

Practical Theology Class
Alcohol & Drugs / Gambling

- 1) Why is it common to find strong statements in American conservative evangelical churches that restrict consumption of alcohol except for medicinal use?
- 2) What are the nuances of difference in the following list of Hebrew / Greek words for wine / and drink? Which would have greater or lesser alcohol content?
 - A) Wine: יַיִן / yayin (Hebrew) οἶνος / oinos (Greek)
 - B) Hebrew - שׁוֹרֵיט / tirosh - new or fresh wine
 - C) Hebrew - חֶמֶר / chemer - bubbles produced in fermentation
 - D) Sweet wine סִיקָה / asis (Hebrew), γλευκος / gleukos (Greek)
 - E) Hebrew - שֶׁמֶר / shemer (dregs)
 - F) Fermented drink made from grain / fruit שֶׁכָּר / shekar (Hebrew), σίκερα / sikera (Greek)
 - G) Mixed wines
- 3) What is the percentage of alcohol range of the following:
 - A) Fermented naturally
 - B) Fermented in controlled conditions
 - C) Distilled
- 4) What causes fruit juice or grain broths to ferment?
- 5) How can the fermentation process be slowed down or stopped? Could that be done in ancient times?
- 6) What is the connection between wine and God's blessing in the Scriptures?
- 7) How connections are made between wine and the worship of God?
- 8) What did an absence of wine indicate?
- 9) What is the value of abstinence? What groups are either forbidden or restricted from the use of wine?
- 10) What warnings are given in the Scriptures concerning consuming alcoholic drinks?
- 11) What cautions should an elder or deacon have in relationship to alcoholic drinks? Why is there a different standard for each?
- 12) What signs indicate a person has crossed the line and has a problem with alcohol?
- 13) How can you help a person that does have a problem with alcohol? Minor? Significant? Serious?
- 14) When is it acceptable for a Christian to take drugs?
- 15) When is it always unacceptable for a Christian to take drugs?
- 16) What is the relationship between the legality of a medication or homeopathic and
 - 1) Safety of usage?
 - 2) Morality of usage? Explain. (Consider that marijuana is being legalized in many states)

17) What signs would you look for that would indicate a person has developed a problem with legal medications?

18) How can you help someone that is abusing drugs?

GAMBLING

1) What is gambling? Are there any Scriptures that directly prohibit gambling?

2) What connection is there between greed and gambling?

3) How is gambling contrary to basic principles of Biblical economics / Christian stewardship?

4) Are there any settings in which gambling could be an acceptable activity for a Christian?

5) What are the dangers of gambling?

6) What vices commonly exist and expand where there is open gambling?

Case Studies

1) You have moved to a new area and found a church that is doctrinally sound, Christ centered and generally Biblically literate. However, included in their church covenant is a commitment to abstain from the use of all alcohol except for medicinal purposes. Would that affect your consideration of the church. If so why? If not, why not? What questions would you ask the church leaders?

2) You attend a social event that is sponsored by and mostly attended by church members. What would your reaction be if: A) You find that beer and wine are being served. B) Hard liquor is being served. C) You become aware that some of the church members are “tipsy” or worse.

3) A couple asks your advice as they plan their wedding and are being pressured to allow alcoholic drinks to be served. What questions would you ask them? What advice would you give them?

4) You call on a couple that has started coming to the church. When you arrive they ask if you would like to join them in having a beer / glass of wine? How will you respond?

5) A parent calls you distraught that they have found out their teenager is abusing drugs. How will you counsel them?

6) You are called over to intervene in a debate between two people about the usage of marijuana. What questions would you ask and what Biblical principles can you give to resolve the conflict and guide them concerning marijuana and all drug usage?

7) A couple is having financial difficulties. In talking with them you find out that each regularly plays the lottery. How will that information help you give them better financial advice?

8) How would you answer the question, “What would you do if you won the lottery?”