

In Defense of Biblical Christianity

Article 10

“The Thou Shall Not Drink Alcohol Heresy”

A Paper

By `

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This apologetic paper is the tenth of a series of articles called ‘In Defense of Biblical Christianity.’ I will be challenging false doctrines that have infiltrated, subverted, and perverted the truth of Biblical Christianity.

Apologetic Preface

The modern-day teaching regarding the consumption of alcohol is unscriptural. It does not represent the truth of the scriptures and has heretical and blasphemous implications.

This teaching, mainly in the evangelical and charismatic church, is a classic example of the doctrines of men perverting the word of God. Like the Pharisees of old, they are imposing religious demands on the church that God never intended or desired for his people. (Matt 23:4).

But far worse than espousing the traditions of men, many denominations teach that drinking alcohol is sinful. This is no minor assault on the truth. When church leaders declare drinking sinful, they insult and offend Christ and are blaspheming his name.

Do I have your attention?

I draw your attention to **Luke 7:33-34** which says *For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and **drinking no wine**, and you say, 'He has a demon.'* *34The Son of Man has come eating and **drinking**, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a **drunkard**, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'* See also **Matt 11:19**.

Here Observe

- 1) In Jesus' own words, he says he drank alcohol.
- 2) Jesus tells us he was called a drunkard for drinking alcohol.
- 3) The religious always attack the righteous.

Below is a syllogism.

- 1) Jesus admits to drinking alcohol.
- 2) The Evangelical Church says drinking alcohol is sinful.
- 3) Therefore, the Evangelical Church is calling Jesus a sinner.

Do not blow this off; this is precisely what is happening. The church is calling Jesus a sinner.

I am sure Satan loves this; he has the followers of Christ blaspheming his name.

Anyone who says it is sinful to drink alcohol is blaspheming Jesus, yet the Bible teaches that Jesus never sinned. The sinless perfection of Christ is essential from a theological perspective. If Jesus was not sinless, he could not be the perfect sacrifice for sin; we are all in our sins.

Several scriptures teach that Jesus lived a perfect, sinless life, as evidenced below.

Heb 4:14-15 says *14. So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. 15This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin.*

2 Cor 5:21 *21For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin so that we could be made right with God through Christ.*

Also see 1 Pet 2:22, Luke 1:35, 1 Jn 3:5, John 8:29, Isa 53:9, 1 Pet 1:18-19.

I trust this clarifies why I have written this apologetic called “The Thou Shall Not Drink Alcohol Heresy. Heresies must be refuted.

Based on the above teachings of the church, should we be surprised that 44% of American believers think that Jesus sinned,¹ as evidenced in The American Worldwide Inventory 2020 survey?

Below is a better syllogism that reflects the truth of scripture, not men’s doctrines.

- 1) Jesus drank alcohol.
- 2) The Bible declares Jesus to be sinless.
- 3) Therefore, drinking alcohol is not a sin.

Introduction

Indeed, if Jesus can drink alcohol, I believe it is safe to assume that you and I can partake under Biblical parameters. Your Pastor and denomination should teach you the truth of scripture, not men’s doctrines.

If your Pastor is preaching this nonsense from the pulpit, please give him a copy of this paper.

The Bible is very clear that alcohol is permitted. The rest of this paper will provide Biblical teachings about alcohol to help you unlearn the lies you have been taught.

Indeed, drinking alcohol is a personal decision that every Christian must decide for themselves. Most certainly, arguments can be made that there are social evils tied to alcohol.

No one would argue that driving drunk and alcohol addiction is a severe issue in our culture.

¹ The American Worldwide Inventory 2020 This apologetic challenges the church’s position that I have articulated as the “Thou Shall Not Drink Alcohol heresy.

This, however, does not make alcohol evil. Alcohol or almost anything can be misused, resulting in a negative outcome.

I am not arguing the social evils of alcohol. I am defending the Biblical position that alcohol consumption is not forbidden to Christians.

Col 2:16 says, “*Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and **drink**, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.*”

Jesus drank alcohol, and they passed judgment on him, and now Paul is telling us not to act like the religious heretics. We are not to pass judgment on anyone who drinks alcohol, provided they adhere to the teachings of scripture.

I am mortified by the Biblical illiteracy and or the willful disregard of church leadership to teach the truth. Anyone who has read the gospel even once should be able to determine Jesus drank alcohol. I knew it the first time I read the New Testament.

