

“THE SWEET WINE OF THE SPIRIT”

1 Chronicles 16:7-13; Ephesians 5:18-21

Is there a better way than dependence on alcohol? Acts 16:25

I. DON'T BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT THAT GLORIFIES THE FLESH

A. Wine is the Inferior “Spirit”

He does not say, “Do not drink wine” but “do not be drunk with wine.” Google Norman Geisler and wine. This stuff can make you drunk. Medically speaking, wine is a depressant, not a stimulant; affects CNS. Exactly why some drink and to excess.

Drunkenness removes brakes of restraint on the old man, whom we are to put off by the power of the Spirit (4:22). Drunkenness instead puts him on with a vengeance. When to avoid the sin: Prov 23:31-35. Back to “walk circumspectly” of verse 15. Watch steps. See the danger and avoid it.

B. Drunkenness Leads to Dissipation

NIV: “which leads to debauchery.” Yes; Gen. 19:33. NKJV renders the Greek as “prodigal living” (Luke 15:13). Waste. Example of waste with a redeemed ending: Mickey Mantle. You might have never succumbed to the bottle. But all your accomplishments will be in vain if you die without the Redeemer. You will have wasted your life. But Jesus is most willing to receive you. His arms of love stretch out to reach you where you are. Receive His teaching as your prophet. Trust His sacrifice as your priest. Bow your will before Him as your King. You never know when you get your last pitch.

II. BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT WHO GLORIFIES CHRIST

A. The Spirit-Controlled Christian Bears Five Fruits

“...but be filled with the Spirit, (v. 18b). Analogy of what being filled with the Spirit is like: being filled with alcohol. How do you

know you are? In verses 19 to 21 are five participles: speaking, singing and making melody, giving thanks, submitting, all dependent on the main verb in verse 18, “be filled,” an imperative. Precise opposite of the dissipation of drunkenness. Paul has already mentioned the Spirit several times in this Epistle: 1:13; 1:18-19; 2:2; 3:16; 4:3; 4:30; 5:9.

Alcohol loosens the tongue of the old man. The Spirit of God moves the new person in Christ to similar but very different: 5:19-20. Songs of drunkards replaced by hymns of praise to God, and glad gratitude to the Almighty, as we also speak to one another. “I sing because I’m happy/ I sing because I’m free / His eye is on the sparrow / and I know He watches me. Also: submission to others (5:21).

B. The Spirit Fills the Person Focused on Christ

Are all Christians filled with the Spirit? No; not anymore than those who take a sip of wine are all drunkards. Cultivate a conscious dependence upon the Spirit and His influences. But Spirit’s main task is to glorify Christ. What captivates the drunkard? The bottle. What captivates Spirit-filled Christian? Christ.

One excellency of Christ: the King is given to us, His church, for our benefit; Eph 1:20-23. How greatly we need such a friend as Christ. We are weak creatures. Infinitely desirable it is to have a friend who knows the future unseen world and rules over it. His attitude toward us is written in letters of blood on the cross. He died that sinners might live; He prayed for His murderers while they stained their hands with His blood; His compassion needs no further proof. On our dying bed Christ is present, with all His tenderness and all His power. What satisfaction when we shall be presented before the throne of His Father as Jesus’ own friends.

Conclusion

Can the bottle be this kind of friend? Can any earthly satisfaction? Matt 25:41