

This study guide's purpose is to present the evidence the Bible shows for the instruction of a sober and vigilant witness for Christ, as we are all called to be.

**1 Peter 3:15** - <sup>15</sup> But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

**1 Peter 5:8** - <sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Peter succinctly offered the description of the basic tools required to follow the path Christ intends for everyone to walk.

**Mark 16:15** - <sup>15</sup> And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

As our Lord Jesus Christ calls us into His service, there is a single stipulation required. This stipulation involves a simple step with wonderful implications for our physical, mental, and spiritual health.

**James 5:7** - <sup>7</sup> Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

**Romans 1:4-6** - <sup>4</sup> And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: <sup>5</sup> By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: <sup>6</sup> Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

Submission and obedience. These are one in the same and are the only requirement of Christ for the building up of His witnesses. Submit to His will, His process, His love. Obedience to divine love and instruction by way of submission is the only way to ensure endurance unto the end.

**Matthew 10:22** - <sup>22</sup> And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

The winner of the race is he or she which continues to the end. Let it be far from our minds to believe that a mild effort will endure. For the witnesses of the Lord are sober and steadfast, unfaltering in their faith to our Lord Jesus Christ.

**1 Peter 5:8** - <sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Peter also continues to show examples of those who have been recorded through the pen of Inspiration as righteous men. These men have shown qualities and values instilled in them by Christ through the study of His Word and seeking His character in the service of their lives.

**2 Peter 2:5,7** - <sup>5</sup> And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; <sup>7</sup> And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: <sup>8</sup> (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

We see even here that the men deemed righteous for saving by the Lord were not perfect men. Noah preached the Gospel for over 100 years among men while he and his sons built the ark. After that

enduring trial of the flood, the Bible records that Noah “fell short of the glory of God” by partaking of fermented wine and becoming drunk.

**Genesis 9:21** - <sup>21</sup> And he drank of the wine, and was drunken;

We can then see that nothing good came of this drunken state.

**Genesis 9:22-27** - <sup>22</sup> And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. <sup>23</sup> And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. <sup>24</sup> And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. <sup>25</sup> And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. <sup>26</sup> And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. <sup>27</sup> God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

Though Scripture plainly tells us that we are to “be sober, be vigilant”, we are also given a lesson through recorded event. Because of the curse pronounced on Ham, we can see that strong drink of any kind is a curse in itself. Benumbing the senses and entangling logical thoughts, so that the prince of darkness may find easy prey.

We read that:

**Romans 3:23** - <sup>23</sup> For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Thus we see that those mighty men of the Bible only remained holy men by maintaining their connection with Christ. Sinning separated their connection with the Almighty. Through repentance and submission, the servant of the Lord maintains a connection to the Source of all life that sustains the human spirit in a way not naturally found in man. If all have sinned and fall short, then those holy men described in the Old and New Testaments must have found their power and righteousness in Christ. Such a Source requires continual effort and maintenance on our part. Such a maintenance requires diligence. And such a diligence requires sobriety, “because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:”.

**Exodus 20:4,5** - <sup>4</sup> Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. <sup>5</sup> Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

God has stated clearly in His Decalogue, as the third commandment, that the sins of the fathers serve “upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;”. Such is the reality of those lost in strong drink, being given up to the delusions of their drunkenness. When no good comes of it, the effects are seen in the sons and daughters and the next generations after that, further attempting to widen the division between humans and their God.

Moses commanded the children of Israel to freely and lovingly give to the church, as a replacement for the love of worldly possessions and lusts will supplication and a contrite spirit to the Lord.

**Deuteronomy 14:24-26** - <sup>24</sup> And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it; or if the place be too far from thee, which the Lord thy God shall choose to set his name there, when the Lord thy God hath blessed thee: <sup>25</sup> Then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose: <sup>26</sup> And thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and thou shalt eat there before the Lord thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou, and thine household,

Instead of settling our souls in the dirt of humanly lusts, which take many forms including that of the stupor of strong drink, Christ calls us to a much more noble calling. Speaking through His servant Moses, He calls us to replace the self-serving nature of the heart degraded by 6000+ years of sin with love and kindness to the spreading of the Gospel and the worship of our Lord.

The wisest man who ever lived reminded us, after the Lord granted him the greatest wisdom among men:

**Proverbs 20:1** – <sup>1</sup>Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

**Proverbs 31:6** – <sup>6</sup>Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.

Reading of Lot in Sodom, we see that Lot and his immediate family were only just saved by the angels of the Lord and Lot's trust in his God. Though difficult and stubbornly, Lot led his family away from the destruction of this city that had become so wicked. Sadly, indicative of many who disinherit themselves from Christ by choice, Lot's wife turned from their escape to view the city one last time and turned into a pillar of salt. Afterwards, Lot and his two daughters came to take shelter in a cave:

**Genesis 19:31-36** - <sup>31</sup> And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: <sup>32</sup> Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. <sup>33</sup> And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. <sup>34</sup> And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. <sup>35</sup> And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. <sup>36</sup> Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

In Lot was found righteousness according to Christ, thus him and his family were spared. The righteousness and conscience of Christ in us would clearly have denounced and rebuked such an act as incest. Yet the instrument used to facilitate, strong drink, again shows that the nobility to which Christ calls us is impossible under its influence.

Christ himself would not even accept vinegar while hanging on the cross while dying for our sins.

**Matthew 27:34** - <sup>34</sup> They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.

Vinegar, itself an ingredient produced from the process of fermentation, is a mild pain-killer.

Because the character of Christ is only attainable by following His pattern, in submission and obedience, we can be sure that the consumption of alcohol, or anything other substance that hinders and degrades the judgement and senses, is an abomination to our heavenly inheritance.

**1 Corinthians 9:25** - <sup>25</sup> And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.