



## DRUNKENNESS AND PROVERBS

The Book of Proverbs is like a treasure chest full of smart advice and wisdom that you can find in the Bible. It's made up of a bunch of sayings that are short and to the point, and they're meant to help you make good choices and live a wise and good life. Proverbs covers every aspect of life like, how to have good relationships, how to work hard, how to handle money, and how to be a good person.

In Proverbs 23, there's a part that specifically warns about the dangers of getting drunk. It tells you to be careful and reminds you that drinking too much alcohol can have really bad consequences. This part of Proverbs teaches us that it's important to have self-control and not let ourselves get carried away with drinking, so that we can live a good and happy life.

### Proverbs 23:29-30

*Who has woe? Who has sorrow?*

*Who has strife? Who has complaints?*

*Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes?*

*Those who linger over wine, who go to sample bowls of mixed wine.*

Alcoholism is an inability to control or stop drinking despite negative consequences. According to studies, alcoholism is the worst addiction that rips families apart, leaves them in financial messes and leads to many legal issues.

It is frightening how alcohol, despite being a highly addictive substance, receives social approval without any negative perception towards those who consume it.

In the Christian world, addiction is seen as a big spiritual fight. It is all about trying to resist the things that tempt us and get in the way of our connection with God. Addiction can happen to anyone, not just Christians, but Christians think that if they trust in God and ask for help from the Holy Spirit, they can find the strength to beat addiction and be free.

Proverbs 23:29-30 vividly portrays the enticing nature of drunkenness. It describes the charm of wine, its sparkling colour, and smoothness as a seductive trap. This part makes us think about why we are drawn to things that only give us short-term happiness, and how drinking too much alcohol can trick us into thinking it is all fun and games when it is actually not.

Proverbs 23:31-35 paints a grim picture of the consequences that accompany drunkenness. It's like a warning sign about getting wasted. It's all about how drinking too much can mess you up big time. It messes with your body, your feelings, and your friendships. When you are drunk, you can't think straight and make good choices. You might even get addicted and ruin your relationships. This verse is all about how alcohol can totally wreck your life if you let it.

The Bible consistently emphasizes the importance of self-control and sobriety in the life of a believer. It is like shouting to us; "Hey, Christians, you have to be disciplined and not go overboard with things. Keep your mind sharp and focused!" Basically, it's saying that we should find balance in everything and trust in God to help us say no to things that can lead to temptation, addiction and loss of control.

### **Nurturing self-control**

Growing up and learning to control ourselves is something we'll be working on for our whole lives. If you are a Christian, there are some ways you can practice and get better at this. One way is by setting limits for yourself, like knowing when to stop doing something. It's also important to find good ways to deal with our feelings and stress, like doing things we enjoy or talking to people who support us. Another thing is to have a strong connection with God by praying and meditating. By trying our best to control ourselves and stay away from things that can mess us up, we can show how much we believe in our faith and live a life that is balanced and meaningful.

Isaiah 5:11 is like a divine billboard flashing with a cautionary message: "***Woe to those who rise early in the morning to run after their drinks, who stay up late at night till they are inflamed with wine.***" In this verse, God is warning against the dangers of excessive drinking and the pursuit of alcohol as a daily obsession.

In the broader context of Isaiah 5, the prophet describes the sins and unfaithfulness of the people of Israel not following God's ways. They were all about doing whatever they wanted and not caring about what God wanted. This verse specifically talks about how they were drinking way too much, and it is a big reminder that this kind of behaviour only leads to trouble and stops them from living the way God wants them to.

Though Isaiah 5:11 was written thousands of years ago, its message remains relevant in modern Christianity. As believers, we are called to examine our own lives and reflect on our relationship with alcohol. While enjoying a glass of wine or a beer is not inherently sinful, becoming consumed by the pursuit of alcohol and allowing it to control our lives is a trap we must avoid.

Isaiah 5:11 serves as a reminder to prioritise moderation and self-control when it comes to drinking. It cautions against using alcohol as a crutch for our problems or as a means to escape reality. Instead, we are encouraged to find our peace and fulfilment in our faith and the presence of God.

In Christianity, we are taught to recognise our weaknesses and turn to God for strength. Addiction can be a formidable foe, but with humility and faith, we can find the courage to reach out for help. By admitting our struggles and seeking help, we open ourselves up to the healing power of God and the resources available to us.

### **Faith-Based Recovery Programmes and Support Groups**

Christianity offers a multitude of faith-based recovery programmes and support groups that can provide help on the road to overcoming addiction. They mix together the power of believing in God with useful tools to help you recover. Plus, you will be part of a group of people who get what you are going through and can support you. It's like having a big family that's always there for you! The Celebrate Recovery Programme is highly recommended.

Discipleship is another powerful tool in overcoming addiction. Christian discipleship involves a mentorship or guidance relationship where a more experienced believer supports and guides someone who is seeking to grow in their faith and overcome challenges.

Embracing sobriety and faith go hand in hand in the Christian life. Recognising the dangers of excessive drinking, seeking help for addiction, and embracing accountability and discipleship are all integral steps toward a more fulfilling life.

Christianity offers a foundation of love, grace, and support that can aid to us in overcoming addiction. By placing our trust in God, relying on the strength of our faith community, and actively participating in recovery programmes, we can find the strength to break free from the grip of addiction and live a life of sobriety and purpose. Remember, you are not alone on this journey, and there is hope for a brighter future.

Let the wisdom and warnings found in Proverbs 23 and Isaiah 5:11 serve as powerful reminders to us Christians to be vigilant against the dangers of drunkenness and addiction. Let us remember that our journey towards sobriety is not one we face alone, but with the grace of God and the support of our Christian community. May we be encouraged to walk this path, guided by faith, and empowered to live a life free from the shackles of addiction.