**Is Drinking Wine a Sin?**

A question came to me and here I am putting the answer from logic, medical, Christian, and Biblical understandings.

Humans knew about wine around 4000 years before Christ and it had been used medically as an antiseptic, to clean the wounds or as an anesthetic (as a pain killer), as there were no other medications known at that time. There are a lot of bad effects of the wine/alcohol on the human body and everyone knows those who get drunk, how they look terrible, fall on the ground, vomit, and sometimes discharge their dirt uncontrollably.

I can mention a lot about its medical effect on the body for the short term and for the long term in life, but I leave the medical part for the doctors. Everyone knows that the wine reduces the concentration of the brains and that is why no one is allowed to drive after drinking, even a little amount of wine. I recall once when the police stopped my car for a breath test by blowing, when he saw me a priest and I said, “I never use wine”, he said, “but you use sacramental wine!”, so it means even this little amount of sacramental wine also affects.

Some people think that drinking wine without having it much is ok but that fact is as we will prove biblically, it Is not ok. The wine when it is used, it goes to the blood and gradually, its percentage increases and the person feels the need to it and gradually the person become drunk. I recall the first person I visited in jail in Egypt, who was a young man and in Egypt at that time, drinking was something forbidden and very rarely used and it is done behind the back, not open like here in Australia. He said to me that some bad friends kept forcing him to try the drink a little bit by little, until one night he became drunk and killed his father, who was fighting with him about how he became drunk.

**Logic and Christian study for drinking**

1. It becomes a habit and any habitual thing is a sin. When it grows more, the person becomes continuously drunk. Here it becomes slavery to the wine and this is a worse sin.
2. Some claim that in the Holy Bible, the good Samaritan used the wine with the wounded person

 (Luke 10:25-37):

*“ 25And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 26He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" 27So he answered and said, ""You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and "your neighbour as yourself.'" 28And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." 29But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" 30Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. 33But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. 34So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35On the next day, when he*

*departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, "Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' 36So which of these three do you think was neighbour to him who fell among the thieves?" 37And he said, "He who showed mercy on him."*

 And here the Samaritan used the wine as an antiseptic to clean the wounds of the man, then poured oil to sooth his wounds. Also, the only other time the bible mentioned it as a use, is when St. Paul advised his disciple Timothy to take it to ease the pains of his stomach and the verse is very clear:

 (1Timothy 5: 23):

*“ 23No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities*.”

1. Our body is a talent given to us to care for, (Ephesians 5:29):

*“ 29For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church*.”

 And the wine destroys the beautiful body, which the Lord granted to us and this in itself is a sin, as we don’t own our bodies. (1Corinthians 6:19-20):

*“ 19Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body*

*and in your spirit, which are God's.”*

1. The logic brains and the ability to think and decide is a gift to us by the Spirit of God, breathed inside us and the wine, wrecks all of this and makes the person behave in a foolish way.
2. We are created on the beautiful likeness and icon of our God and those who are drunk, become in a terrible status, wrecking the beautiful icon and likeness of God. I read a story about an artist, who kept wondering around looking for the most beautiful man to paint and he did. After 10 years, he wanted to paint the ugliest looking man, so he went around the pubs and found a man, who looks very bad and while painting him, he was shocked to find out that he was the same man, who was the best looking man 10 years ago. That is what the wine does to us.
3. My body is a sanctuary for the Holy Spirit and I should be living according to the Spirit. Am I living according to the spirit when I am drinking wine?
4. They claim, “what if I am drinking up to a limit?” the fact Is that the wine goes into the blood and the drinking increases day by day.
* the logic here is, why do I trouble my conscience and drink it and then ask, “is it sin or not?”, while we have around us 100’s of other different drinks.

**Biblical discussion**

The holy bible is full of verses to forbid drinking the wine and shows that it is not accepted. The only 2 places it has been used for in the Holy Bible that mentioned the use of wine, is what I mentioned above for treatment of wounds or as a pain killer or when there were no other medications for this purpose; but now we have very advanced medications for all the needs of the body - we can say even 100’s of advanced medications for all the needs of the body.

