

Sermon Title: What Wine Are You Drinking? July 28, 2013 (Scripture is from the ESV)

Introduction

Hello everyone. My name is John-Michael Becker. My wife Sky and I are the healing and deliverance pastors of New Philadelphia Church and we also serve as Community Pastors at the Itaewon campus. It's my pleasure to share the Word of God with you all today.

If you have been listening to the sermons at Hillside and at Itaewon this past month then you likely noticed a certain theme being preached: grace. God seems to be hammering home grace this month. And as I prayed and prepared for this message I felt the Lord continuing to speak this theme into my heart. So let's get right into it...

Please open your Bibles with me to Luke 5:37-39...

Luke 5:37-39 – No one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. And no one after drinking old wine desires new, for he says, “The old is good.”

The context of this passage is certain people are asking Jesus why His disciples aren't fasting twice a week like the religious leaders of that day are. Jesus responds by saying that His disciples will indeed fast in time, but doesn't speak of any legalistic standard that they would have to follow like the Pharisees did. Instead, Jesus speaks of this new wine and the need for new wineskins.

New wine and new wineskins, this is what I want to speak about today. The title of my sermon today is, “What Wine Are You Drinking?”

Go ahead and ask the person sitting next to you, “What Wine Are You Drinking?”

Alcohol in the Bible

Wine is actually mentioned quite a bit in the Bible, both in positive ways and in negative ways. The word “wine” appears 237 times in your ESV Bible. That's a lot. Wine symbolizes a number of things, but two symbols stand out the most: Divine Grace and Divine Judgment. You either get one or the other, grace or judgment, depending on what wine you're drinking. And so my question to you today is, “What wine are you drinking?” It's either the good stuff or the bad stuff.

I'm the type of person who, when confronted with receiving both good news and bad news, always chooses to hear the bad news first. So let's focus on the bad wine first, the wine that brings forth judgment. Here is one of many examples of the wine of judgment in the Bible...

Revelation 14:8-10 – Another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.” And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.”

These verses are an extreme example of the wine of judgment. In the end times many will choose the wine of this world, symbolizing the ways of the flesh and of the world: materialism, sexual immorality, and selfish desires. Those who partner with the god of this world, the beast who is the antichrist, are in turn choosing the wine of God's wrath and judgment. They have rejected God and chosen themselves. They've chosen the ways of this world and their own selfish desires

Why Drunkenness is a Sin

I mentioned earlier that I am one of the healing and deliverance pastors of the church. Whenever I lead a session I lead the person I'm counseling through healthy steps of turning from their sins and renouncing false identities they have gained from them. There are a number of things we cover including sins of the occult, unforgiveness, and sexual sins and addictions. One sin that we cover that I often get a lot of questions about is drunkenness. Many people don't know that in Galatians 5 and in 1Corinthians 6 that drunkenness is listed among the sins of those who will not inherit the kingdom of God. God hates drunkenness, and for good reason. Drunkenness is the epitome of the wine of divine judgment.

There is not one single instance in the Bible of someone getting drunk and there being something positive coming from it. Noah accidentally got drunk and we read that one of his sons gazed on his naked body and ended up getting cursed for it. Abraham's nephew Lot got drunk multiple times and unknowingly slept with his own daughters. Disgusting! Jacob got drunk on his wedding day and unknowingly ended up sleeping with the wrong woman that night and was forced to marry her. Whoops! King Elah of Israel in 1Kings 16 got himself drunk and ended up being assassinated by his servant. King Ben Hadad got drunk in 1Kings 20 and ended up getting his army destroyed because of his idiotic drunken orders. The King of Babylon got drunk in Daniel 5 and ended up receiving divine words of judgment from God that his kingdom would be taken away from him that very night.

So there you have it, six stories of drunkenness in the Bible. Three ended up in horrible sexual immorality. Three ended up in death and the fall of kingdoms. There was nothing positive whatsoever from these stories of drunkenness.

What happens when you get drunk? You begin to lose control of your body. Let me list for you some of the most common motivations for people to get drunk... this was actually taken by an extensive poll of different people and here were their most common responses...

- to be accepted
- to let loose and feel free and to escape reality
- to experience a boost in confidence for socializing and for sex

A lot of people want to get drunk because in their current reality they don't feel **free enough, accepted enough, or confident enough**. When they are drunk whatever was holding them back seems to be let loose. And there is a lot of truth in this. The alcohol loosens up their mind and so they then begin to lose control over their body and their decisions. But what they don't realize is that something else then takes control. Those spirits that had been oppressing the person and trying to control them now have free reign over the persons mind.

