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with one or the other, perhaps neither, but certainly not both. By every ounce of alcohol, the Spirit of God is squeezed from the heart of a Christian.

I choose not to begin what others find difficult to quit. *“Wine is a mocker... and whoever is led astray by it is not wise”* (Proverbs 20:1). It would be easy to be deceived, thinking one can control his drinking without his drinking controlling him, but twelve-step programs and rehab clinics the world over testify to the mockery that wine makes of men. Peter warned that *“by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage”* (2nd Peter 2:19) – a word of caution well suited for addictions of every kind. In view of the hazards of addiction, saints should imitate Paul in his resolve: *“I will not be brought under the power of any”* (1st Corinthians 6:12).

I choose to avoid temptation. Knowing that drunkenness is sin (1st Peter 4:13), it isn’t sensible to start drinking at all. The command is to *“Resist the devil”* so that *“he will flee from you”* (James 4:7), not to get as close as possible to the threshold without crossing it. Besides, one cannot know how much alcohol the body can tolerate without getting intoxicated until the line is crossed.

The exemption does not apply to me. The saying goes: “The exception proves the rule”. By revealing when the consumption of alcohol is tolerated, Scripture indicates that it is otherwise unapproved. Paul wrote Timothy, *“No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach’s sake and your frequent infirmities”* (1st Timothy 5:23). By this brief encouragement, the apostle implied abstinence is standard, but a limited quantity of alcohol is permissible for remedial medicinal effect to treat chronic illness. Those who aren’t consistently sick do not qualify for the exception and should, therefore, abstain.

I choose not to consume what I cannot see. It’s good to be able to spot a hair in one’s salad or a fly in one’s soup before eating. It’s good to see if poultry or pork is undercooked. Generally, seeing what goes into the body is helpful and safe. Solomon instructed, *“Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly”* (Proverbs 23:31). If wine is not even to be admired with a gaze, then it is certainly not fit for consumption.

“I often think of alcohol as a genie in a bottle. It promises everything, but eventually imprisons you in the bottle itself.”

– Erica Jong

“A LITTLE WINE”

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Paul advised Timothy, *“No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach’s sake and your frequent infirmities”* (1st Timothy 5:23).

“No longer drink only water.” By this statement, we learn that Timothy’s habit had been one of total abstinence from wine until instructed otherwise by the apostle. This is as it should be. Solomon taught, *“Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly”* (Proverbs 23:31). Since the appearance of wine ought not to be admired, how could imbibing in the same have God’s approval? Without the exception provided in the passage under consideration, wine should be abstained from.

“But use a little wine.” In the limited circumstance in which the use of wine is permitted, its quantity must also be limited. The authorization to use wine was not to be construed as a license to become intoxicated, for drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God (1st Corinthians 6:10), as it is written, *“Do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit”* (Ephesians 5:18). Only a slight amount is here permitted for a specific purpose.

“For your stomach’s sake and your frequent infirmities.” The specific purpose for which Timothy was permitted the slight use of wine was its health benefit. It was not given as a social beverage, but as medicine. In particular, it was given for a remedy, not for prevention. Timothy was already known by Paul to experience frequent stomach trouble when the apostle suggested the use of a little wine to alleviate his ailment. The regular use of wine to prevent illness is not under consideration and is nowhere authorized in scripture.

Conclusion: Alcoholic beverages should be avoided except for remedial medicinal purpose, and then only in small quantity.

“All that alcohol does for them is to liberate the sense of sin, which reason suppresses in saner moments.”

– Bertrand Russell

***"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"***

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

***"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"***

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

***"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"***

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN"

PROVERBS 25:11

"The people you're afraid to
offend don't like you anyway, so
stop being afraid to stand up."

– Brad Lea

GIVE ME THE BIBLE

KDNF 840AM

Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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NOT A DROP

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Never in my life have I tasted even a sip of alcohol. My reasons for choosing abstinence are manifold.

I choose not to diminish my sobriety. Many will insist that only drunkenness is prohibited in Scripture (Galatians 5:21), not mere drinking, and thus conclude that imbibing short of intoxication is condoned. There is a better approach to the subject, however. Rather than dwelling on what vice is forbidden, a Christian should contemplate what virtue is commanded. Sobriety ought to characterize Christ's disciples *"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age"* (Titus 2:11-12). The question is not whether one is drunk, but whether one is sober, which involves more than being not drunk, and it is a question of utmost significance. *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour"* (1st Peter 5:8).

I choose not to displace the Holy Spirit. Paul, by inspiration, instructed fellow believers, *"do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit"* (Ephesians 5:18). A person may be filled – Continued on page 2 –

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