

A.L.I.V.E. Bible Study

Date: June 28, 2020

1 Timothy 5:23

1. Why does Paul tell Timothy to stop drinking only water, but to use a little wine?
 - a. Paul thinks Timothy is kind of boring and needs to have a little more fun.
 - b. It says that Timothy is frequently ill.
 - c. They didn't have the water purification process that we have today, so water could sometimes cause stomach illness.
 - d. Both Jews and Greeks had used wine for its medicinal properties.

2. Does this mean that it is ok for Christians to drink alcohol?
 - a. Well, it sounds like it.
 - b. When we interpret scripture, we need to be careful to interpret it in the context of the time it was written and compare that context with our own. Also, Nazarenes believe in the "plenary interpretation of scripture," so we shouldn't take this verse all by itself without considering what other Biblical texts say about alcohol.
 - c. We do have plenty of other ways to deal with stomach illness today.

3. Consider some other texts that refer to alcohol in the New Testament, including several written by Paul. What do they say?
 - a. Ephesians 5:18. _____
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:7-8. _____
 - c. Galatians 5:19-21. _____
 - d. Luke 12:45-46. _____

4. The Nazarene manual says this about alcohol and other substances: "In light of the Holy Scriptures and human experience concerning the ruinous consequences of the use of alcohol as a beverage, and in light of the findings of medical science regarding the detrimental effect of both alcohol and tobacco to the body and mind, as a community of faith committed to the pursuit of a holy life, our position and practice is abstinence rather than moderation. Holy Scripture teaches that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. With loving regard for ourselves and others, we call our people to total abstinence from all intoxicants. Furthermore, our Christian social responsibility calls us to use any legitimate and legal means to minimize the availability of both beverage alcohol and tobacco to others. The widespread incidence of alcohol abuse in our world demands that we embody a position that stands as a witness to others" (903.14-903.16). Many of these scriptures listed above talk about drunkenness. What if I am truly able to drink in moderation and simply have one glass of wine with dinner?
 - a. You're going to Hell!
 - b. 1 Corinthians 8 can be applied here, though it is talking about a different cultural situation. Specifically, 1 Corinthians 8:9 tells us that we need to be careful that our exercise of our rights or freedoms does not become a stumbling block to others. There are many around us who do not have that kind of control and my right to drink a glass of wine is not worth leading an addict back down the path of addiction or influencing even one of the teenagers of our church or my community into that type of a life.
 - c. Is it possible that the damage we have seen caused by the abuse of alcohol is enough reason for us to choose not to even support the industry? Is it worth such a strong stand?