

Strong Drink
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Turn to Proverbs 20. This is a subject that I have not preached on in quite some time, but it is a needed subject that we need to be reminded of. Proverbs 20:1: *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.* Let me speak this morning on the subject, “Strong Drink.” *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.* I would like to say this before I start the message: every Christian needs to get a copy of a book by William Patton, *Bible Wines and the Laws of Fermentation*. God would not use the same thing as a symbol of wrath and as a symbol of joy. He is talking about two different things. He talks about the duty and the cup of blessing with wine as a symbol. He talks about the wine of the wrath of God. God would not take a cup, hold it up, and say, “Now, this is the symbol and blessing of God; this is a symbol of the curse of God.” He is talking about two different things. If you are trying to turn to the Bible to justify social drinking, you had better turn somewhere else. This will help you. Perhaps the only booze dispenser honest enough to admit the truth was James M. Lawrence who published an advertisement in a newspaper. This was an advertisement to announce the opening of his new establishment, “The Naked Truth Saloon.” The advertisement read thus: “Friends and neighbors, having just opened a commodious shop for the sale of liquid fire, I embrace this opportunity of informing you that I have commenced the business of making drunkards, paupers, and beggars for the sober, industrious, and respectable portion of the community to support. I shall deal in family spirits which will insight men to deeds of riot, robbery, and bloodshed; and by so doing, diminish the comfort, augment the expenses, and endanger the welfare of the community. I will in short notice, for a sum and with great expectation, prepare victims for the asylum, poor farms, prisons, and gallows. I will furnish an article that will increase accidents, multiply the number of distress and diseases, and render those who are harmless incurable. I will deal in drugs which will deprive some of life, many of reason, most of property, and all of their peace. It will cause fathers to become fiends, wives to become widows, and children to become orphans. I will cause many of the rising generation to grow up in ignorance and to prove a burden and nuisance to the nation. I will cause mothers to forget their offspring, and I will cause cruelty to take the place of love. I will sometimes corrupt the ministers of religion, defile the purity of the church, and cause temporal, spiritual, and eternal death. If any be so impertinent as to ask me why I have the audacity to bring such an accumulative misery upon the people, my honest reply is money. The spirit trade is lucrative, and some professing Christians give their cheerful countenance. From the U.S. government, I have purchased the right to demolish character, destroy the health, shorten the lives, and ruin the souls of those who choose to honor me with their custom. I pledge myself to do all that I have promised. Those who wish any of the evils before specified brought upon themselves or their dear friends are requested to meet me at my bar, and I will for a few cents furnish them for the certain means of doing so.” That is an honest advertisement. Beer drinking is included in this text: *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging . . .* Beer drinking is the open door through which many young people enter into a life shackled by alcohol. Dr. Milford Rouse, president of Texas Medical Association, said the average twelve-ounce can of beer contains one-half of beverage alcohol. This is the same amount of alcohol one would obtain from most other alcoholic drinks. One twelve-ounce bottle of beer equals an alcohol content of a wine glass filled with natural wine, an average cocktail, an average highball, a jigger of 67-proof whiskey, an average martini, or a shot of 100-proof whiskey. Nearly one hundred thousand ten- and eleven-year-old boys and girls in our country get drunk at least once a week. Law enforcement authorities remind us that individuals drunk on beer are harder to handle and more boisterous than people intoxicated to the very same degree with any other alcoholic beverage. Lupulin and lupunic acids are the culprit. Dr. Robert Zeigler of John Hopkins University calls this stupidity burbanized judgment. He says, “My personal conviction

based on experience and psychiatry that our social drinkers actually cause more trouble of more kinds as a group than do all true alcoholics. That drink medically is a narcotic drug substance and can be compared to a shot of morphine.” Shakespeare wrote, “What fools men are to put this demon in their mouth to steal their brains away.” In a United States Supreme Court case, it was quoted, “Liquor in its nature is dangerous to the morals of good order, health, and sanity of the people and is not to be placed in the category with the ordinary commodities of life.” A former editor of *The Christian Advocate* stated it clearly when he said, “There is no social, moral, or religious value which a church is endeavoring to build up like the liquor industry is not tearing down. It is robbing men of their sense of value, their moral discrimination, their sensitiveness to social responsibilities, their consciousness of divinity and concern for righteousness.” Now, I realize this morning that I am not speaking to those whom alcohol has totally enslaved for they are no longer in the pews. They have left the pews. They once sat where you are now sitting. They are social drinkers. They thought they could control their drinking. I want to remind you that alcoholism is not a disease. It is a sin of addiction brought on purposely by taking the first drink. God may never send those who have a disease to hell. Those who go are called *drunkards*. 1 Corinthians 6:10: . . . *nor drunkards . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God*. Those are words that we do not like to use. We do not use the term *alcoholic*. The Bible calls it *drunkenness*. That is not trying to be without compassion. We must deal with what the Bible has to say. I remind you again that God will never send a man to hell for a disease, but drunkards go to hell. That is mentioned in several places in the Scriptures.

