

# GROW IN GRACE NEWSLETTER

PLEASE USE the Grow in Grace Newsletter for your own spiritual growth; and **AS A RESOURCE** to help equip you to MINISTER to others!

**Volume 47, No. 3, January 18, 2022** / Southside Baptist Church / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / **The Grow in Grace Newsletter is a WEEKLY Bible Study**, plus local church news notes—designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church; and is sent forth with the desire to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide), in the experience of 2 Peter 3:18. ***"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD JESUS CHRIST!"***

## **Elders! Deacons! Every day Christians! — And ALCOHOL!**

**2<sup>nd</sup> time hearing the same message as last week but with a few minor additions/changes**

**Introduction note:** On Sundays we are working our way through the various qualifications for Elders/Pastors and Deacons; and we are seeing that, (almost without exception), the same character qualities are elsewhere called for in the New Testament for every believer. As we look at the various points set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and in Titus 1, let us keep in mind the **BOTTOM LINE** reason why embracing and seeking after these character qualities are so vital: **"God intends to display the glory of His beauty, perfection, and love through the church. We believe that there is no better evangelistic tool, mission's strategy, or counseling program than the image of God displayed through His gathering of imperfect but transforming people."** **JESUS CHRIST is building HIS church with men, women, youth, and children who are on a LIFETIME JOURNEY of becoming more and more like JESUS!**

## **SO, WHAT ABOUT Elders, Deacons, ANY CHRISTIAN and ALCOHOL!**

Paul's instructions pertaining to the qualifications of elders and deacons—**WHAT IS BEING SAID?** [1] Elders are not to be **"given to wine"** (1 Timothy 3:3), [2] while deacons are not to be **"given to much wine"** (1 Timothy 3:8). **REGARDLESS** of the Bible Translation used, at the end of the day this question remains: **Does**

### **1 Timothy 3:8 sanction moderate alcohol use?**

The phrase in verse three consists of two Greek words (*me paroinos*) and, literally translated, means **"not beside, by, or at wine"** (Vine, 1966, p.

146; Robertson, 1934, p. 613). The phrase is enjoining abstinence, and perhaps even the act of situating oneself in the presence of people and places where the consumption of alcoholic beverages is occurring. The ASV translated the expression “brawler” to emphasize the violent behavior that may proceed from the use of alcohol.

**Calling for elders to be abstinent** is consistent with other terms used in the same listing: *nephalion* (1 Timothy 3:2)—“free from intoxicants” and “abstinent in respect to wine” (Perschbacher, 1990, p. 284), and *sophrone* (Titus 1:8)—“of a sound mind, temperate” (Perschbacher, p. 400), “soberminded” (Moulton and Milligan, 1930, p. 622), “self-controlled” (Arndt and Gingrich, 1957, p. 810). Elders must refrain from the use of intoxicants, and they must not [as in having fellowship] associate with places and people who do use them.

**In verse eight, the four words used to qualify deacons on this point** (*me oino pollo prosechontas*) are literally translated “**not wine much occupied with**” (cf. Perschbacher, p. 352; Spain, 1970, p. 64). **Does the use of the word “much” mean that deacons may imbibe a moderate amount of wine?**

CONSIDER: [1] **When Solomon said**, “Do not be overly wicked” (Ecclesiastes 7:17—NKJV [“overwicked”—NIV; “overmuch wicked”—ASV]), did he mean to imply that a person can, with God’s approval, be **moderately** wicked? When Peter noted that pagans do not understand why Christians do not engage in the “same excess of riot” (1 Peter 4:4), did he mean **moderate rioting** was appropriate?

In other words, language can forthrightly condemn an **excessive** indulgence or great amount of an action without implying that the action is permissible in a **lesser** amount or to a lesser degree. One cannot assume that what is unlawful in excess is lawful in smaller amounts.

