

Billy Graham Answers: Is It Wrong for Christians to Drink Alcohol?

Q: My parents drink alcohol on occasion and always at social events, but they tell me to never drink. Isn't this hypocritical?

A: (From the writings of the Rev. Billy Graham)

Some of the most heartbreaking stories are from people who tell how alcohol or drugs have ravaged their lives and destroyed their families. The Bible condemns the use of any substance which alters or distorts our thinking. This includes alcohol, which was the most common drug in Bible times. It may be used as a medicine, as it often was, but it can become a terrible drug. The way it is used in connection with entertainment is probably one of the great evils today. It is a self-inflicted impediment that springs from "a man taking a drink to a drink taking the man."

When the headlines get black and foreboding, the sale of alcohol and barbiturates rises in the country, as millions try to escape from the grim realities of such dangers. The Bible says, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whoever is deceived by it is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). Drinking has become one of the most serious social problems and the results are quite opposite of experiencing a "happy hour."

Parents often tell their children not to do something but do not realize they are sending a mixed message by their own bad example. Wise parents will practice what they preach by striving to bring their own conduct into line with what they know to be right.

Many people turn to alcohol to be sociable. Some use it to try

and drown the cries and longings of the soul. Nothing but God ever completely satisfies, because the soul is made for God. Escaping the bitterness of life with drugs or alcohol is a common thing, but we cannot escape from God.

(This column is based on the words and writings of the late Rev. Billy Graham.) {eoa}

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