

Don't Make Jesus a Promoter of Drinking

In the book of John 2:1-10 we have the first miracle of Jesus recorded in which Jesus turned the water into wine. There have been debates throughout the years as to the nature of the wine that Jesus produced and presumably drank.

Those who wish to promote drinking alcoholic beverages believe that this is the text for saying, "See, *even Jesus* drank and encouraged others to drink." But this was not the case and those who are quick to justify their winebibbing need to take a closer look.

First of all, wine in Jesus' day and wine in our day are produced and consumed for different reasons. Wine would often be mixed with water in order to make the water safer to drink for quenching one's thirst. Often the mixture would result in a blend that was one-tenth to one-third of its original strength. Basically, wine was grape juice mixed with water. However, strong drink as mentioned in Proverbs 20:1 was wine that was not mixed with water and could be intoxicating. Nevertheless, strong drink in their day was only as a beer today with three to six percent alcohol. And even this level of alcohol was forbidden to be consumed by the Levitical priests and forbidden in the Passover feasts. Jesus was a high priest as stated in Hebrews 4:14-15.

The wine that was consumed at the marriage feast would not have been intoxicating according to tradition. Knowing the nature and character of Jesus as we do, it can be concluded that Jesus did not miraculously construct the world's fastest "still" and thus endorse liquor-by-the-drink for all time and eternity! The only thing Jesus could legitimately be accused of at the marriage feast of Cana is preparing the world's best grape juice in the Eastern Hemisphere! Jesus' wine would have been fresh and unfermented. Comparing Jesus' wine to wine we prepare today is like comparing a BB gun to a bazooka. Twelve to fifteen percent alcohol content was not allowed in a ceremony in Jesus' day. In fact, the process of distillation was not discovered until around A.D. 800. They could not even produce the kind of wine we have today.

It is blasphemous to suggest that Jesus participated in the use of "strong drink" as it is forbidden in Leviticus 10 and Proverbs 20. If Jesus would have consumed what the Scripture forbids or had given it to others to consume (Habbakuk 2:15), He could not have been the perfect sacrifice that we needed to save us from our sins. He had to keep the entire Tanakh perfectly in order to be the spotless Lamb capable of dying as our substitute.

Make sure your love of alcohol doesn't cause you to misrepresent the Son of God. Drink it, if you may. Promote it, if you want. But don't try to make Jesus your "poster boy" to sell it!

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