We can refer to a person’s **frequent** involvement in a certain activity (e.g., adultery) without intending to leave the impression that a more moderate participation in the action would be proper. **Albert Barnes addressed this point VERY CLEARLY:** “It is not affirmed that it would be proper for the deacon, any more than the bishop, to indulge in the use of wine in small

quantities, but it is affirmed that a man who is much given to the use of wine ought not, on any consideration, to be a deacon (1977, p. 148)."

The word in verse eight translated "given to" (KJV, NKJV, ASV), or "indulging in" (NIV), or "addicted to" (RSV), is *prosecho*. It is used elsewhere in 1 Timothy (1:4) and in Titus (1:14) to refer to those who "give heed to" (KJV), or "occupy themselves with" (RSV), or "pay attention to" (NASB) Jewish myths. **Who would draw the conclusion that Paul intended to encourage Christians to give some attention to Jewish myths, just not too much attention?**

Consequently, Paul was spotlighting an individual who is known for drinking freely of alcoholic beverages. He was saying that no such person should be put into the eldership. A parallel would be to make an observation about a person who carouses and parties **every night**—"do not put such a man into the eldership!" But the speaker hardly would mean that one who parties less frequently, say **on weekends only**, would be acceptable.

Paul no more intended to suggest that leaders in the church who use small amounts of alcohol are suited to their role than Mosaic law would have permitted priests to do so (Leviticus 10:9). Barnes commented: "The way in which the apostle mentions the subject here would lead us fairly to suppose that he did not mean to commend its use in any sense!" (1977, p. 144)

**A second possibility is that** the terminology that Paul used was a loose form of speech (Bacchiocchi, 1989, p. 250). Both Greek and Hebrew manifest such tendencies... Later in the same letter, Paul instructed Timothy to **"use a little wine" for his stomach and infirmities (5:23)**... IF Paul meant for Timothy to add **fermented** (i.e., intoxicating) juice to his diet, he nevertheless implied: (1) that Timothy had been abstinent up to that point; (2) that the quantity he was now to add to his diet was to be **"a little"**; and (3) that its use was strictly **medicinal** in nature— not social, casual, or recreational... **The wine may have simply been the antiseptic means to purify the polluted water that Timothy had been drinking by killing germs and bacterial organisms, thereby reducing their ill effect on Timothy's fragile stomach**— in which case, Paul was not commending wine; he was commending a method for cleansing contaminated water.

**A third possible interpretation** of this verse concerns the meaning of the term “wine.” Unlike the English word (which **always** connotes an alcoholic beverage), the Greek word *oinos* is a **generic** term that includes **all forms of the grape** (cf. Lees, 1870, pp. 431ff.). The term *oinos* was used by the Greeks to refer to **unfermented** grape juice every bit as much as fermented juice.

**Consequently, the interpreter must examine the biblical context in order to determine whether fermented or unfermented liquid is intended.** In light of this realization, some have suggested that Paul instructed the elders to refrain completely from alcoholic beverages, while deacons, on the other hand, were being instructed to engage in a moderate use of **NON**alcoholic grape juice. At least three lines of argumentation are evident for this interpretation.

**First**, in the Old Testament, the generic Hebrew term that is equivalent to *oinos* is *yayin*. Some passages praise the ingestion of *yayin* (Song of Solomon 5:1; Psalm 104:15; Ecclesiastes 9:7), while others condemn it (Proverbs 20:1; 31:4). The only plausible explanation is that the former is a reference to grape juice, while the latter is a reference to grape juice that has been transformed into an alcoholic beverage.

**Second**, only in Timothy and Titus is the word “much” used— as if the secret to pleasing God lies in the **quantity** of liquid ingested. If fermented juice were intended, the same distinction surely would have been made in the Old Testament. No such distinction is made. But if **nonalcoholic** grape juice is intended in Timothy and Titus, the intent of the qualification shifts from the **level of intoxication** to the matter of **liquid gluttony**. In that case, Paul intended to require moderation in the intake of **nonalcoholic** liquids.

