



QA: Didn't Jesus Approve of Drinking? by [John T Polk II](#)

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

QUESTION: Didn't Jesus approve drinking when He made water into wine?

ANSWER: Jesus did NOT make alcoholic wine, nor approve drunkenness in anyone!

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."

His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water."

And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast."

And they took it. When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!"

This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him. (**John 2:1- 11**)

1. This first miraculous "sign" Jesus did which "manifested His glory" was "the water that was made wine." This miraculously by-passed the normal time involved in growing, harvesting and processing the grapes into wine, thus it was a miracle showing His power over time, as well as the elements. It was a "sign" that God's power was working through Jesus to show that God was with Him (**John 3:2**).
2. The word "wine" is the Greek word "οίνος" and is a general term used for grape extract ranging from pure and fresh to alcoholic. In the Bible, one must read the accompanying verses to determine what, exactly is referred to in each instance.
 - a. **When "wine" makes someone drunk, it is obviously alcoholic.** Noah "drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent." (**Genesis 9:21**) This is the first mention of "wine" in Scripture, and it shows that it can overcome someone and remove their good judgment.

[**Ephraimites**] 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**)

To retain sound judgment in the churches of Christ, Elders must not "sit long at the wine" (**1 Timothy 3:3**) and **Deacons** must not be "much mindful of wine" (**1 Timothy 3:8**). Both attitudes described may best be served by abstinence.

b. **"New wine" equals "grape juice," and is permissible for its benefits.**

Thus says the LORD: "As the new wine is found in the cluster, And one says, 'Do not destroy it, For a blessing is in it.'" (**Isaiah 65:8**)

"New wine" found "in the cluster" is juice on the vine. No clearer definition of "grape juice" could be expressed! **Under Moses' Law, the priestly tribe, Levites, was to be supported by:**

... the firstfruits of our dough, our offerings, the fruit from all kinds of trees, the new wine and oil, to the priests, to the storerooms of the house of our God. (**Nehemiah 10:37**)

"New wine" would be as fermented as the fresh "oil" or "fruit from all kinds of trees." **Jesus Christ explained:**

"Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved." (**Matthew 9:17**)

"New wine" is fresh from the vine, and therefore expected to begin fermenting. Because of this past expansion, an already stretched wineskin could not withstand another such process.

3. At the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee, "good wine" is what they began with, but when the guests had "well drunk" it, that is, they "ran out of wine," the "master of the feast" proclaimed that, in the process, wine would have become "inferior." However, because of Jesus' miracle, "good wine" was available after "inferior," showing that "new wine" after old wine was out of order, therefore unexpected.

4. **Jesus Christ did not turn water into alcoholic wine! AND He condemned "drunkenness:"**

But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. (**Luke 21:34**)

Because there are "some things hard to understand," do not be among the "untaught and unstable" people who "twist" Scriptures "to their own destruction" but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (**2 Peter 3:16, 18**)

— John T. Polk II, March 18, 2021