The Evils of Alcohol

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Proverbs 23:29-35

Many have questions about the use of alcohol. We need to know what the Bible says about it. In this lesson, we are going to talk about the evils of alcohol.

Negative Effects of Alcohol (Proverbs 23:29)

- Emotional (“Who has woe?”) – lamentation; emotional distress; ironically, many turn to alcohol as a way to deal with emotional distress, but it does not help anything; instead, we should turn to God (Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Peter 5:7)
- Financial (“Who has sorrow?”) – from a word that suggests want; one comes to be in need; leads to poverty (Proverbs 23:20-21); the consumption of alcohol is not compatible with good stewardship (Proverbs 3:9)
- Social (“Who has contentions?”) – strife; discord; “Strong drink is a brawler” (Proverbs 20:1); alcohol causes one to be argumentative and violent; God expects His people to be peaceful (Romans 12:18)
- Verbal (“Who has complaining [babbling, KJV]?”) – refers to the inability to communicate effectively; “Your mind will utter perverse things” (Proverbs 23:33); removes the “filter” on our speech; we are to guard our speech (Titus 2:8) because it comes from the heart (Matthew 12:34)
- Mental (“Who has wounds without cause?”) – yet there is a cause (Proverbs 23:35); alcohol affects our memory causing us to forget what happened; our minds are important (1 Corinthians 14:19); alcohol damages our ability to serve God fully
- Physical (“Who has redness of eyes?”) – alcohol affects our physical state/condition; remember that our “body is a temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20); this does not glorify God

Dangers of Alcohol

- Endangers one’s life (Proverbs 23:34-35) – true that we should be ready for death (Philippians 1:21), but that does not mean that we should be reckless
- Addictive (Proverbs 23:35) – despite the trouble caused by alcohol, many remain enslaved to it
- Causes one to forget the law (Proverbs 31:4-5) – to forget either man’s law or God’s law is dangerous (Romans 13:3-4; Hosea 4:6)
- Mocks the user of alcohol (Proverbs 20:1) – many believe that when they drink they are in control; often an illusion; leads to embarrassing situations that should have been avoided (Genesis 9:20-22)
Alcohol and the Christian

- Many today wonder if Christians can consume alcohol – Is it OK as long as we do not get drunk?
- The casual use of alcohol is incompatible with the life of a Christian
- We are called to be sober-minded (1 Peter 1:13) – this prohibits alcohol and any other substance that affects our thinking; not to be taken lightly because of the spiritual threat of the devil (1 Peter 5:8)
- We are to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) – contrast with being drunk; therefore, we cannot be filled with the Spirit as we should be if we are partially filled with alcohol
- We are to leave our old lives of sin (1 Peter 4:3) – more than avoiding drunkenness; this old life of sin also includes carousing and drinking parties (wild parties and “social drinking”)
- We are not to be mastered by anything (1 Corinthians 6:12) – the addictive nature of alcohol should cause us to avoid it
- What about Paul’s instruction to Timothy about using “a little wine“? (1 Timothy 5:23) – for medicinal purposes (not the destructive or casual use of alcohol); told to use little (indication that he was to be very careful with it); had to be told to use it (indication that it was not normal for Christians to be drinking alcohol)

Conclusion

- Many today want to justify the casual use of alcohol – even some Christians (or so-called Christians)
- But those who respect God’s word cannot condone even the casual use of alcohol
- Whether alcohol is “legal” or “illegal” does not change what the Bible says – even if the laws of men permit a practice, that does not mean that God permits it
- We must conform our lives to His word and teach others to do the same