**Third**, biblical warnings against the excessive intake of food and liquid are legion (e.g., Deuteronomy 21:20; Proverbs 23:20; 1 Corinthians 11:21-22; Titus 1:12). Solomon even applied the principle to honey (Proverbs 25:27). To understand Paul to be enjoining moderate use of a good gift from God (i.e., grape juice) is consistent with the context that is riddled with references to self-control, temperance, and moderation (e.g., 1 Timothy 3:2,

11). It also fits the social conditions extant in Greco-Roman culture in which intemperance was rampant.

**In addition to the above considerations, one must keep in mind that EVEN IF it could be proved that God sanctioned moderate drinking of alcoholic beverages in the Bible, IT DOES NOT FOLLOW that God sanctions drinking modern "wine," since the wine in antiquity was far less potent.**

The ancients typically had to add drugs to their drinks to increase their intoxicating potency. **In light of all these considerations, the view that maintains that deacons may drink moderate amounts of alcoholic beverages is precarious, dangerous, and biblically unsubstantiated.**

[The above section is edited from <https://apologeticspress.org/elders-deacons-timothy-and-wine-1208/>

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## **REASONS why believers should abstain from DRINKING ALCOHOL:**

**1. DRINKING LEADS TO DRUNKENNESS:** "People must be informed that the use of alcohol is not unlike Russian roulette: every tenth person becomes automatically hooked. The only solution is total abstinence."

**2. THE BIBLE CONDEMNS STRONG DRINK:** Proverbs 20:1 "Wine is a mocker, **strong drink** is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Isaiah 5:11 -- "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow **strong drink**; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!"

**3. WHAT WAS "STRONG DRINK" IN BIBLE TIMES?** Distillation was not discovered until about 1500 A.D. Strong drink and unmixed wine in Bible times was from 3% to 11% alcohol. Someone will say, "Since beer is only 4% alcohol, ITS OK FOR A BELIEVER TO DRINK BEER, RIGHT?" The answer is NO! Here's why... **IN BIBLE TIMES WHAT CHRISTIANS DRANK WAS SUB-ALCOHOLIC, BASICALLY PURIFIED WATER**

Norman Geisler, Liberty University, has written: "Many wine drinking Christians today mistakenly assume that what the New Testament meant by wine is identical to wine used today. This, however, is false. In fact, **today's wine is by Biblical definition strong drink, and hence forbidden by the Bible.** What the Bible frequently meant by **wine was basically purified water,**" purified by adding some alcoholic wine. The Holman Bible dictionary says, wine was also used as a medicine and disinfectant. Geisler goes on to say, "Therefore, **Christians ought not to drink wine, beer, or other alcoholic beverages for they are actually strong drink forbidden in Scripture.** Even ancient pagans did not drink what some Christians drink today." All alcoholic beverages used in our culture fall under the biblical **classification of STRONG DRINK** and are therefore forbidden. The least ratio of water to wine mixture used in Bible times was 3 parts water to 1 wine. That produced a sub-alcoholic drink that was 2.5% to 2.75% alcohol. Normally, the ratio was even higher, up to 20 to 1. What early believers drank was sub-alcoholic by today's standards. **The right choice is to abstain! What is your choice?**

**4. IT WILL CAUSE OTHERS TO STUMBLE:** **Romans 14:21** says "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to **"to drink wine,** nor anything whereby thy brother **stumbleth,** or is offended, or is **made weak.**"

Innumerable Christians claim their "Christian Liberty" when it comes to social drinking. In order to do that, they must turn their backs on this passage of Scripture. **"Sipping Saints"** have given multitudes of people an excuse to drink. More than once, I have heard a believer say "there is nothing wrong with drinking in moderation. **Pastor so and so says it is OK.**" **[AND 'FORMER' RESPECTED BIBLE-TEACHER, PASTOR, AUTHOR, THEOLOGIAN R.C. SPROUL, JR... SAID IT WAS JUST FINE! ... YES, BUT ... Sproul was arrested in Indiana a few years back and charged with four DUI accounts, including felony charges for being under the influence with a minor in the vehicle, and at twice the legal limit.]**

**The problem is, drinking often sets off a chain reaction of influences that are like tipping over the first domino.** Drinking causes some to stumble, others to be offended, and many to be weakened. Studies support my statement.