If you don't believe in the spiritual realm, then just go to a bar and watch drunk people. Your eyes will quickly be opened to the demonic realm. You will see the angry and abusive drunk, the sad and depressed drunk, the loud and babbling drunk, the sexually aggressive drunk,

along with other manifestations of unclean spirits controlling them. A friend of mine from high school was nicknamed “The Naked Drunk” at his university because whenever he got drunk he would end up stripping off all his clothes and running around naked. In his right mind he would never do that. There is a reason why another word for alcohol is “spirits.”

Dad’s Friend Earl

Let me tell you the story of my dad’s friend Earl who was the music minister at his church. Before his walk with Christ he was an ‘out of control’ alcoholic. In the hopelessness of his addiction, Earl’s heart started turning to God for help. One day he went to a church and was moved by what the pastor had shared but he wasn’t ready to commit yet. After the service, the pastor spoke with him and before they parted the pastor prayed that Earl’s eyes would be opened to see the truth in what he was doing. It was a bit after that prayer while at a bar having a drink, reflecting on the nudges toward God that he had felt and remembering (wondering) about that prayer the pastor prayed that, he looked around the bar at the others there. Only now he didn’t just see the people he saw demons surrounding them. The demons were eager for the people to drink because when they did the demons would jump onto the liquid and dive into them and the people would become violent and loud. He had never experienced anything like this and he had never been so terrified by what he saw. He said he put his glass down and didn’t drink anymore after that. He came back to the church and committed himself to follow Jesus. He became one of the most joyful guys my dad knew.

So in summary, let me share why drunkenness in this world is wrong. I want to encourage you to take notes of these reasons because you’re going to see a strong correlation later.

1. It reveals the flesh and makes us worldly.

If you want to see the true, unhealthy spiritual condition of someone then watch them when they are drunk.

2. It gives control to the enemy, and allows his spirits to take over.

As a person becomes drunk they begin to lose control over their mind and over their body. Unclean spirits can then begin to take over. The same goes for any drugs and narcotics. Alcohol itself isn’t a sin, but getting drunk and letting go of control is a sin.

3. It’s choosing the world, temporary freedom, and not God.

As I mentioned earlier, one of the main symbols of wine and alcohol in the Bible is divine judgment. **The reason for this is because people are choosing to find their escape, their help, and their joy in the ways of this world rather than in God.** They are choosing to try and satisfy their own desires apart from God. They are in turn rejecting God and going their own way. Drunkenness in this world is a sin and those who live by it will face divine judgment.

Now, let me tell you something that may surprise you, God understands the desires in people to be fully let loose. God understands our desires to feel confident, accepted, and free. God understands the stresses and burdens we face and He wants us free from them. So what I’m about to share might surprise you, but hear me out: **God wants you drunk.** You can quote me on that one as long as you get the rest of this message. God wants you free and confident, but His wine isn’t the wine of this world. His wine is the good stuff.

Jesus Liked Wine

The truth is: Jesus Christ liked wine. Surprise surprise! The Savior of the world drank wine often! What was the first miracle Jesus did? He was at a wedding and they ran out of wine, so He had them fill these huge containers of water and then Jesus miraculously turned that water into wine. That way the party was able to continue on. Also, in Luke 7:34 Jesus was accused for eating and drinking with His disciples and with the prostitutes and the tax collectors. Clearly Jesus had nothing against social settings with alcohol. Jesus never ever endorses drunkenness, but it's clear He had no problem with wine. In fact, **Jesus used wine to be the greatest symbol of God's divine grace...**

Let me read Matthew 26:27-28 to you. This is during His last supper with His disciples before He was betrayed...

Matthew 26:27-28 – And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”

“Drink of it, all of you.”

So what does His blood of the covenant symbolize?

When mankind was created, we were perfect before God. We were made in His image and had a close relationship with Him. But when Adam and Eve sinned, they made themselves imperfect. What is imperfect cannot be in relationship with what is perfect. Their sin had created a division between them and God. So from the time of Adam and Eve to the time of Jesus, mankind tried to break down that division through sacrifices. They sacrificed bulls and rams and sheep in order so that they could be accepted by God. But the truth was, their sacrifices were all imperfect. They were sinful people trying to sacrifice things of this world in order to reach a perfect, heavenly God. Their earthly sacrifices just could not add up.

I want to make a point here that **EVERY SINGLE RELIGION IN THE WORLD** other than Christianity is based on this sacrifice mentality. Research this and you will see it to be true. Every religion: Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, New Age, and on and on, emphasizes the need for humans to act and to obey in ways that will lift them up to God or lift them up so that they can be their own god. Every single religion teaches this: we must work and strive in order to be accepted. If we die for our religion then we have good standing before God. If we sacrifice our clothes and material things then we have good standing in the spiritual realm. If we sacrifice our time and continually meditate then we are lifted up in the spiritual realm. These are all work-based religions. None of them can add up to God.

