

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

January 30

2022

Insulting Our Youth

While living in south Florida in the mid 1960s I received announcements from churches in the area of plans to have special activities for the young people (especially juniors and seniors in high school) near the end of the school year. These activities included an annual “track and field meet” of the (as one group announced it) “south Florida district of the churches of Christ.” Another event in 1966 was a “Junior-Senior Banquet” with entertainment provided by Pat Boone (remember, this was 1966) and the “Belles and Beaux” of Harding College. Also, a “senior king and queen will be crowned” during the banquet. After the banquet they had all night bowling and then a breakfast served in the “fellowship hall” of one of the area churches. Those promoting these activities said they wanted to provide wholesome activities so the young people would not be attending such activities as the school sponsored proms. The newspaper article promoting these activities quotes the person they interviewed as saying, “The event is not underwritten by the churches, but by the interested parents and friends.”

Even though the events were announced and promoted by the churches and each congregation selected their own “king and queen” candidates and one church provided the place for the breakfast, they contended that it was “not underwritten by the churches.” In the years following many churches got involved in openly providing recreational and entertainment activities to attract the young. One preacher in the area at that time defended such by saying, “Anything that may ultimately lead one to become interested in the gospel would be an authorized work of the church.” This is just another way of saying “the end justifies the means.” See what Paul said about such thinking in Romans 3:8.

Many opposed these activities then, not because they were bad within and

of themselves, but because these things were not an authorized work of the church. Even though the claim was made that they were not paid for by the churches they were promoted as a work of the churches.

Recently, some of my brethren who spoke out against such activities as described above have engaged in the very same activities and making the same claim. They plan a “Teen Retreat” that includes Bible study, prayer, and singing and, the next day, outdoor recreational activities and hay rides with meals provided. They later sent a letter explaining that they understood that recreation and social activities are not the work of the church and that these activities were not paid for by the church. This was the same statement made by those in south Florida in 1966.

I am convinced that all of these brethren are making the same mistake. And the mistake they are making is an insult to our young people. In essence they are saying to the young people, “You are too carnally minded to respond to an invitation to simply study God’s word and engage in things spiritual.” If we truly believe that recreational and social activities are the responsibility of the home then why don’t we let the parents plan and provide such and let the church fulfill its responsibility of teaching and edifying?

At the summer time of year when many groups have their “Vacation Bible Schools” the announcements of these leave the impression they are, in the words of our own little Paul Watson, “having a party instead of a Bible study.” Whether its “Kool-Aid and cookies” or some of the previously mentioned activities, the appeal is the same.

Let’s quit insulting our young people by thinking the only way to get them interested in studying God’s word is to make a carnal appeal to them. There are those who desire to “remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth” (Eccl. 12:1). I am convinced that we still have young people like Joseph and Daniel who love God and are dedicated to pleasing him. They do not need some carnal attraction to get them to study God’s word. They respect those who are concerned enough about their souls to provide that spiritual teaching and training they need. They recognize that the social and recreational have their place, but it is not the work of the church to provide such. I am encouraged by the number of young people who refuse to participate in the previously mentioned activities because they recognize that such is not the work of the church and that it should not be made to appear such. In the word’s of many of the older preachers in days past, “Let the church be the church and let the home be the home.”

✍ James Hahn

Some Dangers of Alcoholic Drink

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, more than 80,000 people die from alcohol related deaths each year in the United States. You see, alcoholic drink is dangerous; and it has a profound effect on one's judgment and body, especially on one's brain, heart, pancreas, and liver. Sadly, even after many know about the dangers of drinking alcoholic drink, they continue to drink alcoholic beverages with the mentality that I will drink in moderation, and a little drink once in a while won't hurt a thing.

However, have you ever thought about the fact that with each drink one takes in moderation their judgment is being moderately impaired, their brain cells are being moderately destroyed, their heart is being moderately attacked, and organs such as one's pancreas and liver are being moderately upset and effected? The point is, alcoholic drink is dangerous, even when done with moderation. So, to help emphasize the dangers of alcoholic drink, let's take a look at what the Bible has to say in regard to consuming alcoholic drink. Beginning with, the Bible says...

Alcoholic Drink Makes One Unwise.

In Proverbs 20:1, we learn, "*Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is lead astray by it is not wise.*" Folks, to be simply put, it is just not wise to consume alcoholic drink.

Alcoholic Drink Leads One To Poverty.

In Proverbs 23:20-21, the wise man said, "*Do not mix with winebibbers, Or with gluttonous eaters of meat; For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.*" Think about that, and beware of alcoholic drink.

Alcoholic Drink Causes One Great Distress.

"*Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine*" (Proverbs 23:29-30). Now, does that sound appealing to you?

Alcoholic Drink Bites Like A Serpent and Stings Like A Viper.

Proverbs 23:31-32 reads, "*Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; At last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper.*" Friend, hold onto that warning, and beware of consuming intoxicating drink.

Alcoholic Drink Fills The Mind With Impure Thoughts.

Also, in regard to alcoholic drink, we are informed in Proverbs 23:33, "*Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things.*" Did you know that alcoholic drink will pollute your mind, and cause impure thoughts? If not, you know now.

Alcoholic Drink Causes Forgetfulness.

Another thing that alcoholic drink will cause is forgetfulness. In Proverbs 31:4-5, in reference to alcoholic drink we read, "*It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink; Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted.*" Keep those words in mind, and beware of alcoholic drink, lest you become forgetful.

Alcoholic Drink Causes One To Stumble In Judgment.

One more danger of alcoholic drink to suggest is, it will cause one to stumble in their judgment (Isaiah 28:7). Therefore, beware of alcoholic drink, not only lest you stumble in judgment, but also lest you cause your brother to stumble (Romans 14:21).

These are just a few of the dangers of alcoholic drink which are found in the Bible. I hope that we will all strongly consider these dangers of alcoholic drink, and that we will all be one who chooses to avoid the consequences of consuming alcoholic drink. So, in conclusion let's always keep these inspired words of the apostle Paul in mind, "*do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit*" (Ephesians 5:18).

✍ Brad Phillips

Belleville church of Christ

5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258

www.bellevillechurch.net

Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	4:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

Brad Phillips... (765) 720-2816