The rest of this paper will be dedicated to teaching what the Bible says about consuming alcohol before the law, during the law, and in the New Covenant.

The Bible’s Teaching About Alcohol

Before we go to the scriptures, I need to share some facts about alcohol. Before 1869, there was no such thing as unfermented wine. We can thank Thomas Welch for making grape juice available to the masses. He was the first person who stopped the natural fermentation process of grapes. He used a process called pasteurization that was discovered by Louis Pasteur in 1857, thus the name pasteurization.

Before 1869, grape juice stored in barrels or wineskins began to ferment. There was no way to stop the process; the sugar immediately began to turn into alcohol.

Knowing this fact means Jesus drank fermented wine at the Last Supper, and the church for 1900 years would have used fermented wine in communion.

Indeed, the wine could be diluted with water for communion, but I assure you, most of the time, this did not happen whenever wine was consumed.

The Jews drank fermented drinks at Jewish festivals and weddings. More about this later.

I am asking you to let the truth get in the way of the religious nonsense you have been taught.

Let’s see what the Bible says instead of men’s doctrines.

Drinking Before the Law

Below are two negative and two positive uses of alcohol before the law.

The first time we see alcohol consumed is recorded in **Gen 9:20**, which says *Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard. 21He drank of the wine and became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent.*

Noah was a righteous man who made the mistake of overconsuming and getting drunk, not having a vineyard and drinking. The Bible does not condemn Noah for planting a vineyard or drinking alcohol. The issue articulated was being drunk, which resulted in a loss of self-control.

Another negative use of wine is Lot's daughters getting their father drunk so they could rape him and conceive children. **Gen 19:32** says *Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve offspring from our father.*"

On the positive side, **Gen 14:18-20** says *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out **bread and wine**. (He was priest of God Most High.) 19And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!"*

Melchizedek was the priest of God, and Abraham was the man of faith, and they were drinking fermented wine. However, this text is more significant than alcohol consumption. Eating bread and drinking wine is foundational theology that will play an integral part in the Mosaic Covenant regarding celebrating feasts and offerings. In the New Covenant, the bread and wine are used for celebrating communion.

In **Gen 35:14**, it says, *And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone. He poured out a **drink offering** on it and poured oil on it.*

This drink offering was wine, used to honour the Lord.

We have discovered so far that wine can be used to celebrate unto the Lord and can be misused, leading to drunkenness and the loss of self-control.

The fruit of the vine is a gift from God; the issue is what we do with it.

Drinking Under the Law

The law of Moses permits and regulates alcohol consumption.

I draw your attention to **Deut 14:26**, which says *Then you may spend the money on anything you desire: cattle, sheep, **wine, strong drink**, or anything you wish. You are **to feast** there in the presence of the LORD your God and **rejoice** with your household.*

This text elaborates on the Lord's tithe that landowners set aside to celebrate the three main festivals that required a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. (Passover, Pentecost & Tabernacles) This tithe would be eaten and enjoyed in celebration of the Lord. The offerings and sacrifices presented at the festival would be beyond the tithe. There were three tithes; for more information about the Lord's Sacred and Poor tithe, go to Article 9.

The annual feast required many to travel great distances, so God permitted them to sell the agricultural tithe for money. This means when they arrived for the festival, they could buy provisions for the celebration, including wine and strong drink, as the text states. May I suggest you read **Deut 14:22-29**.

It is impossible to read this text and say that God forbids alcohol consumption. The text says God permits and expects it to be purchased. Don't miss this, God himself told the worshippers they could buy wine and strong drink.

Fermented wine was integral to Jewish Feasts, sacrifices, and Offerings.

Drink Offering / Libation Offering.

Fermented wine was used on various feast days, sacrifices, and offerings. In all cases, the fermented alcohol was wine.

Num 15:1-5 says The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When **you come into the land** you are to inhabit, which I am giving you, 3 and you offer to the LORD from the herd or from the flock a **food offering** or a **burnt offering** or a sacrifice, to **fulfill a vow** or as a **freewill offering** or at your **appointed feasts**, to make a pleasing aroma to the LORD, 4 then he who **brings his offering** shall offer to the LORD a grain offering of a tenth of an ephah of fine flour, mixed with a quarter of a hin of oil; 5 and you shall offer with the burnt offering, or for the sacrifice, a quarter of a **hin of wine** for the **drink offering** for each lamb.