Look at Proverbs 31:4-5. Prohibition – wise people do not drink. You see the sign that says, “Men of distinction drink.” They misspelled it, “Men of *extinction* drink.” They do not show what happens behind the sign. They do not show down the road. It would be interesting if they would show venereal diseases and AIDS. It would be very profitable if they showed some films like they showed us in World War II of venereal diseases. It was terrible, horrible, awful. If they showed that, it would have a sobering effect upon those who saw it. Prohibition – wise people do not drink. Proverbs 31:1-5: *The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him. What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows? Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings. It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.* It says that it will pervert justice and judgment. It is not for presidents, senators, congressmen, secretaries of state, governors, national/state/county/city officials, and leaders. Our nation is paying a terrible toll and bitter price for the conferences held in Cairo years ago. There were decisions and agreements that effected the whole world where our representatives drunk down hard liquor until they could hardly sit up and did not know if they were going or coming. At one time, they had to be carried out dead drunk. It is not for government officials to drink wine or strong drink, for they are in a place of dispensing the matter of judgment and justice. Billy Graham was quoted as saying during a crusade in the capital, “Washington needs a spiritual awakening more than any other city I have ever been to. I have only begun to see what takes place here: drinking parties, the way the influence is bought and sold, and disregard for morals in the realm of sex. I am disgusted and nauseated. It is unbelievable. God save America.”

It is not for the dedicated. Numbers 6 talks about the matter of the vows of a Nazarite. By the way, Jesus Christ did not have long hair. We have had the artist’s conception. Jesus was a Nazarene. He was not a Nazarite. The Nazarites wore long hair as a symbol of their vow. Jesus was from the city of Nazareth. He was a Nazarene. This is a prohibition of a Nazarite and his vow. Numbers 6:1-5: *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the LORD: He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried. (That would rule out totally our Lord Jesus Christ being a Nazarite.) All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels*

even to the husk. All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the LORD, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. He did not have long hair. He was not a Nazarite. He was a Nazarene. Wise people do not drink. It is not for the dedicated. Lawrence Welk – although his music is referred to as “Champagne Music” – is a total abstainer. His band is well-renowned. He recommends that to succeed in any profession, everyone, especially young people, should refrain from the use of alcoholic beverages. That is Lawrence Welk. Listen to what he says and why. This band leader of almost half a century said, “As a band leader, I have had numerous experiences and have developed certain convictions with regard to alcohol and music. Such work is mine in which twenty musicians must cooperate. I could not afford to have one drinker nullify the efforts of the other nineteen musicians. As we play it today, music requires the utmost cooperation of sensitivity and physical cooperation. With my various commitments, such as weekly television shows, nightly network air shows, record and audio transcription sessions, the possibility of any drinking problem arising would be of a great concern to me. As far as the business aspect is concerned, one member of the band who becomes an alcoholic can ruin the musical output of the whole band, can nullify the good public relations of the group when I need him the most, and can jeopardize my relationship with the people who hire our organization. *Let me say that the musician who drinks the liquid blend can ruin the musical blend.*” It is not for the dedicated. It is not for the leaders. It is not for the wise.

It is not for mothers. Judges 13. Sampson was to be a Nazarite from his mother’s womb. The instructions to the mother of Samson was this: *And the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb . . . Verse 7: But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death.* Alcohol is deadly on the unborn fetus. From *Faith for the Family* is an article entitled, “Mother’s Alcohol Use May Lower the Baby’s Intelligence”: “A new animal study shows alcohol consumption by pregnant or nursing mothers hinders brain development in the fetuses and newborns possibly lowering the intelligence or causing mental retardation. Drinking alcohol particularly in the first three months of pregnancy effected the formation of brain proteins and ribonucleic acids in laboratory rats. Decreased formation of those vital elements may cause mental retardation common to infants with fatal alcohol syndromes, said a University of Toledo Bio-Chemist. It is projected that twenty percent of children in various mental retardation centers may be victims of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Virtually all alcohol consumed by the mother is being cycled through the developing fetus. The fetus does not remove the alcohol. That is the responsibility of the mother’s liver. Consequently, the fetus is bathing in the uterine environment of alcohol – the higher the lull of the concentration, the greater the damage to the fetus.”

