



Drink, Drank, Drunk by [John T Polk II](#)

*All Scriptures and comments are based on the **New King James Version**, unless otherwise noted.*

The percentage of people who begin drinking alcohol to deliberately become roaring, vomiting, stinking drunk might actually be small. The percentage that actually becomes that way looms large, however. When does "social drinking" become "unsocial drinking?" Most people seem to think drunkenness is determined by:

- 1) Their own capacity;
- 2) Their companions' capacity;
- 3) The legal percentage of alcohol consumed compared to their body weight; or
- 4) How painful their "hangover" is on the next day.

It is actually, none of the above! According to the way the Bible deals with the subject, drunkenness is determined by definition and purpose. The Bible word for "drunken" literally refers to the loss of judgment, caution, and reasoning. It is scientific fact that this alteration begins to occur with the very first drink of alcohol. If the purpose for the drink is its medicinal property, then, as with every medicine, the harm of the dose is weighed against the benefit to health. In point of fact, more than "a dose" is "social drinking!"

Let's have a party!

But they also have erred through wine, And through intoxicating drink are out of the way; The priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink, They are swallowed up by wine, They are out of the way through intoxicating drink; They err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filth; No place is clean (**Isaiah 28:7-8**).

What wonderful fun it is (?) to be with people socially while they are consumed by the alcohol they consume; fall all over the place; and to watch them vomit and void all over themselves and us! This surely makes for such a great Prom, Roadhouse, Tavern, or Convention that we'll keep coming back again and again! "Social drinking" leads into habitual drinking socially!

How about this for a "hangover?"

1. *There is the ever-present problem with problems that are still problems after "socially drinking:"*

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? (**Proverbs 23:29**)

2. *There is the fear of increasing addiction:*

Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine.
(**Proverbs 23:30**)

3. *There is the personal misery of the after-effects, which the commercials never show:*

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. (**Proverbs 23:31-32**)

4. *There is the loss of trust at home and at work:*

Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things. (**Proverbs 23:33**)

5. *There is the damage done to those outside the family who see the drunken reeling back and forth and the loss of the ability to feel pain:*

Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: 'They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?' (**Proverbs 23:34-35**).

Won't this be hilarious to talk about the next morning?! What fun yesterday!?

There are 3 uses of alcohol, each as a medicine, that is, to be used with a very low dose, only for pain relief, out of necessity, briefly at best. They are:

1) To relieve recurring weakening digestive problems. Paul told Timothy to,

No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities (**1 Timothy 5:23**).

Whether this wine was fermented or not, the emphasis is on the words "a little," for this gives no room for "social drinking," which always seems to involve more than "a little." It has been established that grape juice has beneficial digestive properties apart from its alcoholic content. Timothy was a total abstainer from "wine," for he had to be told to "use a little" as his medicine.

The Holy Spirit inspired Paul had made it clear that Christian men who became Elders were not to be "given to wine" (**1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7**), that is, lingering where it is served, having the regular practice of drinking it, or enjoying its use! If that doesn't condemn "social drinking," what would? With Deacons, the phrase is "not given to much wine" (**1 Timothy 3:8**), which is not approving the regular practice, but showing that a deacon should not have "much wine" on his mind! Again, "social drinking" was not to be a part of a Christian man's thought or concern.

In Moses' Law, God absolutely prohibited a "priest's" use of "wine nor intoxicating drink" when offering sacrifices (**Leviticus 10:8-11**;

Ezekiel 44:21). Since New Testament Christians are priests who offer spiritual sacrifices (**1 Peter 2:5**), it is reasonable, consistent, and clear that the regular practice of "social drinking" should be avoided (**Ephesians 5:18**) in order for Christians to be able to offer sacrifices "everywhere" (**1 Timothy 2:8**). Timothy understood this teaching and kept completely away from the practice, himself!

2) To ease a person about to die.

Give strong drink to him who is perishing (**Proverbs 31:6**).

Jesus on the cross was offered "sour wine" (vinegar) mixed with an ingredient (the description of "strong," or "intoxicating drink") to dull His pain (**Matthew 27:33-34**; **Mark 15:22-23**), but He refused. Just before His death, however, "sour wine" (vinegar) by itself, was offered to Him (**Matthew 27:48**; **Mark 15:36**; **John 19:28-30**), and He took it. Jesus maintained His purity in life by refusing anything akin to "strong drink," and vinegar only just before His death. Since alcohol is a drug, it is acceptable to use other drugs to ease pain in death.

3) To relieve a "bitter heart."

And wine to those who are bitter of heart. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more (**Proverbs 31:7**).

Since alcohol is a mood-affecting drug, people assume it is the only remedy for the "bitter of heart" (**Ecclesiastes 10:19**). Righteous Hannah however, had used prayer to deal with her "sorrowful heart" rather than drunkenness (**1 Samuel 1:12-15**). Though alcohol might be a medicine to lift one's mood, repeated moodiness needs more *spiritual attention* than "spirits!"

A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones (**Proverbs 17:22**).

How Does A Person "Get Drunk?"

No one ever "got drunk" by refusing to drink altogether! Israel's King, Elah, was "drinking himself drunk" when he was assassinated (**1 Kings 16:8-10**); Syrian King,

Ben-Hadad and the thirty-two kings helping him were getting drunk at the command post" and lost the battle to Israelites (**1 Kings 20:16-21**);

Therefore God's warning said:

"Woe to men mighty at drinking wine, Woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink" (**Isaiah 5:22**).

The purest vow before God in the Old Testament meant total refusal of alcohol. The Nazarite vow of purity meant that:

[The man] shall drink neither wine nor strong drink (**Luke 1:15**; **Numbers 6:1-4**).

When "In Rome..."

Paul condemned "drunkenness" in Rome (**Romans 13:13**), so even Christians in Rome were not to drink like Romans! Timothy was with Paul:

- 1) In Corinth, but **1 Corinthians 5:11; 6:10** condemned "drunkards;"
- 2) In Asia, but **Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:18** identified and condemned being "drunk;"
- 3) And Timothy fully understood that, wherever he was, abstinence was best (**1 Timothy 3:1-3, 8; 5:23**).

What possible justification can a Christian have for the regular practice of drinking wine and intoxicating beverages? Paul condemned Christians who would use the Lord's Supper as an excuse for being "drunk" (**1 Corinthians 11:20-22**). Since the only way to be "drunk" is through drinking that which makes one "drunk," then Christians throughout the world should show those still in the world how to be "sober" (**1 Thessalonians 5:6-8; Titus 2:2**). "Social drinking" is sinful drinking, no matter where in the world it occurs!

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