According to a survey done by the Daily Journal newspaper, October 26, 1988, one of the top five reasons teenagers drink is because their parents drink. This has proven true time and time again. Parents, you must remember that **whatever you do in moderation your child will likely do in excess**. The Bible clearly defines drinking as an activity that is to be foregone because it causes others to stumble and makes them weak (fall into sin).

**5. IT HARMS OUR BODIES WHICH ARE THE LORD'S: I Corinthians 6:16-20. The first effect of alcohol on the brain is to dull the capacity for self-criticism and the sense of caution.** A lessening of care and anxiety follows this. The checks on irresponsibility and unreasonable behavior are also curtailed. Actions follow the impulses, which is dangerous. **Reaction time becomes slower; coordination is disturbed;** drowsiness follows. Dr. Robert Haas, M.D... a former president of the American College of Sports Nutrition... said, "**Beer, wine and hard liquor form toxic substances called aldehydes that can destroy the liver, kidney and brain cells.** Aldehydes serve a useful function in preserving or pickling dead animal tissue, but they serve no beneficial purpose in people. **Alcohol dehydrates (robs) your body of its precious water supply, and along with the water go vital nutrients such as B Vitamins, calcium, magnesium, and potassium.**"

**Alcohol has adverse effects on your esophagus, stomach & intestines, bloodstream, pancreas, liver, heart, bladder, kidneys, glands and your brain.**

**"The most drastic and noticed effect of alcohol is the brain.** It depresses brain centers, progressively produces un-coordination, confusion, disorientation, stupor, anesthesia, coma, death. Alcohol kills brain cells, and brain damage is permanent" (From-Office of Highway Safety, Madison, WI) As believers, our body belongs to the Lord. We should not knowingly do anything that would harm it. Alcohol harms the body, therefore we should not drink alcohol.

**6. ALCOHOL IS ADDICTIVE: I Corinthians 6:12** tells us that we are not to "be brought under the power" or to be controlled by anything. The only exception is the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18) Alcohol is clearly a powerful

substance (Proverbs 23:35). Because alcohol is addictive, we should choose **not** to drink alcoholic beverages.

## 7. BELIEVERS ARE KINGS AND PRIESTS SEPARATED UNTO GOD!

"The prophets, the kings, the Nazarites, the leaders -- those who were special in the plan of God were total abstainers" says Dr. Paul Dixon. Kings and PRIESTS were not to drink (Proverbs 31:4-5). Further Dr. Dixon says "the priests of the Old Testament were to abstain totally." The Aaronic priests were not to drink because they ministered in the tabernacle before the Lord (Leviticus 10:9) **The application:** Believers are a "royal" or kingly priesthood (I Peter 2:9). We are the temple of God (I Peter 2:5). We are God's special children and should choose total abstinence.

Drinking socially is a worldly activity and in light of the fact that believers are **neither to be conformed to the world** (Romans 12:2) **nor love the world** (I John 2:15) our choice should be clear. We ARE to be **SEPARATE FROM** the world (II Corinthians 6:17) and **LIGHT TO** the world (Ephesians 5:8; Philippians 2:15). Perhaps social drinking has enhanced the acceptability of Christians in society, but it has not advanced the cause of Christ, and it does not glorify God! Social drinking is simply a means which the devil uses to blunt our testimony for Christ and squeeze us into his mold....

**Above all else...** AS IT IS WHEN ANY CHRISTIAN PUBLICALLY sins— the name of Christ is drug in the mud; and sinners are encouraged to BLASPHEME God, even as when King David sinned. **LET EVERY ONE OF US TAKE HEED! Sooner or later, sin's wages demand to be paid!**

**FOR ANY AND ALL, God will not be MOCKED— as we sow, we shall reap! LET US PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER AND ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER IN CHRIST LIKE LIVING!**

Grace to one and all in Christ! James Bell

**NEWS NOTES:**

**EVERY SATURDAY\*\*\* 8:00 AM, — Men's Bible Study: *THE BOOK OF JOB, CHAPTER 19*** (Doors open by 7:30am... coffee, juice, donuts, and Hardee's Biscuits are available!)