This above text reveals that the drink offering was a significant part of the Levitical system of worship, as further evidenced by the following.

- **Lev 7:15** reveals the peace offering is the only offering where the worshipper shared in the offering; the drink offering was made.
- **Numb 28:9-10** reveals that a drink offering was drunk on the Sabbath
- **Numb 28:11-15** reveals that the drink offering was made for the new moon and sin offering
- **Num 28:16-25** reveals a drink offering for the Passover
- **Numb 28:26-31** reveals a drink offering for Pentecost.

I do not want to turn this paper into a teaching about sacrifices, offerings and festivals. If you want to study this in detail, please visit my website at www.breakfreeapologetics.com/free, then click [Hebrews Course](#); the study starts on page 26.

The drink offering was poured out on the altar. The alcohol consumed by the worshipper was not part of the offering.

The Passover

Today, the Jews drink four glasses of wine at the Passover Seder. According to Judaica, ²Each glass of wine has significance, as drawn from Ex 6:6-8.

Exod 6:6-7 says *Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and*

- 1) *I will **bring you out** from under the burdens of the Egyptians,*
- 2) *and I will **deliver you** from slavery to them,*
- 3) *and I will **redeem you** with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.*
- 4) *I will **take you to be my people**, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.*

There are 15 steps in the Passover Seder, ³and the four cups of wine are drunk at the four steps⁴ listed below.

Step 1: Kiddush- Sanctify- the benediction prayer recited with wine before the meal

Step 5: Maggid- Telling the Passover story, the second cup of wine is drunk.

Step 13: Barech- Blessing After the Meal- the third cup of wine is drunk.

Step 14: Hallel- Song of Praise- the fourth class of wine is drunk.

The Jews have practiced this tradition for centuries. At no time in their history have they been taught drinking alcohol is a sin.

Abstinence

The Old Covenant law did have requirements for abstinence, as shown below.

² Judaica <https://blog.judaicawebstore.com/what-do-the-4-cups-mean-at-passover/>

³³ Chabad-https://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/116793/jewish/Passover-Seder-Step-by-Step.htm

⁴ Taste of Home-www.tastofhome.com/article/passover-seder

1) Numb 6:2-4 When a Vow was Made

“Speak to the Israelites and tell them: If a man or woman **makes a special vow**, the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the LORD, ³he is to **abstain from wine and strong drink**.

2) Lev 10:8-9 Priest on Duty

8 Then the LORD said to Aaron, *You and your sons are **not to drink wine or strong drink** when you **enter the Tent of Meeting**, or else you **will die**; this is a perpetual statute for the generations to come.*

Why would God have rules for abstinence, as stated above, if alcohol was forbidden?

The evidence from the scriptures reveals that drinking alcohol was permitted under the Law of Moses with few restrictions.

Warnings for Misuses

There are numerous warnings against misuse and much detail about those who do misuse alcohol, but not a single inhibition is stated.

I found a website that listed 75 warnings against drinking alcohol.⁵ The problem with the presentation is it says these scriptures condemn the use of alcohol. Again, another Church leader called Jesus a sinner.

The person calls his paper “75 Scripture Warnings Against Drinking Alcohol”. If he had added the short phrase the misuse of alcohol after against and before drinking, he would have accurately depicted the intent of the 75 scriptures.

Below are their best 6 of 75. I have provided a short statement that reveals what the text says, not what the author wants his readers to believe.

- 1) Deut 32:32-33 This is the wine of Sodom and Gomorrah; it says their wine is the poison of serpents. (Not Kosher).
- 2) Prov 4:17 The reference is to the wine of violence who are wicked.
- 3) Prov 20:1 Wine is a mocker and strong drink, a brawler for those led astray by it.
- 4) Isa 28:8 This is about priests and prophets who are drunks.

⁵ 75 Scripture Warning Against Drinking of Alcohol <https://crosstheology.wordpress.com/75-scripture-warnings-against-drinking-of-alcohol/>

- 5) Hosea 4:11 This is about those who have forsaken God and who cherish whoredom and wine.
- 6) Matt 24:48-51 This is about a wicked servant who drinks with drunkards.

When studying the Bible, you must not read into the text what you want it to mean; you must study the text to see what it is saying.

