**THE DECEPTION OF ALCOHOL**

Sunday School Lesson 9

*Deceptions of the Devil*

Proverbs 20:1

10/17/2021

**Introduction:** The topic for today’s lesson is the deception of alcohol. Of all of the deceptions thus far covered, the deception of alcohol stands out in its destructiveness. There are so many lives that have been destroyed in just the last hundred years as a result of alcohol. Thankfully, the Lord in His infinite wisdom recognizes and identifies the dangers that alcohol poses for mankind. Contrary to what some might think, His Word is not silent on the issue. Throughout the Old and New Testament, we are given warnings and even examples about the harm that alcohol can cause to a person. There are over fifty Scriptural references that directly speak to its damage. As with anything harmful, we know that the Devil wants to deceive us into accepting it. He loves to see people, especially believers, destroyed; consequently, he will use any device he can to achieve that destruction. While alcohol has been a struggle for man all the way back to the days of Noah, mass production of alcoholic drinks and increasing toxicity of those drinks in our present day has further exasperated the struggle and subsequent destruction. Yet, the pulpit has probably never been quieter on this topic than it is today. In fact, alcoholism has been changed from a spiritual problem to a disease. Will we open up our hearts and minds this morning to what the Bible has to say about the deception of alcohol?

1. **THE DECEPTION OF ALCOHOL CALLS OUT TO US WITH A PROMISE OF JOY.**
2. **Notice that wine is a mocker; it cannot provide us with true joy (Proverbs 20:1a; Isaiah 24:11; 1 Samuel 25:36; Ecclesiastes 10:19; Jeremiah 51:39; Ezekiel 23:33; Ephesians 5:18).** The Bible tells us that wine is a mocker. What does that mean? It mocks us in its offering. It presents to us an opportunity for joy. It makes the heart merry. Yet, the merry heart that comes from the drunkard is not one that is based in reality. Thus, it mocks us in our behavior. We have likely all seen someone merry in their drink. There is not true joy there. In fact, it is often embarrassing to see someone in this condition. These people are routinely mocked. Yet, how many people have turned to the bottle with the hopes of it providing them with a moment of levity? It offers a relief from the drudges of the daily responsibilities, and it offers momentary bliss. Yet, it cannot sustain itself. This is why the Bible tells us in Ephesians 5:18 that we are not to be drunk with wine. Instead, we are to be filled with the Spirit. It then tells us that we are to speak to ourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. The fruit of the Spirit is joy. The believer ought to subscribe to the Biblical method of joy obtainment rather than the foolish method of the world.
3. **Notice that strong drink is raging; it often produces the opposite effect of joy (Proverbs 20:1b; 23:29-32; Isaiah 5:11; Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:21).** Alcohol unleashes the passions or emotions of a man. The book of Isaiah regards the actions of wine as inflaming a person. While some may be prone to a merry heart, there are also those who languish in sorrow while in their stupor. Again, we’ve likely all seen the sad or angry drunk just as we have seen the obnoxious or goofy one. Proverbs 23 speaks very clearly about the dangers of alcohol. It speaks of those who have woe, sorrow, and contention. They have wounds without cause and redness of eyes. The Bible speaks of alcohol here as one that bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. In our nation, we have many homes that are filled with domestic violence. Can you guess what most of these cases have in common? The answer is alcohol. Obviously, we know that the sinful heart that lacks the love of God is ultimately to blame for violence in the home, but alcohol is the gasoline that fans the flame of anger, sorrow, rage, and violence. As believers, why would we allow a deadly snake to be present in our home? We are to subject our emotions in the Spirit.
4. **THE DECEPTION OF ALCOHOL CONVINCES THAT YOU ARE IN CONTROL.**
5. **Notice that the Bible warns those who think they are strong enough to handle alcohol (Isaiah 5:22; 28:7; Jeremiah 23:9; Matthew 26:41; Rom. 14:21; Joel 1:5).** Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink. As with any addictive thing, our flesh always convinces us that we are strong enough to handle it. We must remember that our flesh is weak. The second that we forget this truth, we are in great danger of falling into temptation. The road to alcoholism is filled with people who thought that they could handle a few drinks. The Devil has convinced many Christians that social drinking is not a big deal. This is partly due to misconstrued interpretation regarding wine in some places in the Bible (Deut. 32:14, 32 and Is. 65:8 show us that there was a difference between the wine of the Israelites and the wine of heathen nations.). While there may be some who never go down the road of continual drunkenness, might we ask whether the potential risk is worth the occasional drink? Additionally, is it wise to give control over to alcohol for even a short period of time? I think not.
