

VIDEO ON ALCOHOLISM

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(Third part)

IN THIS THIRD AND LAST PART, WE WILL TALK ABOUT OUR SUPPOSITIONS AND CONVICTIONS ON THE CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL

At first let's say a word of what we assume to be the logic of this biblical study then we will say what our personal belief is.

A. Our suppositions about alcohol consumption

The inevitable question people ask when they listen to a teaching on alcohol is this: "Taking a little wine or alcohol is it a sin or not?" Thus, from all positive and negative understanding, and biblical principles on the consumption of alcohol, we assume that:

1. A moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages is permitted in the Bible (see Deuteronomy 14:26, Ecclesiastes 9: 7, 1 Timothy 5:23). The consumption of alcohol in small quantity is a matter of Christian freedom. If for a medical reason or for personal convenience a brother or sister in Christ takes a little wine, I will not say, "Ah! You have sinned. You will go to hell." However, I must point out that this "biblical permission to take a little wine" (1 Timothy 5:23) should not be taken as a recommendation to go and drink alcohol. You are not obliged to say, "Since there is this permission to take a little wine, I must drink wine or alcohol." This is not a wise decision. In fact, Paul, the apostle declares, "Everything is permissible, but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible, but not everything is constructive." (1 Corinthians 10:23). He also says in 1 Corinthians 6:12, "Everything is permissible for me, but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me, but I will not be mastered by anything."

2. On the other hand, intoxication is sin. Any abusive use of alcohol, which is drunkenness, must be prohibited in the Christian life and in the Church because of its terrible impact on individuals, on the Church, and on society, and especially because the Bible condemns it.

3. Christians should not reject drunkards or alcoholics. On the contrary, they must love them and help them recover from drunkenness and live freedom that Jesus offers to those who give him their lives. Indeed, God is love and he loves the sinner even though he hates sin. That is why Christians must demonstrate that they love sinners while hating sin. And as a wise man said, "Do not throw the baby with the bath water." You have to take the baby that represents the sinner before throwing the bathwater that represents sin.

B. Our personal convictions about alcohol consumption

Despite what has just been said, because of biblical concerns about alcohol and its effects, due to the easy temptation to consume excess alcohol and become alcoholic, and

due to the possibility of causing a scandal or to be a stumbling block to the weak for whom Christ died, it is better for the Christian to abstain from drinking alcohol. What Paul, the apostle says about abstaining from eating meat sacrificed to idols so as not to scandalize the weak is also valid for the consumption of alcohol.

In Jeremiah 35, what is said of the obedience of the Rechabites is a good model that Christians can imitate in relation to alcohol consumption.

In Jeremiah 34: 8-12 the people of Jerusalem and the inhabitants of Judah disobeyed the law of Jehovah, the law of dismissing their slaves and servants free in the seventh year according to Deuteronomy 15: 12-15 and thus attracted God's anger against them. Jehovah sends against them the sword, the plague, and the famine. The Babylonian army attacked the city of Jerusalem, took it, and burned it with fire. And Jehovah made the cities of Judah a desert without inhabitants.

The Rechabites are the sons of Jonadab son of Rechab, a Kenite or blacksmith (Jeremiah 35).

And the LORD God commanded Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "Go to the house of the Rechabites, speak to them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink." (Jeremiah 35: 1-2).

Jeremiah the prophet did the commandment of Jehovah. He led the Rechabites into the house of the LORD, and set before them a bowl full of wine and chalices, and said to them, "Drink wine!" (Jeremiah 35: 3-5).

But the Rechabites said to Jeremiah, "We do not drink wine; for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father has commanded us, 'You shall never drink wine, neither you nor your sons...' Thus we have obeyed everything that Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father commanded us, we do not drink wine for all our lives, we, our wives, our sons and our daughters." (Jeremiah 35: 6-11).

Facing the Rechabites' refusal of drinking wine, even if it was a prophet who offered it to them, God turned to Jeremiah and said to him, "This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says, Go and tell the men of Judah and the people of Jerusalem, Will you not learn a lesson and obey my words?, declares the LORD. Jonadab son of Rechab ordered his sons not to drink wine and this command has been kept. To this day they do not drink wine, because they obey their father's command. But I have spoken to you again and again, yet you have not obeyed me. Again and again I sent all my servants the prophets to you. They said, 'Each of you must turn from your wicked ways and reform your actions; do not follow other gods to serve them. Then you will live in the land I have given to you and your fathers.' But you have not paid attention or listened to me. Yes, the descendants of Jonadab son of Rechab have observed the commandment of their father, but these people have not obeyed me." Therefore, this is what the LORD God Almighty, the God of Israel, says, "Listen! I am going to bring on Judah and on everyone living in Jerusalem every disaster I pronounced against them. I spoke to them, but they did not listen; I called to them, but they did not answer." (Jeremiah 35: 12-17).

Yes, the contrast is shocking, a man gave orders to his sons and they obeyed him totally. On the other hand, the Eternal God, the Creator of heavens and earth, gave orders

to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and they disobeyed him totally. That is why his sentence was harsh against them.

As for the Rechabites, it is blessing because of their obedience. God commanded Jeremiah the prophet to say to them, “This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says, Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts and done according to all that he commanded you. Therefore, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says, Jonadab the son of Rechab will not lack a man to stand before Me forever.” (Jer. 35: 18-19).

Although we have shown that in the Bible moderate consumption of alcohol is permitted, in our current context where alcohol abuse is common, it is beneficial for both the Church and society to choose abstinence as a viable Christian model and which can be defended by the Bible. Such a model is certainly necessary for Christian leaders who might be called upon to help people dependent on alcohol to live a life of sobriety. For those who recover from alcohol dependency, abstinence for life is the only sure way of their recovery. For this reason, a Christian leader who joins them in abstinence can serve as a model of virtue and self-control necessary for a life of sobriety that glorifies our God.

Personally, I do not drink alcohol and teach my children even not to taste alcohol. Indeed, alcohol is like a gear. If you put your finger on it, it will take your finger, then your hand, then your arm and your whole body. Today, you drink a glass of alcoholic beverage, tomorrow two glasses and three glasses and without realizing, you will easily find yourself in alcoholism. Now the Bible declares that drunkards, that are, alcoholics, will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:10; Galatians 5:21). So alcoholism closes the door of heaven. That is why it is better not to try alcohol.

Dear friends! The aim sought through this teaching is the positive transformation of the mentality of Chadians with regard to the consumption of alcohol. That by the teaching proposed in this video, the Chadians are sensitized to the point that the new generation comes to say, “Our parents have done wrong, we will not follow their bad examples, we will do otherwise, we will stay away from alcohol so to have strength, intelligence and the means of building our society, our nation.”

In addition to this video and the training manual we are using, we have created an association called “Christian Initiative to Fight against Alcoholism in Chad”, shortened ICLAT. The association is recognized by the Ministry of Territory Administration and Public Security on the 20th of June 2014. Its headquarters is in the Atrone district about 100 meters in front of the Ranch de Chagoua. The association works in partnership with the Alliance of Evangelical Churches and Missions in Chad (EEMET).

To conclude, I would like to thank the ONRTV team for making this video possible. May God have mercy on us in Chad and help us to become aware of the danger of drinking and to fight for a better change for the benefit of Chad, our nation.

Thank you for your attention! God bless you!

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