**\*\*\* NEXT Ladies Bible Study, January 25, @ 11:00 AM**

## **SUNDAY SERVICES, JANUARY 23, 30... / 2022**

**1. \*\*\* Sunday School at 9:30am:** Nursery, Children's classes, Youth, and Adult classes.

**2. \*\*\* WORSHIP SERVICE at 10:45am!**

### **ADDITIONAL SUNDAY SERVICES:**

**\*\*\*\* JANUARY 23, 5:00pm- SPECIAL Church Wide SERVICE in the auditorium!** The Southside Elders **HAVE MET WITH EACH OF THESE COUPLES:** Adam and Bethany Troutt; Devin and Jasmine Purdue; and James and Laurel Poteete.

**NOW** We call our **ENTIRE CHURCH FAMILY** 1) To Hear the recommendation of the Elders; 2) To hear the testimonies of these three men and their wives; and 3) To give your own testimonies of **HAVING WITNESSED EVIDENCE** of servanthood from these men and their wives.

**TUESDAYS: WEEKLY Youth Group Meeting, ages 12 and up ... Tuesdays a 7:15pm... at Jaden and Rhi's home...**

### **WEDNESDAY NIGHTS @ SOUTHSIDE:**

**6:30pm— come in back 'double doors' under the Drive Thru awning!**

**\*\* Adult Prayer Service**

**\*\* Young FAMILIES Prayer Service**

**\*\*\* LOVE OFFERINGS UNTO THE LORD BY MAIL or by ONLINE GIVING:**

**SUCH funds, (if checks), make out to Southside Baptist) — MAIL TO: Southside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1594, Gallatin, TN 37066/ *OR YOU MAY CHOOSE TO GIVE* via ONLINE GIVING:**

<https://southsidebaptist.breezechms.com/give/online>

**HEALTH REMINDERS as to CHURCH SERVICES AND as to Responding with WISDOM and NOT fear IN SEEKING TO KEEP AS HEALTHY AS WE CAN— SO AS TO BE ACTIVE IN THE KINGDOM BUSINESS OF THE LORD!**

**1. IF YOU ARE SICK... [OR if you are in a state of high immune deficiency or if (at home or work) you are caring for one who is sick; or if you have • Fever; • Coughing; • Chills; • Headache; • Sore throat; etc.], Please stay home!]**

**2. IF YOU ARE HEALTHY and well... you may or may not choose to wear a mask... WE do not require it. WE CONTINUE to encourage FREEDOM as to 'social distancing'... masks ... vaccine choices, etc. — PLEASE HONOR THE LORD, by continuing to give sensitivity and respect one to another.**

**3. In addition to carefulness, good hydration, good nutrition, and sleep— ALSO: SEEK TO BUILD UP A STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM! I PERSONALLY TAKE ELDERBERRY, VITAMIN C, ZINC, GINGER, VITAMIN D, Quercetin, and a good multi-vitamin that includes fiber... And I have a PRESCRIPTION of Ivermectin... TO TAKE, if needed.**

***DO YOUR OWN RESEARCH! BE PROACTIVE! BE PREVENTIVE!***

**4. LET each of us DO OUR PART IN personal hygiene. [IF you use the restrooms— please wash your hands with SOAP; and use nearby SANITIZER.]**

**5. HERE IS AN EDUCATIONAL resource from The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons... FROM Doctors who successfully treat covid-19 patients! => <https://breggin.com/covid-19-home-treatment/>**

Peter McCullough, MD testifies to Texas Senate HHS Committee. BRIEF. EXCELLENT: → <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAHi3lX3oGM>

The PDF booklet: A Guide to Home-Based COVID Treatment can be downloaded ... **focus is on PREVENTION and early treatment:** COVID Treatment - Truth for Health Foundation <https://www.truthforhealth.org/patientguide/patient-treatment-guide/>