

Article Title— "Intoxicants"

Article Category— Practical Christianity

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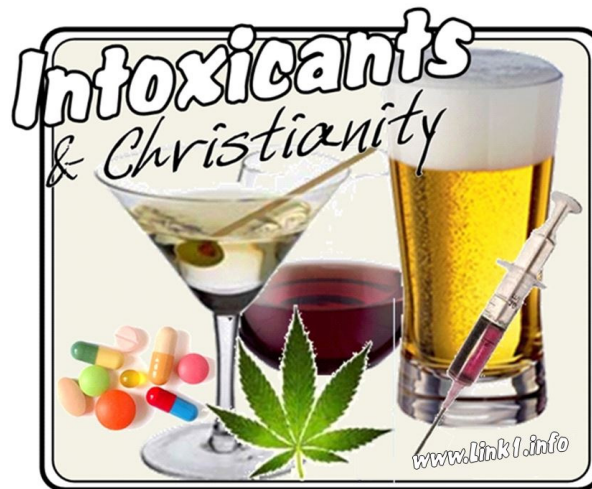
The battle rages on, but it's clearly senseless. There is a little-known scripture that *should* send the fighters back to their respective corners of the fight ring. What's with all the hoopla? Since the days of the U.S. Prohibition fight, it was all about alcohol. But the issue has grown in complexity. Preachers and parishioners have become quite vocal about this highly controversial topic. The open discussions should be closed...and kept within our Christian ranks. This is why:

> "...whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God." —Paul, at Romans 14:22 [NIV]

Read that in several Bible versions. You may want to read the entire chapter. It speaks wisely about the consumption and the non-consumption of certain foods, too. Paul insists that if a believer thinks it's a sin for him to eat red meat, to him, it is a sin. How should other believers respond? Those who're fully convinced that occasionally enjoying medium-rare filets of beef with one or two glasses of wine is not only okay, but scripturally defensible, should keep that practice and the rationale for it completely to themselves.

Those believers who've lost loved ones to drunk drivers will have a really hard time doing that. But they must restrict the discussion to the evils of driving while intoxicated. But what about members of those families who've been traumatized by intoxicant-driven domestic violence? For them, the struggle for a scriptural response may be considerably more difficult. There are at least four things on which they might productively focus their thinking and their discussions:

- A. Getting professional help for the offenders.
- B. Getting professional help for the victims.
- C. Condemning the film industry and the news media who insist on glamorizing the use and abuse of intoxicants.
- D. Condemning clergymen and other Christians who aggressively insist that the scriptures prescribe nothing at all to support total abstinence.



If you're among those who perceive absolutely no harm in the consumption of alcohol or another intoxicant you should consume it, always, in private...and keep the rationale for that mindset to yourself. Why? Non-private consumption can easily cause others to perceive a license. Some of those others, for example, will have a genetic propensity to alcoholism. The wise mindset is to let others work out their OWN salvation with fear and trembling.

> "But if thy brother be grieved with [thy] meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then your good be evil spoken of. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ [is] acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed [are] pure; but [it is] evil for that man who eateth with offence. [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. Hast thou faith? have [it] to thyself before God. Happy [is] he


I was a successful Bible teacher for a LOT of years—big sanctuary classes.
I knew what my denomination believed and that's what I taught.
Yes, I should've checked it out to make sure it was true.

So why didn't I do that? Well, maybe I didn't do that for the same reason that you haven't really checked out what your denomination teaches.

"In religion and politics, people's beliefs and convictions are in almost every case gotten at second hand, and without examination." —Samuel Clemens




that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because [he eateth] not of faith: for whatsoever [is] not of faith is sin." —Paul, at Romans 14:15-23 [KJV]
So, what should your clergyman preach about such things? Nothing more than this.

—T. C. Newsome 

PS: To participate in Bible discussions about articles like this one – or to just read and enjoy them – join us at TC's Friends Club. Here's the hot link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/136708110091989/>

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