

Beer, Bars and Bongs

The Scriptures give us God's boundaries for believers concerning alcohol and drugs.

- **Boundary #1: LIMITED ALCOHOL USE IS PERMITTED.**

Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. 1 Timothy 3:8 (New International Version)

“Indulging” = Greek = *prosecho* = to give oneself to, or attach oneself to, or to be addicted to

The definition of “much” changes depending on what a person is drinking.

- **Boundary #2: DON'T GET DRUNK OR HIGH.**

Do not get drunk with wine, which will only ruin you; instead, be filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 (Good News Bible) See also Romans 13:13; 1 Peter 4:3; 1 Corinthians 5:11.

How Does Getting Drunk Ruin You?

- Getting drunk replaces God and His control.

Someone will say, “I am allowed to do anything.” Yes; but not everything is good for you. I could say that I am allowed to do anything, but I am not going to let anything make me its slave. 1 Corinthians 6:12 (GNB)

- Getting drunk will cause you personal pain, will alienate you from others and it will keep you immature.

Show me someone who drinks too much, who has to try out some new drink, and I will show you someone miserable and sorry for himself, always causing trouble and always complaining. His eyes are bloodshot, and he has bruises that could have been avoided . . . ³²The next morning you will feel as if you had been bitten by a poisonous snake. ³³Weird sights will appear before your eyes, and you will not be able to think or speak clearly. ³⁴You will feel as if you were out on the ocean, sea-sick, swinging high up in the rigging of a tossing ship. ³⁵“I must have been hit,” you will say; “I must have been beaten up, but I don't remember it. Why can't I wake up? I need another drink.” Proverbs 23:29-30; 32-35 (GNB)

- **Boundary #3: GUARD YOUR LIFE FROM ABUSING ALCOHOL.**

Don't let wine tempt you, even though it is rich red, though it sparkles in the cup, and it goes down smoothly. Proverbs 23:31 (GNB)

Don't gaze at the wine, seeing how red it is, how it sparkles in the cup, how smoothly it goes down. Proverbs 23:31 (New Living Translation)

Practically, How Do I Guard My Life?

- Make alcohol a non-issue by not drinking at all.
- If someone in your life tells you that you have a problem with alcohol, take that warning seriously.

For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, ¹²encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory. 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 (NIV)

- Avoid people, places and situations where it is harder to limit your consumption.

Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace . . . 2 Timothy 2:22 (NIV)

Flee = Greek = *pheugo* = to seek safety by flight

- Know the signs of alcohol abuse and do not ignore them.
 - Preoccupation or craving
 - Increased tolerance
 - Continued use
 - Withdrawal symptoms
 - Drink alone
 - Blackouts
 - Hide your supply
 - Find an excuse to drink
 - Failed promises
 - Family and friends avoided

- **Boundary #4: DRUGS ARE ALWAYS MORALLY WRONG.**

- Recreational drugs only have one purpose: to get high.
- Drugs are against the law.

Everyone must obey the state authorities, because no authority exists without God's permission, and the existing authorities have been put there by God. Romans 13:1 (GNB)