

The Oologah Informer

July 16th, 2017

What About Moderate Social Drinking? BY WAYNE JACKSON Part 1 of 2

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Service Times

Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.
Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

Preacher:

Russ Earl

AM Sermon:

Sermon Series: Our Plea – Lesson 1
(**Jeremiah 6:16**)

PM Sermon

Amazing Attributes of God

Sunday AM Bible Class:

Character Studies in the OT

Wednesday Bible Class:

Summer Series: Dan Fredman

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On Channel 6-2 Sundays @ 7:30 am

The Truth in Love on Channel 47

Sundays @ 8am

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"In the 2nd chapter of John, Christ’s first miraculous sign was the turning of water to wine at a wedding. We know the purpose of wine at weddings – social consumption. And, if we look at the passage honestly, we know that this is a fermented beverage; for when the host tasted it he was confused that the best wine there was served last."

"In 1 Timothy 5:23, Paul instructed Timothy to take in wine for his stomach’s sake. Take notice that the apostle specified a “little” wine. If it were grape juice or non-fermented drink, I am sure that there would have been no concern over the amount consumed?"

"Looking into the qualifications of deacons and elders, the elders are told to be given to no wine but deacons not to be given to “much” wine. Are they talking about grape juice?"

"Christ would not create something that is sinful. So, if alcohol consumption was and is a sin, He would not have created it at all. Paul, inspired of God, understood the nature of God, and what was or was not pleasing to Him, and would not have advised his disciple to sin (consume alcohol) even for health purposes.”*

Normally we do not take the space to deal with “questions” that are more of an essayed affirmation than they are a serious inquiry. In this case, however — because of the prevalent interest in the theme, and due to the common erroneous conclusions drawn — we are prepared to make an exception. Hence we respond to the paragraphs above in order.

Jesus Turned Water to Wine

There is no proof that the “wine” at the marriage feast in Cana was fermented. The Greek word for “wine” in this text is oinos, which may refer to a fermented beverage (cf. Eph. 5:18), or it may denote freshly squeezed grape juice (cf. Isa. 16:10 – LXX). Since the word for “wine” is generic, the student has no right to import the concept of an alcoholic beverage into this passage without contextual justification — of which there is none.

Moreover, what may be “social consumption” in our day, says nothing about the practice of the first century. The juice of the grape was a common drink in that land of many vineyards.

Finally, the fact that the ruler of the feast could still distinguish the quality of the latter beverage from the former, suggests that his

senses were not dull as a result of previous guzzling! [Note: For further study see “John 2:1ff – The Wine that Jesus Made”.]

Timothy Took Wine for His Stomach

The fact that Paul instructed Timothy to “take a little wine for his stomach’s sake” involves several things.

First, it suggests that the young evangelist had been reticent to drink the wine prior to the admonition. If drinking fermented wine was common for the primitive Christians, the exhortation would scarcely have been needed.

Second, Timothy obviously suffered from a stomach ailment which required medicinal remedy. The water in Asia Minor could be very dangerous, hence the young evangelist was encouraged to take “a little wine” along with his water. The sentence is elliptical: “Be no longer a drinker of water [alone], but [with it] take a little wine . . .” (1 Tim. 5:23).

This text must be viewed in light of Timothy’s malady, and the conditions of that day. Paul’s advice, therefore, no more encourages the modern practice of social drinking than would the use of a prescription drug be a precedent for “pot” smoking.

*Part 2 next week