

# Total Abstinence From Alcohol

(Part 4)

*“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.” (1 Corinthians 10:31-33)*

Some people have misused the instruction given by Paul to Timothy, *“Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.” (1 Timothy 5:23)* Paul was not recommending wine to Timothy as a social drink. The fact that Paul had to mention the medicinal use of wine indicates rather strongly that Timothy and Paul were committed to abstinence as a lifestyle.

**The Use of Alcohol Weakens the Christian's Testimony:** The use of alcohol violates some basic principles laid down for all believers, whether minister or laymen. One of these important principles is the Biblical caution not to offend a weaker brother or cause a younger Christian to fall.

The apostle Paul deals with the responsibility of the stronger brother toward the weaker brother in *Romans 14:21*, *“It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.”* It takes a stronger act of the will to abstain from the consumption of alcohol than to participate in this social practice of the world. Therefore believers who take their Christian responsibility seriously cannot avoid the obvious importance of total abstinence to their Christian testimony.

This truth is especially significant when it is applied to the young people of the world who are turning to alcohol in unprecedented numbers as an acceptable mind-altering drug. They are going beyond moderation, no matter what their parents and elders say. If Christian parents and adults use alcohol even in moderation or just to be socially accepted, the next generation will use it with less care and self-control. The best example our generation can set for the next generation is to practice and teach total abstinence.

Jesus spoke very clearly to the disciples about the responsibility of the older generation to its children and youth: *“It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.” (Luke 17:1, 2)* We must not set an example that will send others to hell and destruction.

As believers we must draw a line on the use of alcohol. If we draw the line at the point of moderation, our ministers will soon find it necessary to exhort congregations to forsake drunkenness. If we draw the line at total abstinence, we will save a multitude of young and old from the sin of alcoholism.

**Social Drinking Is Satan's Cruel Deception:** The term social drinking suggests that the

consumption of alcohol in respectable surroundings is in some way different from drinking in other environments. Social drinking is a dangerous matter among Christians with what can bring from bad effects and harmful consequences. The fact that such a problem has grown to the currently distressing proportions shows what a powerful and insidious influence the present age exerts on the church of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit can deliver from the shackles of social drinking, and we plead with all Christians who have fallen into this bondage to cry out for God's help immediately.

Many people who experience psychological problems (and some of them unfortunately are Christians) are tempted to seek an easy solution in "a little bit" of alcohol. But what was used as a supposed cure has caused even greater problems. We are set free through Jesus Christ, not through a drug that dissipates and destroys us when we submit to its influence.

Many drinkers today started on the road to alcoholism with a social drink or an innocent first taste. Fatal automobile accidents are caused by drinking drivers. The economic cost of alcoholism includes lost in production, automobile accidents, health care, violent crimes, and fire losses. Alcohol is consistently linked to a high percentage of reported murders, assaults, and rapes, as well as to suicide, domestic violence, and child abuse. Social drinking was the starting point for those who are all involved with all the above.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is one of the leading causes of mental retardation as a birth defect in countries where alcohol is a social drink. Whatever alcohol the pregnant mother consumes it crosses the placenta and enters the bloodstream of the baby. The result too frequently is below-average birth weight and size, deformed and improperly formed joints and limbs, as well as heart defects. Therefore we should not be concerned only about the life of the unborn child; the health of the child is important too.

The consumption of alcohol has become a social crisis, tearing at the moral fabric of the society. Christians cannot meet their moral responsibilities by a posture of neutrality about alcohol. The problem is not merely economic, cultural, or social. In the final analysis, the use of alcohol is a spiritual problem. Alcoholism is sin, not sickness. Alcoholism is the manifestation of the permissive, lawless spirit that produced so much spiritual degeneration in our society today. Therefore,

**My Dear and Beloved:** Alcoholic beverages should have no place in the life of the Christian. Let there be no doubt about the Church of God stand on this critical issue.

**The Call To Abstinence:** We declare unequivocally our conviction that total abstinence from alcoholic beverages is the only acceptable way of life for the Christian. We call upon every member and adherent in our fellowship, including both the ministry and the laity, to teach by word and example a life-style that abstains totally from the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

**My Prayer:** *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins and rose again from the death to give me eternal life. Lord I commit myself for total abstinence from alcohol and to teach my family and the people around me the same. I commit myself to pray, instruct and to teach those who drink to stop drinking this is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.*