Alcohol can be misused, evidenced by the 75 scriptures, but that does not inhibit its use; it does make us accountable for how we use it.

Do not be deceived.

New Covenant Drinking

The New Covenant has restrictions regarding alcohol consumption, as evidenced below.

- 1) Eph 5:18 says do not be drunk, for that is debauchery.
- 2) Gal 5:19-21 says drunkenness is a work of the flesh.
- 3) Titus 2:3 warns older women not to be slaves to much wine.

The facts reveal the holy scriptures never tell us not to drink alcohol.

We see Jesus turning the water to wine at the Jewish wedding feast in **John 2:1-12**.

The wine drank at the wedding before the miracle was likely fermented upwards of 15% alcohol. I highly doubt the miracle wine was grape juice since the bridegroom is commended for bringing out the good wine after everyone has drunk freely.

You are seriously mistaken if you think this is all about unfermented grape juice.

Jesus told us plainly that he consumed alcohol in **Luke 7:34 & Matt 1:19**, so it is very likely that he had a drink or two throughout the evening.

Can anyone honestly say Jesus did not drink fermented wine at the Last Supper? Even if the wine was cut with water, it was fermented because unfermented wine was unavailable until 1869.

At the last supper, Jesus says in **Matt 26:29** *I tell you **I will not drink again** of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new **with you** in my Father's kingdom.*

Here Observe

- 1) Jesus is currently abstaining from drinking wine by choice, not because it is sinful.
- 2) Jesus said he would drink again, which means he had previously drunk wine.
- 3) Jesus plans to drink with his followers in his Father's kingdom.

Do not be deceived. God is not forbidding the use of alcohol; he is asking us to consume it responsibly.

The Early Church Fathers

I am unclear why the early church father understood that drinking alcohol was not a sin, but our modern-day preachers, with hundreds of times the study resources, cannot figure this out.

Below are four quotes.

Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.505 Jesus Drank Wine

*It was when Crist was eating with men **and drinking wine**.*

Clement of Alexandria (c. 195, E), 2.240 Drinking Wine is Not Sin

*It is good, then, neither to eat flesh nor drink wine... Yet, if one partakes of them, **he does not sin**. Only let him **partake temperately** not being dependent on them.*

Origen (c. 228, E), 9.314

Bread nourishes and makes a person strong. It is said to strengthen the heart of man. In contrast, wine pleases, rejoices, and softens man.

Commodianus (c. 240, W), 4.215

By sparing an abundance of wine, lest, by means of it, you should go wrong.

All the church fathers agree that drinking is not a sin.

A Few Other Teachings About Alcohol

Below are a few supplemental Biblical teachings regarding alcohol.

1) 1 Tim 5:23 Medicinal Purposes

*Stop drinking only water and use a little wine instead, because of your **stomach** and your frequent **ailments**.*

2) Pro 31:61 Strong Drink for the Dying and Wine for Distress

*Give strong drink to the one who is **perishing**, and wine to those in bitter **distress***

3) Psalm 104:15 Wine Gladdens the Heart

*and wine to **gladden** the heart of man,*

4) Amos 9:14 Symbolic of God Blessing

*I will restore the **fortunes** of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall **plant vineyards** and **drink their wine.***

5) Hab 2:15 Used for Evil Purposes

*15“Woe to him **who makes his neighbors drink**— you pour out your wrath and **make them drunk, in order to gaze at their nakedness!***

These texts show wine’s positive and adverse effects, which depend on the user.

Conclusion

When false doctrines are preached from the pulpit, it destroys the credibility of the preacher and the Christian faith. I experienced this as a new convert; I read in the bible and knew Jesus drank fermented wine, so immediately, I had trust issues with leadership.

Today, I realize these preachers were preaching the traditions of men, cultural standards, or denominational edicts that nullify the word of God, not proclaiming it.

There is irrefutable evidence that Jesus drank alcohol, and he will drink alcohol again, per his testimony. This should be the only evidence anyone needs to stop believing the Thou Shall Not Drink Alcohol Heresy.

I am calling church leaders to stop preaching heresy and stop calling Jesus a sinner.

I am not advocating that anyone drink alcohol. I am fulfilling my obligation to teach the truth.

If you choose to consume alcohol, then do so responsibly and in line with the scriptural teaching you have learned in this paper.

Thank you for taking the time to read this article.

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