

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning

Week 9 (February 22-28, 2015)

In the past two weeks, we have looked at passages that deal with many subjects, but the primary goal has been to study the Biblical teachings on the matter of eating and drinking. This week, we will look at some of the warnings to those who enjoy a glass of wine or an occasional beer.

Sunday, February 22 (read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? (1 Corinthians 6:9a)

Read carefully through the list of those who will not inherit the kingdom of God (v. 9-10). Can you understand why I emphasize **mercy** and **grace** from our Lord in my preaching? Based on this list, can any of you throw a stone at another believer? Don't jump on one sin that you have never been tempted to do while failing to look closely at how you stack up against the entire list. Note that **drunkards** are listed with the other lifestyles that are included here. Do you know where the line is between being a social drinker and a drunkard? Ask yourself, "Why do I drink?" You may find out that you are substituting alcohol for the permanent peace and joy that Jesus gives.

Monday, February 23 (reread 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

*And that is what some of you **were**. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:11, emphasis mine)*

The word, "were," emphasized in the printed verse above, is a verb of hope that what **has been** in the past can remain there. The fact is that **no one** will enter the kingdom of God unless he/she is born again (John 3:3). The beautiful plan of salvation is outlined in v. 11: 1) You accepted Christ and were **washed** (baptized), 2) You were **justified** (just as if I'd never sinned), 3) You were **sanctified** (made holy) because of your acceptance of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the subsequent workings of the Holy Spirit. God can remove your desire for any of the lifestyles listed in v. 9-10. You can replace your ungodly lifestyle with the peace and joy of knowing that you are now a child of God (Romans 8:15-17). Are you ready to use the verb, "were," to describe your old life of addictions? God is ready to help you!

Tuesday, February 24 (read 1 Corinthians 6:12-17)

"Everything is permissible for me"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"—but I will not be mastered by anything. (1 Corinthians 6:12)

Using a quote from the Corinthians who were abusing God's grace (v. 12), Paul warns us of the habits that may become addictive and destructive. Now is the time for **us** to answer a few questions:

- (1) Am I setting a good example for my family by my habit?
- (2) Am I harming my own body as I participate in this habit?
- (3) Am I always in control of my actions, or am I using a product that alters my behavior?

Specifically, today's text warns of sexual immorality, but the warnings are the same for each temptation. God is greater than any desire or habit or addiction. He wants you to be able to testify to the difference He has made in your life. Are you willing to allow Him to change the way you think and live? You will be glad you said "yes" when you see Him face to face (see 1 John 3:1-3).

Wednesday, February 25 (read 1 Corinthians 6:18-20)

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Can there be a better reason to examine the use of our bodies than the printed verses above? “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:1-2). The ungodly lifestyles in v. 9-10 are part of God’s “flee market” (v. 18). If you do not avoid them by a willful choice, you will be tempted to join your worldly friends who are indulging in this type of behavior regularly. Decide today that you are going to live like a believer and turn your back on the deceiver. Live your life to glorify God!

Thursday, February 26 (read Proverbs 23:29-35)

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaints? Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? Those who linger over wine, who go to sample bowls of mixed wine. (Proverbs 23:29-30)

I want to be “fair and balanced” (quoting Fox News) in covering the subject of food and drink. Today’s text warns about going **beyond** the enjoyment of a glass of wine with a meal and becoming drunk and out of control. We already saw the **spiritual** ramifications from 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. When you use this product to forget your problems or to feel good, you are substituting strong drink for a meaningful prayer life. You can certainly see that this is sin! If you are experiencing the events so vividly described in this text, make a commitment to God that you will never drink again. No longer do you have a habit; now the habit has you! God will help you overcome your desire and dependency. Allow Him to fill you with His Holy Spirit and you will no longer need to get drunk on wine (see Ephesians 5:18).

Friday, February 27 (read 1 Corinthians 11:17-26)

No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God’s approval. (1 Corinthians 11:19)

We will conclude our studies on the proper use of food and drink by observing my favorite account of the Lord’s Supper. Then, as now, there are people partaking of the elements without self-examination. This causes divisions among the participants (v. 19). The fact that “One remains hungry, another gets drunk” should teach you that they celebrated with real wine diluted for the occasion so that they would not become intoxicated. The problem was that some of them were using the occasion to **overindulge** in both food and drink (v. 21). My subject this week is on the proper use of food and drink, not communion, but I do ask that you read the familiar words repeated each week around the communion table (v. 23-26). Ask yourselves, “Are there changes I want to make in my life before I come to His table?”

Saturday, February 28 (read 1 Corinthians 11:27-33)

Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 11:27)

Today’s text is the most thorough explanation of the Lord’s Supper found anywhere in the Bible. God’s judgment in the form of sickness or death can occur when self-examination does not take place (v. 29-30). All true believers have chosen to come under the **discipline** of God, but this beats the alternative (judgment and condemnation, v. 29, 31-32). My prayer for you is that you will begin to take the Word of God seriously. The Lord loves you enough to allow His only Son to die for you (John 3:16), but love without discipline raises a spoiled child (see Hebrews 12:4-13). Give all your habits, dreams and desires to Jesus! He can do far more than you can ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20).