The truth is there is nothing that we, as sinful humans here on earth, can do or can sacrifice in order to be clean before God. And God knew this. So in the greatest act of love ever recorded, God sent His Son Jesus. Jesus was born as a baby and grew up with us. He experienced every temptation that we experience. He endured hunger and He endured pain. But through everything He remained perfect. Jesus never sinned. He alone was worthy of relationship with God. He alone could be the perfect sacrifice.

Knowing this Jesus chose to be that sacrifice for us. Jesus chose to endure the whipping, the pain, the mocking, the rejection, and the shame of the Cross so that we might experience the

healing, the comfort, the acceptance, and the love of God. Jesus took the consequences of our sin upon Him, so that we might be free and have a true relationship with God. **His blood that was poured out symbolizes the true and eternal sacrifice made on our behalf.**

Unlike any other religion in the world, God came down for us. God knew we couldn't work ourselves up to Him. He knew He had to come down.

Let me read to you some verses about the blood of Jesus...

Hebrews 9:14 – How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Ephesians 1:7 – In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace

1John 1:7 – But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

Ephesians 2:13 – But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off **have been brought near** by the blood of Christ. (**acceptance**)

Hebrews 10:19 – Therefore, brothers, we have **confidence** to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus. (**confidence**)

Revelation 1:5-6 – Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and **has freed us** from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (**freedom**)

God didn't want us to just remember His blood alone; **He chose wine as a symbol for it.** And He said to us, "Drink of it, all of you."

God doesn't want us to get drunk from the wine of this world. **The wine of this world symbolizes escape through the things of this world.** The wine of this world can't bring eternal freedom. The wine of this world can't bring eternal joy. Instead, it gives you a hangover. Instead, it gives you pain and regret. Instead, you eventually feel empty and have to get more of it because it never fully satisfies.

In the same way striving through works and other religions won't get you to God. You might feel good for a moment if you are doing well, but sooner or later your sinful nature will be revealed and all you'll have is hopelessness and regret. Works, striving, and the ways of this world will never bring you true escape and true rest.

But God is saying, "I am your escape!" "I am your escape!" "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest!" God is saying, **"Stop trying to add up, because you can't do it!** My blood has already accomplished everything. Receive my grace. Receive my forgiveness. Receive true redemption."

The old wine was the wine of works. It was the wine of having to do things in order to be accepted. The more you drank of it, the more you became drunk and had delusions of acceptance, confidence, and freedom. But whenever you awoke to your sinful nature, you were left with a hangover of pain and regret.

The new wine is the wine of grace. It is the wine of redemption through Jesus' sacrifice, and not our own. The more you drink of it, the more you let go of your striving and trying to add up on your own. The more you drink of His wine the more you are filled with true acceptance, true confidence, and true freedom that come from knowing you are loved with an everlasting and unfailing love.

Whenever you feel stress or you feel you're lacking, you can just rest and drink in His grace. Jesus' last words on the Cross were, "It is finished." It is done. There are no more works needed.

If you think you have to pray more or work more or strive more in order to be accepted or approved of, then you are rejecting the sacrifice of Jesus and saying what He did wasn't enough and that you must do more. Let me say that again: If you think you have to pray more or work more or strive more to be accepted or approved of, then you are rejecting the sacrifice of Jesus and saying what He did wasn't enough and that you must do more.

We don't have to add up anymore to be accepted. We don't have to perform anymore to be approved of. We are already approved! So our obedience to God and our performance now can come from freedom and from joy in the Lord. His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

Let me review what I shared earlier. Here are reasons why earthly drunkenness is wrong...

1. It reveals the flesh and makes us worldly.
2. It gives control to the enemy, and allows his spirits to take over.
3. It's choosing the world, temporary freedom, and not God.

And here are the reasons why being drunk in His grace is good...

1. It cleanses the flesh and makes us holy
2. It gives control to Jesus, and enables His Holy Spirit to take over
3. It's choosing God and eternal freedom.

Stop trying to control your life. Stop trying to work out of your flesh. Loosen up. Get drunk in His grace. Give Him full control. Let Him intoxicate you with His love. Take His cup and drink it, all of you!

Psalm 34:8 – Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

Psalm 63:3 – Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.

His love is better than life. His wine is richer than anything of this world. God is inviting you to taste and see that He is good today. He wants you to open wide your mouth so He can fill you with true freedom, confidence, and acceptance.

Repeat after me, “I want to get drunk with your grace.” “Consume me, God.”

Psalm 81:10 – Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

Let’s take a moment right now to receive His new wine, to receive His grace. I’m going to invite the praise team up. As they play let’s reflect on the full freedom, confidence, and acceptance He gives us.

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Possible altar calls...

Salvation altar call to the left.

Letting go of seeking God’s approval and acceptance through works to the right.