**The Christian and Alcohol**

**Introduction**

In the hit country music song “Heart Like Mine” Miranda Lambert sings:

Last verse

“These are the days that I will remember

When my name is called on a roll

He'll meet me with two long stem glasses

Make a toast to me coming home.”

Chorus

“Cause I heard Jesus he drank wine

And I bet we'd get along just fine

He could calm a storm and heal the blind

And I bet he'd understand a heart like mine”

There are a lot of things about the words to this song that would probably be worth examining but the singers summary of Jesus is that he is fine with alcohol and she cannot wait to get to heaven to share a drink with Jesus.

Let me begin by making a few introductory remarks:

* We want to approach this subject with humility
* I feel like there has been some bad arguments in debate
* Often attitude: I am going to do what I want
* We live in a culture that is saturated with alcohol; bar in movies, TV; Commercials
* I am often asked about this; some secular people rethinking

**Secular People Rethink Drinking**

I just want to highlight a few things:

**1) Payton (childhood acquaintance, very secular)**

He stated he was giving up alcohol because it was leading to him mistreating those he loved.

**2) Anne Hathaway**

Anne Hathaway gives up drinking for her son:

“I quit drinking back in October (of 2018), for 18 years. I’m going to stop drinking while my son is in my house just because I don’t totally love the way I do it and he’s getting to an age where he really does need me all the time in the mornings,” Hathaway said.

The actress added, “I did one school run one day where I dropped him off at school, I wasn’t driving, but I was hungover and that was enough for me. I didn’t love that one.”

**3) CNN Article**

On August 24, 2018 Sandee LaMotte wrote an article for CNN entitled “No Amount of Alcohol is good for your overall health, global study says.”

**1. Back to the Beginning**

* Genesis 9:20-27
* Genesis 19:30-38

In Genesis 9, Noah and his family have just been saved by God and resume life on solid ground again. Noah plants a vineyard, makes wine, and gets drunk. This seems odd from our perspective and the story gets more odd. Noah’s son sees him naked. Exactly what that means is debated (perhaps sleeping with mother; see Lev 18:6-7; or homosexual action on father).

In Genesis 19, Lot and his family flee the destruction of Sodom and go to the mountains. His daughters come up with a plan to get pregnant by their father but they know he will not go along with it so they make him drunk before committing incest.

I think there is a strong connection between alcohol and immorality. I think this is hinted at in Proverbs 31:3-4 when women is addressed in verse 3 and drinking in verse 4. I also find this to be an observation that seems consist many stories I have heard.

**2. The Set Apart Abstain from Alcohol**

* Lev 10:8-11: Priest do not drink wine
* Ezekiel 44:21: Priest do not drink wine
  + Violated in Isa 28:7
* Num 6:2-3: Those who make a Nazirite vow abstain from strong drink
  + John the Baptist (Luke 1:15)
* 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7: Elder/Overseer/Shepherd

It gives me major pause to think that those who were set apart for the work of the Lord or dedicated themselves to the Lord should abstain from these things. I know the counter argument would be they were just to abstain for certain periods of time, but doing the work of the Lord requires we do not diminish our mental capacity at all.

**3. What does it do?**

* Hos 4:11: Harlotry, wine and new wine take away understanding
* Isaiah 5:22-23: Perverting justice
* Isaiah 28:1-8: Bad spiritual advice
* Proverbs 20:1: Unwise

Is it wise to drink alcohol when it inhibits you and can lead you to make foolish decision?

**4. Book of Proverbs**

* Proverbs 23:29-35
* Proverbs 31:4-9

Proverbs 23 is a rather brutal picture of one who is drawn in because the drink looks pretty but is consumed by the drink. A man takes a drink but eventually the drink takes the man.

King Lemuel’s mother urges him not to drink because it is not wise. With his job as king he must discern between truth and falsehood. He must not pervert justice or help those who have done wrong. Is there ever a time as a Christian we are not called to discern between truth and lies? She tells him to give drink to him who is perishing and in great sorrow.

**5. Objections**

* 1 Tim. 5:23

Pro-drinking: Paul told Timothy to drink wine, so can I!

Anti-drinking: Timothy was only told to take medicine!

While Timothy seemed to be drinking wine for medicinal purposes there is a deeper question I have always missed. Why has he been drinking only water? Probably because he knows and has seen what drunkenness can do to a person! He is only drinking water because he wants to stay away from alcohol and its destructive effects.

**6. Be Alert**

* Romans 13:11-14
* 1 Peter 1:13; 4:7; 5:8

It is hard to be alert when you are drinking a substance that is supposed to diminish your capacity.

**7. One Final Question**

Would consuming more alcohol make me a better Christian? Is that bottle of Jack Daniels helping me draw closer to God?

**Other verses**

* Isa 5:11
* 1 Cor 6:10
* Gal 5:21: Work of the flesh
* Eph 5:18: Contrast with worship
* Titus 2:3