

*“That the aged women, likewise, not be ... given to much wine”*

*Titus 2:3*

*The counsel of the Bible on abstaining from drinking alcohol*

*\*Note: The following scriptures are in reference to alcoholic wine. The Bible also speaks of wine in a positive light, but these scriptures are referring to new wine or grape juice.*

**“The LORD spoke unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die.” Lev. 10: 8, 9**

- The LORD did not want His tabernacle or His priests defiled by alcohol.

**“It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more” Prov. 31:4-7**

- Looking at the first two verses, there is instruction for kings and princes to abstain from alcohol. Our Heavenly Father is the King of kings, and Christians are adopted into His family. As His sons and daughters, or princes and princesses, the direction to abstain from alcohol is applicable to Christians.
- The Bible also teaches that we are made kings and priests as followers of Christ. “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” Rev. 1:6. We are called kings, and kings are to abstain from alcohol. Furthermore, remember the instructions for priests mentioned earlier in Lev. 10: 8, 9. Rev. 1:6 calls us priests, and priests are to abstain also.
- It is clear that alcohol negatively affects judgment. As women of God, we are to be discreet (Titus 2:5). Having discretion is also understood as having good judgment. Alcohol perverts our judgment and discretion making us less effective for His Kingdom.
- Alcohol is reserved for those ready to perish and those with heavy hearts (v. 6-7). The Bible says in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life” As Christians, we will not perish, and we are to “count it all joy” when life is hard (James 1:2); therefore, wine is not for Christians, but for the unsaved.

**“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.” Prov. 20:1**

- Alcohol is deceptive. Do not be deceived.

**“Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine” Prov. 23: 29, 30**

- This is very ugly picture of the effects of alcohol. Drunkards become so inebriated that they cannot physically continue. Drunkards never intend to become so dependent on alcohol; they start by assuming they can handle just “a little.” There would be no drunkards had it not been for their choice to take the *first* drink.

**“Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like and adder” Prov. 23: 31, 32**

- Alcohol is tempting and looking at it can make you really desire it. However, in reality, it is comparable to a snakebite. God warns us to not even *look* at alcohol, let alone drink it.

**“Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!” Isa. 5:11**

- Alcohol can overtake our lives and it is a life filled with “woe.”

**“A bishop then must be blameless... not given to wine” I Tim. 3:2, 3; Titus 1:7**

- A church leader must abstain from alcohol in order to be qualified to lead people. Leadership requires abstinence from alcohol.

**“Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” Eph. 5:18**

- We are to fill ourselves up with the Holy Spirit, not with alcohol.

*The counsel of the Bible on drinking “a little” alcohol*

*\*The Titus 2 text states for “aged woman... not be... given to much wine,” so is being given to a little wine acceptable?*

**“It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby they brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.” Rom. 14:21**

- Consumption of alcohol can cause a brother or sister in Christ to fall into sin. Those who come into a Christian home can be hurt just by seeing it in the refrigerator. The message of alcohol being acceptable for Christians affirms for others that they too can drink it. The evidence is overwhelming that many people cannot handle even a drop of alcohol as it leads to a life of drunkenness. Do we want to be responsible for role modeling something that can be so destructive?

**“Abstain from all appearance of evil.” I Thess. 5:22**

- Many Christians and unsaved people alike have had their lives hurt or entirely destroyed by alcohol. Christians can devastate their testimony by appearing with alcohol, as alcohol is a horrendous evil to many in this lost and hurting world.

**“Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldst thou die before thy time?” Ecc. 7:17**

- Studying how the word “much” is used in other passages will help to clarify what is meant by “much wine” in Titus 2:3. Ecclesiastes exhorts not being over “much wicked.” With all we know about God from His Word, we understand that even though He says here to “be not over *much* wicked,” this does not imply that being over a *little* wicked is acceptable. Compiling the scriptures with the understanding that God does not contradict Himself, provides the direction we need as Christians to serve and honor Him. God strongly condemns alcohol throughout the Bible; it would be inconsistent for Him to allow older, Christian women “a little.”

**“By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.” Ecc. 10:18**

- Again studying the use of the word “much,” the Bible discourages “much slothfulness” or laziness. Could we infer by this scripture that “a little slothfulness” is acceptable? On this scripture alone, we could determine that a little laziness must be acceptable. However, when we consult the entire counsel of God, we understand that a “little slothfulness” is sin. In conclusion, when we read that older women should not be given to “much wine,” that does not automatically permit women to drink “a little wine.” Looking back over all the above scriptures, we see clearly that God's desire is for aged women, along with all Christians, to abstain from, or not drink any, alcohol.