

A SERPENT'S BITE AND AN ADDER'S STING

PROVERBS 20:1; 23:29-35

Text: Proverbs 20:1, 23:32

Proverbs 20:1

¹ Wine *is* a mocker, strong drink *is* raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

Proverbs 23:32

³² At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

Introduction:

We have a drug problem in the U.S. We could talk about: cocaine, marijuana, meth, or heroine.

America's number 1 problem drug is not any of these illegal substances, but a legal drug called ALCOHOL.

Illustration:

A teacher was trying to show her class the dangers of alcohol by using a visual aid. She had a glass of water on the table and a glass of beer on the table. In between the two she had a bowl of live worms. She then told her class how she was going to show them the affects of alcohol. She took a handful of the live

worms and put them in the glass of water and when she did they just swam about unharmed. She then took another handful of the live worms and put them in the glass of beer and when she did they died instantly.

Thinking she had taught her class how alcohol kills she then said, "Ok class, what have we learned from this lesson?" A young boy in the back of the class said, "Teacher I know, if you have a bad case of the worms just drink a lot of alcohol." The sad thing is that a lot of people see nothing wrong with drinking.

Alcohol has produced:

- The Most Death

Produces more death than any other drug. Over 55% of highway deaths are alcohol related. It causes heart problems, liver problems, and powerful addiction...a walking death!

- The Most Addiction

There are over 17 million alcoholics in America today, and rising. They, by far, outnumber the addicts of any other drug.

- The Most Misery

Alcohol Attracts You:

- Medically

Some abuse alcohol as a medicine.

- Moderately

Some think its ok to drink in moderation.

- Mentally

Some drink to temporarily escape reality.

Alcohol Attacks You:

- Through Affliction

It afflicts every part of your body – Sight (see strange things), Speech (utter perverse things), Senses (do stupid things)

Proverbs 23:33-35

³³Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. ³⁴Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. ³⁵

They have stricken me, *shalt thou say, and* I was not sick; they have beaten me, *and* I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

- Through Addiction

Proverbs 23:35

³⁵ They have stricken me, *shalt thou say*, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

Alcohol is the viper's venom.

Think of the Dependence, Disability, Death, Affliction, and Addiction ...it produces more misery than any other drug.

With all its dangers it is still sold legally.

Not only is it sold legally, but it is as widely available as a bottle of ketchup, a bottle of shampoo, or a baby's bottle of milk...it's just another bottle!

\$25 billion will be spent this year on beverage alcohol. Not *million*, **billion!**

While it is the most dangerous drug in the world, there is no warning label on the bottle! The can doesn't read, "#1 producer of death", "#1 producer of addicts", "#1 producer of misery."

Advertisers will spend \$600 million, quite a lot of it today, telling you that you ought to drink.
TV/Radio/Billboards/magazines

With so many telling us why we *should* drink, I don't mind today sharing what God says about it.

Abe Lincoln said, “Alcohol has many defenders, but no defense.”

1. DESCRIPTION OF ALCOHOL

Proverbs 23:31

³¹ Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright.

God says not to even look at it.

“Wine” in the Bible is a generic term. It is a general term that may at times refer to an intoxicating beverage, or at times it may not.

We have words today very similar.

Illustration:

When someone says “I’ve got to have a drink” or “you’re driving me to drink” we assume the mean alcohol.

On the other hand when traveling down the road with your children and they ask to stop and get a drink they probably mean soda.

Wine in the Bible can mean a drink that can intoxicate or juice that is not fermented.

Every time the word that intoxicates is used in the Bible it is always condemned.

2. DESTRUCTION OF ALCOHOL

When it comes to the misery index, alcohol scores a perfect 10.

Notice the misery and destruction:

A. Sorrow – Proverbs 23:29

Proverbs 23:29

²⁹ Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

I cannot begin to tell you the sorrow and misery I've seen in people, both lost people and born-again Christian people, resulting from alcohol.

I've seen it ruin marriages and become the direct cause of divorce.

- Turn teens into rebels who ruin their lives.
- Turn normally gentle/docile men into wife-beaters.
- Cause children to be deprived.

- Send people to an early grave.

B. Contention – Proverbs 23:29

Proverbs 23:29

²⁹ Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

Want a “recipe” for fighting arguing divorce violence murder?

“Pop the top and pour”

Time magazine: “1/2 of all murders are alcohol related.” 2008

Want to drive a wedge between husband/wife, parent/child, friend/friend... social drinking is a great place to start!

C. Foolishness – Proverbs 23:29

Proverbs 23:29

²⁹ Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

The one who’s usually quiet and introverted...is suddenly running around the room w/ a lampshade on their head.

Ever listened to a drunk person babble?

