

University Heights Church
of Christ
445 Columbia Ave.,
Lexington, KY 40508
(859) 255-6257
www.uheightschurch.com

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday

Bible Study: 9:45 AM

Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7:30 PM (This is
immediately followed by a
short worship period)

First Friday of Each Month

Singing: 7:30 PM

LEADERSHIP

Elders

David Collins

John Thompson

Troy Antle

Evangelist

Adam Litmer

Deacons

Richard Brundige

Matt Thompson

Adam Litmer

Bill Morelan

Jim Parsons

Pat Seabolt

Adam Daniels

Jamie Powell

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

The Osborne family, Jim Parsons,
Rachel Thompson, John Thompson,
Larry Billator, Karen Spivey, Sandra
Russell, Jeff Howerton (also his aunt),
Janet Brundige, Rhonda Boyd (and
her sister, Dorothy), Paul Atkisson,
Julia-Ann Dixon, Ed Allison, Dwight
Antle, Keia Burton, Robert Brundige,
Valerie and Barry Boyd, Janett's
mother, Sandy Driver, Erlene Young,
Larry Sells, Evelyn Damron, Jean
Gartland, John Blessing, William
Roberts, Paul Lyda, Pete Soro, Mattie
Johnson, Elijah Epling, Sandra Queen,
Linda Moore, Sheila Johnson, Virginia
Gordon, Glenn Lake, Annie Allen

University Heights Messenger

Volume 10--Number 24

June 10, 2018

Drinking

Adam Litmer

A 2008 report states that the median age for when Americans begin drinking alcoholic beverages is 15.7 years. Once more we are dealing with something that is far beyond a teenage issue yet tends to begin in the teenage years.

I have never known a Christian to defend drunkenness as something God approves. On the other hand, I have known many Christians to defend "social drinking." By this is meant having a glass of wine in the evening, having a glass of champagne at a wedding, or drinking a beer or two with friends during the ball game. The current generation of young Christians (16-30 years of age) seems to be far less concerned with social drinking than the generations that preceded them.

I wish to begin by stating that it is my conviction that drinking, social or otherwise, is not a matter of opinion at all but is condemned by the highest Authority.

Ephesians 5:18 says, *And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.* Many have declared that this passage does not speak of "social drinking" but only condemns drunkenness. Further consideration of the word translated "drunk" (*methusko*) is helpful. Vine tells us

that it is “an inceptive verb marking the process.” Thus, the word itself speaks not just of drunkenness but the process leading to it. Paul is telling Christians not to begin the process leading to drunkenness. Obviously, the process begins with the very first drink. Social drinking is condemned in Paul’s command not to become drunk. Should one choose to reject this they are forced to reject the meaning of words themselves.

Some point to Jesus turning water to wine at a wedding and Paul’s instruction to Timothy to add a little wine instead of drinking water alone to help his frequent stomach ailments. (John 2:7-10; 1 Timothy 5:23) The word translated “wine” is *oinos* and speaks of the juice of the grape, fermented or unfermented. The context must determine which is meant.

In the first case, after our Lord’s miracle, the master of the feast declared, *Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.* The idea of the guests having “drunk freely” is that everyone had enough to be filled. Were this alcoholic wine then the people would have already violated God’s command against drunkenness. Are we to conclude that Jesus then created another 120-180 gallons of *more* alcoholic wine for them to drink? A Christian ought to know their Lord better than that.

Likewise, in Paul’s instruction to Timothy, there is no reason to assume the wine mentioned is alcoholic. Studies suggest that pure grape juice, particularly from dark red and purple grapes, contain the same health benefits as wine with

alcohol in it. This is because research suggests the benefit is found in a substance called resveratrol which is in the skin and seed of the grapes. The substance exists in the skin and seeds before and after fermentation. The point is that alcohol is not required to produce the health improving substance.

Besides these things, a Christian must consider their influence upon Christians and unbelievers alike. Setting aside for a moment the meaning of the word “drunk” from Ephesians 5:18, what is a Christian or unbeliever to think when they see us coming out of the store with a bottle of wine or 12 pack of beer? Even if drinking in moderation was approved in Scripture are they expected to conclude that’s what we intend to do? Someone may declare that it doesn’t matter what people think. On the contrary, Jesus declared, *Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.* (Matthew 5:16) Does a can of beer or bottle of wine in hand tend to promote good works and the glory of our Father in heaven? Answer honestly.

As with each topic of this series we are considering sins that are not limited to teenage years. Indeed, many become greater problems as one ages. However, each does tend to begin during the teenage years. If spiritually sound habits can be developed early they will aid one throughout their life. Friends and peers may go one way while God tells His child to go the other. May we always have the faith, trust, and courage to choose God’s path.

