***Proverbs 20:30* Cure Wounds 5E Now**

Verse 1 states,

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“Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise.”
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This is not a new statement in the Proverbs. In fact, it is a warning that can be found in many of the books of the Old and New Testament. One of the requirements for a man considered as an elder of a congregation is that he not be addicted to much wine (***Titus 1***).

Fermented drink has been a scourge on mankind from the days of Noah. How many lives have been ruined due to drunkenness? How many families have been destroyed because one or both parents were alcoholics? How many accidents have occurred due to drunk driving? The list can go on and on.

No one questions that drunkenness is sinful, but what about an occasional drink, or one for a celebration? “After all, (the argument goes) John 2 records that the first miracle that Jesus performed was changing the water to wine at a wedding feast.

Therefore, social drinking is not sinful as long as you don't get drunk." It is true that people drank wine due to the potential contamination of water, but John 2 indicates being healthy was not the issue.

John 2:9-10 reads,

> *"When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom, and said to him, 'Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now.'*

Obviously, the headwaiter expected the next wine to be of lesser quality because the guests would have drunk enough wine that they would not have cared.

But today, how should a Christian deal with this issue? It is true that the Bible does not specifically declare against drinking alcohol. However, many Christians believe that drinking alcohol is sinful. Others argue that the only issue is drunkenness.

The answer to this can found in Paul's writings in 1 Corinthians 8:1-11. There was disagreement between Christians in Corinth. Meat that was purchased in the marketplace was routinely offered to idols first and then sold. Some of the Christians rightly knew that there were no other gods and saw no reason to avoid eating the meat. However, others saw the eating of that meat as honoring other gods and would not eat.

Paul addressed this issue, and at the end of his discussion, Paul came to the following conclusion in 1 Corinthians 8:9-13,

> *"But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if someone sees you, who have knowledge, dining in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols? For through your knowledge he who is weak is ruined, the brother for whose sake Christ died. And so, by sinning against the brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble."*

This same principle can apply to drinking. The key is love and consideration of other Christians. If a Christian is seen drinking alcohol by another Christian who has a weaker faith or has a real problem fighting alcoholism, then the first person's actions can cause that weaker

brother or sister to stumble and even fall back.

Plus, that Christian would be guilty of causing that other brother or sister to stumble, and THAT would be sin. Note, Paul did not say eating meat will cause a person to stumble, but he said IF food causes my brother to tumble. It was the POTENTIAL danger to the weaker Christian that concerned Paul.

There is another issue as well. While a person may maintain that social or private drinking is not sinful, the potential danger still exists. Every alcoholic became one by drinking one drink or beer, and then another, and another. “But it helps me to unwind at the end of the day!”

The question then becomes, “Is your social or private drinking more important than your soul?” When drinking privately at home, if there is a family, what is that teaching the children? Maybe a parent can “handle their liquor” and never become an alcoholic, but what about that son or daughter?

Another question that is often asked, “Then, if alcohol is bad, why did Jesus change the water to wine?” John 2:1-5 states,

> *“On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, ‘They have no wine.’ And Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come.’ [5] His mother said to the servants, ‘Whatever He says to you, do it.’”*

Addressing His mother as “Woman” may seem harsh, but the actual word was milder and showed respect. “Madam” may be a closer meaning. While Jesus was not happy with the request, he still honored His mother’s request and fulfilled one of the Commandments of the Law.

Verse 6 is certainly applicable today!

> *“Many a man proclaims his own loyalty, but who can find a trustworthy man?”*

Any person who has interviewed a potential employee has dealt with this problem. The person comes in excited and a little anxious. The interview is completed, and the person is hired. The new employee is excited and grateful. “I will be a hard worker. Thank you!” Initially,

everything goes well. The new worker is attentive and seems to pick up and understand the tasks required.

But as time goes on, the quality of the person's work suffers. The supervisor must constantly check the person's work. He/she begins to come in late and asks for time off for personal issues. This becomes more frequent. The company, or organization, tries to work with the employee. The person is counselled, but nothing really changes. Finally, the person must be fired. Why? They were untrustworthy.