D. Mutilation – Proverbs 23:29

Proverbs 23:29

²⁹ Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

Alcohol kills over 200,000 Americans every year.

The Bible defines a generation as 40 years.

That means that alcohol kills 8 million out of every generation.

That's more than Hitler and the holocaust where 6 million lost their life.

We can talk about 160,000 killed in the recent Tsunami, and yet more than that will die in America *alone* from Alcohol *this year*!

We talk about the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, killing 80,000...Nagasaki, and 35,000 died, yet nearly *twice* that die every year from beverage alcohol.

So, it's more dangerous than the atomic bomb and the holocaust and it's legal, advertised, and even promoted! What's wrong w/ this picture?

In the 9 years of the Vietnam War, 57,000 Americans died fighting for our country. Millions protested that atrocity in the streets, completely blind to the 2 million dying at the hands of alcohol during the same period of time.

We ask, what can we do about cancer/aids...well, what about alcohol?

If it were any other plague affecting us then America would be up in arms!

Hollywood actors would put on telethons raising money to find a cure!

Scientists would be hard at work...Rewards would be offered for anyone who could find an antidote!

Politicians would run on the platform of "stopping the plague that's killing America!"

More than 400 Americans will die this week in alcohol-related car wrecks...many of them innocent people, victimized by drunk drivers.

That's more people than fit on a 747! What if a packed 747 went down once a week every week and everyone died.

Would we be up in arms? Would there be a congressional investigation?

We hear the name Busch and think of gardens or a baseball stadium!

Coors has us thinking about snow-capped mountains and icy springs when we hear their name! But it's destruction!

E. Mental Anguish – Proverbs 23:29

Proverbs 23:29

²⁹ Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

Redness of eyes speaks of weeping and not sleeping.

Sadly, people are drinking trying to find happiness and in the end it's the one thing they have the least of!

And even if they did have a good time briefly, they can't remember it!

F. Health Problems – Proverbs 23:31-32

Proverbs 23:31-32

³¹ Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright. ³² At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

The bite of an adder – poison.

Why do people drink and vomit? Their stomach has more sense than their head! Their body rejects the poison. That's why we call it being "intoxicated." It's a toxin!

G. Immorality – Proverbs 23:26-27

Proverbs 23:26-27

²⁶ My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways. ²⁷ For a whore *is* a deep ditch; and a strange woman *is* a narrow pit.

Alcohol breaks down inhibitions and restraint.

H. Instability – Proverbs 23:34

Proverbs 23:34

³⁴ Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

I. Insensibility – Proverbs 23:35

Proverbs 23:35

³⁵ They have stricken me, *shalt thou say*, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

J. Addiction – Proverbs 23:35

Proverbs 23:35

³⁵ They have stricken me, *shalt thou say*, and I was not sick; they

have beaten me, *and* I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

They sober up and realize it's wrong, and regret it. They agree with this message, and still say, "I will seek it yet again."

Social drinkers say, just keep it in moderation...just one drink and then put it down.

Chinese proverb, "first the man takes a drink, then the drink takes a drink, and then the drink takes the man."

3. THE DECEPTION OF ALCOHOL – PROVERBS 20:1

Proverbs 20:1

¹Wine *is* a mocker, strong drink *is* raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

Wine is a mocker – what a mockery for the beer companies to have such control over America.

Illustration:

Beer companies put on commercials talking about money they give to charities...they don't talk about the money they cost us, even us who don't drink, in crime, welfare, taxes, insurance rates, etc.

Experts say for every dollar they give it costs us 4 to clean up the mess!

- Some drink for happiness and become unhappy
- Some drink for Joy and become miserable
- Some drink for Sophistication and become obnoxious
- Some drink for Friendship and become enemies
- Some drink so they can Sleep and then can't rest
- Some drink for Strength and then become weak
- Some drink so that they can Relax and become anxious
- Some drink for Confidence and then become doubtful
- Some drink to Strike up a conversation and then have slurred speech
- Some drink to Forget and then are forever haunted
- Some drink to Escape problems and discovered their problems are multiplied

What a mockery alcohol is making of our society!

4. DELIVERANCE FROM ALCOHOL

Proverbs 23:31

³¹ Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright.

Don't look at it; Even if you think YOU can handle it, God says, because of all the above, don't even look at it!

Notice:

Proverbs 23:20

²⁰ Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh:

Not only are we not to look upon alcohol, but we are also instructed not be among those who drink.

Alcohol is the devil's substitute for a spirit-filled life.

Ephesians 5:18

¹⁸ And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

Close:

Hopefully no one here has been deceived by alcohol; if so give it to the Lord.

Every other Christian in the room should come to this altar and pour their heart out to God for loved ones bound in the chains of alcohol.