strong drink, there is nothing else I can say to change your mind. But know this, one of us is wrong. Either I have misinterpreted the Bible, and God does permit you to look upon and consume the wine, or you have been misled and are justifying sin. If so, what if your conscience has been seared and you have been sent strong delusions because you will not repent of drinking? Either way, until I can be shown otherwise from God’s word, I will encourage all drinkers to repent and be sober minded.