That is a common occurrence. To find a person that is truly loyal and trustworthy can be a real treasure for any organization. To know that a person will do what they say they will do and take care of their responsibilities is wonderful.

Jesus spoke to this same principle in His parable of the sower in Matthew 13:3-8,

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> *"And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow; and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth*

> *of soil. But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."*

Jesus then explained the meaning of the parable. The seed was the word. The first example, the person never understood the word and it was snatched away. But the next two examples point to the principle in Proverbs 20:6.

Matthew 13:20-22,

> *"The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."*

These two individuals can be described in one word….untrustworthy. They started off professing their love for the Lord and their willingness to work for Him. But that professed loyalty and trustworthiness faded and disappeared.

How many men and women have declared their love and commitment to God the Father through Jesus Christ, and then just quit? Jesus warned people to count the cost of discipleship. There is no resigning or going back without severe consequences.

Hebrews 10:26-31 clearly warns Christians,

> *“For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.’ And again, ‘The Lord will judge His people.’ It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”*

Verse 9 states,

> *“Who can say, ‘I have cleansed my heart, I am pure from my sin’?”*

During the time of Jesus, many Jews felt confident that they were saved because of their physical lineage to Abraham. Jesus described this kind of arrogance in Luke 18:9-14,

> *“And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and viewed others with contempt: “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’ I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

In Romans chapters 2-4, Paul plainly put an end to that assumption. The only way to “earn” salvation through law is to perfectly fulfill every single requirement of the law. Paul declared in Romans 3:23,

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“…for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God…”
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There is only one name and one person through which any can be saved, and that is Jesus Christ, the Son of God!

Unfortunately, some men and women, who were baptized and added to the Church, begin to see themselves as better than others. This began to happen early in the establishment of the different congregations. Paul, Peter, John, James and Jude all warned against the sinful pride of the devil.

This problem still happens today. To help prevent this, congregations must insure that the men identified to serve as elders clearly meet the requirements of an elder. Evangelists must constantly guard against pride.

They are seen and often admired by many. It takes very little to slip into the attitude of the Pharisee above. The overriding theme in all the letters of the New Testament is sincere love and compassion for each brother and sister in Christ.

Verse 12 states,

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“The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord has made both of them.”
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A very large number of people believe in the Theory of Evolution to the point that it never occurs to them to question it. Everything in this world, everything in this universe rose up from nothing and it is accepted as fact. But even a cursory examination of just a few things in this world results in major questions.

Consider the human ear. The shape of the ear is unique to person. The structure of the inner ear and middle ear show a complexity that is amazing. A sound wave is funneled into the ear drum by the outer ear.

The ear drum converts the sounds waves into a physical action that acts on the inner ear, and the inner ear then converts that physical energy into wave action, and the hairs of the inner ear convert that to electrical impulses that the brain recognizes as sounds.

But that is not all that is involved. A second ear also exists. Not only does it work the same way, it works in harmony with the first ear. Both ears transmit electrical signals to the brain that recognizes it as sound. So, both ears are created (somehow) and interconnected to

the brain.

The ear and the brain can hear a remarkable range of sounds. The brain stores up those sounds and can retrieve them. A person may hear a sound that was first heard as a small child. Decades may have passed, but the sounds of the music are immediately identified. An old pilot will hear the sound of the aircraft he once flew starting up, and that sound will take him back years to when he was flying.

The same can be said for the eye. The remarkable ability of the eye to adjust to day and night vision. The two eyes are tied together in such a way that they give a person depth perception. The range of colors that the normal eye can see is incredible. Two eyes are interconnected to the same brain, and those eyes also react to the sounds from the ears.

Someone off to the side clears his throat. The person hears the sound and his head and eyes start to turn in the direction of the sound. To believe that there is no design causing this is beyond ignorance. So many people that are known as intelligent, educated, and well-respected refuse to believe that it can be anything but chance. The god of this world has blinded them because they want to be blinded.

But the plain, clear, and simple evidence points to a level of design that is beyond anyone’s capabilities. If there is design, then there is a designer. Proverbs 20:12 proclaims who the designer is….The Living God.

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Bruising wounds clean away evil, And blows cleanse the innermost parts.
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