**Verses in the holy bible:**

1. (Judges 6:1-4), Samson being consecrated for the Lord was not allowed to drink wine or a strong drink. Even Samson’s mother herself to give birth to a consecrated person, was not allowed to drink wine or strong wine. (Judges 13:2-4):

*“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: "When either a man or woman consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the LORD, 3he shall separate himself from wine and similar drink; he shall drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from similar drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins. 4All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin.”*

*“ 2Now there was a certain man from Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and had no children. 3And the Angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Indeed now, you are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. 4Now therefore, please be careful not to drink wine or similar drink, and not to eat anything unclean.”*

1. The same with St. John the Baptist in (Luke 1:13-15) and it was mentioned, “he will be filled with the Holy Spirit”.

“ *13But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. 14And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither*

*wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.”*

From Numbers One and two: And all of us being consecrated to the Lord by Baptism and sacrament of Confirmation (Chrism), the Holy Spirit is dwelling inside us. So Biblically, we are not allowed to drink wine.

1. The Bible tells us Black and white that we don’t drink wine, as it ruins our bodies. (Proverbs 23:20-21):

*20 Do not mix with winebibbers, Or with gluttonous eaters of meat; 21 For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags”*

1. The Bible also tells us not even to look to the wine when it is put into the cup. (Proverbs 23: 29-32):

*29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? 30 Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine. 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper.”*

1. Those who drink wine have been drifting away. (Isaiah 28:7-8):

7 *But they also have erred through wine, And through intoxicating drink are out of the way; The priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink, They are swallowed up by wine, They are out of the way through intoxicating drink; 68 They err in vision, they stumble in judgment. 8 For all tables are full of vomit and filth; No place is clean.”*

1. It enslaves the heart. (Hosea 4:11):

*11" Harlotry, wine, and new wine enslave the heart.”*

1. It makes the person look silly before others. (Proverbs 20:1)

“ *Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise.”*

1. It causes the anger of God. (Isaiah 5:11):

*“ 11 Woe to those who rise early in the morning, That they may follow intoxicating drink; Who continue until night, till wine inflames them!”*

1. It causes transgression. (Habakkuk 2:5):

5*" Indeed, because he transgresses by wine, He is a proud man, And he does not stay at home.*

*Because he enlarges his desire as hell, And he is like death, and cannot be satisfied, He gathers to himself all nations And heaps up for himself all peoples*.”

1. St Paul forbids the company of those who drink wine. (1 Corinthians 5:11):

*“ 11But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner--not even to eat with such a person.”*

1. It says that those who drink wine, woe to them. (Habakkuk 2:15).

*15" Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor, Pressing him to your bottle, Even to make him drunk,*

*That you may look on his nakedness!”*

1. The person who uses the wine is not allowed to be in heaven. (1 Corinthians 6:9-10), (Galatians 5:19-21):

*“ 9Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.”*

*“19Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20idolatry,sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

**What about wine in weddings, as the Lord converted the water into wine in the wedding of cane galilee?**

1. Here I mention first, the only drink they had at that time was grape juice and it wasn’t at all a strong wine or even wine but that was its name at that time.

2. There are a lot of spiritual understandings in the Lord converting the water to wine. Here I’ll mention some of them:

a. When the Lord is in my life, He converts my cold emotions before being in the Lord (like the water), to be warm emotions towards spirituality and Heaven i.e. to be fervent in the spirit by the grace of the Lord (like the wine being one of those drinks that makes the person hot).

b. Another spiritual meaning that the Lord by Word of His mouth, converted the water into wine and when I from all my heart want to change my loose and cold life of sin (like the water) to a controlled life in the good way (like the wine), if it is my request from my heart, the Lord will do it for me to be in Him, until I am with Him in Heaven.

c. When you feel yourself cold or Luke warm spiritually and you are meaning to be good in your heart and ask the Lod, He will convert your life in Him, as He converted the water in the wedding of Cana Galilee, that your soul becomes His bride and the Lord is your Bridegroom.

**Conclusion:**

My beloved; it is easy for us humans to accept things and say, “it is ok to do them”, but it is not easy to answer it before the Lord in the last day. Life is short and we should use it to confirm our place in Heaven. That is why St. Paul said: (1Corinthians 6:12) *“All things are lawful for me, but not everything is suitable for me. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of anything”.*

I pray that our Lord guide you to be on the right path.

Pray for me

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