

Minister's Message – May 2008

Drink Living

Not so long ago a lot of people died on our roads because of drunk drivers. Then we made it illegal to drink and drive, and many lives have been saved. But still lives are being destroyed and even lost, and many suffer neglect and abuse because of drunkenness. We put up signs banning the consumption of alcohol in some public places – but just down the road is a pub that is open most of the day and night. What about parties at work and at home? Drunkenness is not something new. It is an age old problem – even Noah got drunk.

Drunkenness, like all human conditions, is addressed in the Bible. *Listen my son and be wise, and keep your heart on the right path. Do not join those who drink too much wine and gorge themselves on meat, for drunkards and gluttons become poor. Who has woe? who has sorrow? who has strife?...those who linger over wine...in the end it bites like a snake* (Proverbs 23:19, 29-32). *Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler, whoever is led astray by them is not wise* (Proverbs 20:1).

Drinking is not wise. Drunkenness is a sin before God our maker. God made us in his image. He commands us to live with self-control. Binge drinkers lose self-control. Laws banning alcohol will not solve the problem – although closing pubs earlier will help. The problem is not in our physiology, but in our psychology – or as the Bible says ‘in the heart’.

Jesus saw people as like sheep without a shepherd. He came to be the shepherd, the one to give us life and hope, the one to guide us into ‘green pastures’. Jesus can lift you out of the pit of hopelessness; he can lift the drunkard out of the gutter into which he/she has sunk. *Do not get drunk with wine in which is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit* (Ephesians 5:18). Jesus gives new life, Jesus gives those who confess their sin and believe in him the Holy Spirit, a much better help to our souls than alcohol ever will be.

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