6. **Notice that it is difficult for the drunkard to think clearly to know if he is in control (Psalm 107:27; Proverbs 23:34-35; 26:9; 31:4-5; Job 12:25; Isaiah 24:20; Lev. 10:9; Luke 21:34).** There is no lack of verses to show the truth of this thought. Alcohol causes cognitive impairment. The world even has to admit to this truth. Obviously, we know that we are to put on the mind of Christ. Certainly, that is not a mind that is impaired by alcohol. The Bible speaks of the drunkard as one who staggereth. He is not aware of what is going on around him. The priests were expressly warned that they would die if they went into the temple drunk. They were to be of a clear mind. Solomon was warned that a king should never drink, as it would cause him to forget the law or pervert judgment. There are those who claim that alcohol does not affect them. They consider themselves to be in control. They do not think themselves to be alcoholics because they perceive that they can function. Yet, how can they trust their own minds to know if their judgment is sound? How than they be certain that they are not an alcoholic themselves?
7. **THE DECEPTION OF ALCOHOL CREATES OPPORTUNITY FOR SATANIC ATTACK.**
8. **Notice that alcohol is associated with sensuality in the Bible (Genesis 19:30-38; 9:21; 2 Samuel 11:13; Lam. 4:21; Prov. 23:33; Hab. 2:15).** We find multiple examples in the Bible where alcohol is tied with sensuality. One example is that of Lot. His own daughters caused him to get drunk in order to have an immoral relationship with him. Even King David used alcohol in an attempt to cause Uriah to be drunk with the hopes of sending him home to his wife to cover up his own adultery. The Bible speaks of nakedness and drinking on multiple occasions. Noah allowed himself to get drunk, and it led to his own nakedness. When we study the false religions mentioned in the Bible, a common theme we will find is drunkenness and sensuality in their temples to their false gods. The warning in Proverbs 23:33 is not to even look on alcohol because it causes thine eyes to behold strange women. When you think of a bar, what comes to mind? Is it not considered to be a place where physical partnerships are often formed? Satan knows exactly what he is doing in these places. It is a place for Satan to easily attack.
9. **Notice the sinful activities that the New Testament associates with drunkenness (1 Corinthians 5:11; 6:10; Galatians 5:21; Romans 13:13; 1 Peter 4:3).** The Bible speaks of drunkenness in the New Testament in the same place as it speaks of envying, murders, theft, covetousness, extortion, idolatry, fornication, rioting, strife, and several other works of wickedness. There is an association here. There is a warning here for us to consider. I have personally tried to help some believers who found themselves in the bondage of alcohol. One thing I have found to be true each time is that the Devil preyed upon these people. He sees the vulnerability of the alcoholic, and he uses it to tempt in a variety of other areas. There has not been a single time where I could say that the person struggling with alcohol was not also struggling with something else listed above in the works of wickedness. If we look back at our examples in the previous point, we will notice that there are people who take advantage of those under the influence of alcohol. If people will take advantage of them, do we really think that the Devil will not?
10. **THE DECEPTION OF ALCOHOL CAUSES US NOT TO SEE THE DESTRUCTION COMING.**
11. **Notice that alcohol causes financial destruction (Proverbs 23:20-21; 21:17; Joel 1:5; 3:3).** The Bible shows us that financial calamity awaits the drunkard. How many families have found financial ruin because a father or mother could not stop the urge to buy more alcohol? There are people who will speak all of their money on alcohol and other addictive vices instead of paying for groceries or even their utility bills. The power of alcohol that it has over the mind leads to power over the wallet book. We are called to be good stewards of that which the Lord has given to us. The person in the bondage of alcohol cannot follow through on this command. While our goal as believers should not great wealth here on this earth, this does not mean that we should waste our money on riotous living. The Bible warns us repeatedly about alcohol in the New Testament (Titus 1:7; 2:3; 1 Timothy 3:3-8; Romans 14:21). Will we take heed to what the Bible says, or will we potentially bring financial difficulty into our homes?
12. **Notice that alcohol causes physical and spiritual destruction (Isaiah 19:14; Jeremiah 48:26; Nahum 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8; 1 Kings 16:9; 20:16; Deuteronomy 21:20; 32:32).** Alcohol is a poison. It poisons the mind, the heart, and the body. It is detrimental to our health. Our bodies are the temple of the Lord. While we could probably all find some areas that we could do better in taking care of our bodies, there are few things worse for the body than alcohol and drugs. We cannot claim ignorance regarding the harm that alcohol does on the body. This does not even speak to the thousands who are killed every year as a result of someone else’s activities while drunk (driving for example). Do not be deceived into thinking that alcohol is insignificant to your Christian walk and overall well-being. Let me encourage every believer to be wise concerning the dangers of alcohol. Do not let it take control of you and your life. Keep your body under subjection to the Lord!