It is not for church leaders. 1 Timothy 3:1-3: *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;* Church leaders are not to use alcohol. Christians are not to use alcohol. “Oh,” you say, “Preacher, I have got you there.” Open your Bible, and follow along. 1 Corinthians 5:11. Paul is writing about church discipline: *But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard . . .* You are not to keep company with someone who calls himself a Christian but is a drunkard. That is what Paul had to say. That is pretty strict. That is what the Scripture has to say. Romans 14:21: *It is good neither to eat flesh . . .* Paul said, “If eating meat maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no meat as long as the world liveth.” He is talking about meat offered to idols. He said, “I do not have to eat meat. I will not do anything that will induce some brother to go to the temple as an idolater.” *It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to*

drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. I have never known anybody who was made strong by alcoholic beverages. I have never known anybody to be made wiser or smarter. I have never known anybody who would be a better example to follow because they drank alcohol. That individual is not found at all. I do not know of businesses that hire people with the requirement that you must drink in order to work there. Businesses generally do not want that. Why? They do not get the work that they need to get, because of alcoholic beverages. Let us read some more about the matter of Christians. Turn back to Romans 13:13: *Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.* The passage that I read to you previously says: . . . *any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.* I would lose my testimony as a preacher, and this congregation would not have me as pastor. All I have to do is just pop one can of beer, and my testimony is gone. That is all. It does not make any difference what else I do. All I have to do is pop one can of beer, and I have lost my testimony. You, likewise as a Christian, lose your testimony when you pop a can of beer. You have lost your testimony, and you offend the bulk of Christian people who love the Lord. You will offend them. You will lose your testimony. You cannot afford to lose your testimony on anything. Nothing is worth losing your testimony. Your testimony is the reason the Lord leads you in this world – to be a witness. When we wreck and ruin our testimony, we have no value to this world. Our testimony must be kept clean and pure. We must do that regardless of what I may think about it. If it ruins my testimony, then it is wrong. It is that simple. Ephesians 5:18: *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit,* It will lead to excess.

Let us look at the warning: *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.* Let us look at some verses in Proverbs. Do not listen to the advertisements of the liquor industry. They are not honest. That is the reason the writer of Proverbs gave the admonition that: *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.* Proverbs 19:27: *Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.* Do not listen to that. It causes you to err from the words of knowledge. Then he goes down to that: *Wine is a mocker . . .* Turn to Proverbs 23:29. It imparts misery. I have been in the ministry almost forty years. I have been preaching just a little under forty years. I have never heard anybody stand up and say, “I want to tell you what alcohol did to my home. What a blessing it has brought to my home.” I have heard a lot of testimonies in meetings, but I have never had one to stand up and say, “I want to tell you the blessings that have come down on my life because we as a family learned to social drink.” I never have heard that. Proverbs 23:29-35. Listen to what the words of wisdom have to say: *Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? (There are enough problems in this world without getting wounded without a cause.) who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.* It imparts woe. It imparts the woe of God’s judgment. Isaiah 5:11-14: *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands. Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.* It imparts the misery, the woe of God’s judgment. Just stand in every city, and let your eyes watch what transpires. Listen to the conversation. It imparts sorrow, because it effects family income. It effects family harmony. It effects the home. It

effects the job. It effects the friends. It effects the health. We laugh sometimes and joke about being drunk, but nobody who is a drunk laughs and jokes. They do not make those jokes, because it is no joke. Would you hear me well? It is strange that we go to war against drugs, and yet drugs have not done to America what alcohol has done. Alcohol is a drug. Alcohol is the chief article that brings the woe upon the United States. Instead of the needle, it is the bottle. We leave that alone. Why? So many people are involved in it. They are involved in it in high places. Let me read this from the *H.E.W.* – Health. Education. Welfare. I would not say they are a very religious institution. They are not coming at this in a religious matter. Listen to what they have to say. The *H.E.W.* report on national counsel on alcoholism has reported this: “*Alcohol in the nation is the third leading cause of death after heart disease and cancer. It is a contributing factor in both. It is a factor in one-third of all suicides. It is a factor in half of all violent crimes. It is a factor in half of all traffic fatalities resulting in eleven million alcoholics or one out of ten drinkers or one out of five heavy drinkers. It is the result of over eighty percent of fire deaths. It is the result of sixty-five percent of drownings, twenty-two percent of home accidents, seventy-two percent of falls, and thirty-six percent of pedestrian accidents. Fifty-five percent of the arrests are linked to the use of alcohol. Up to forty-four percent of pileups involved in accidents have been drinking. Violent behavior attributed to alcohol usually accounts for approximately sixty-five percent of murders, forty percent of assaults, thirty-five percent of rapes, thirty percent of other sex crimes, fifty-five percent of fights or assaults in the home, and sixty percent of cases of child abuse. When alcoholism is treated, associated violent behavior is known to decrease. It would take a plane crash every day, each killing eighty people equal to the deaths of alcohol related automobile accidents. Each airplane crash would have to be a real freak accident crashing into a crowd and seriously injuring twenty-seven hundred to equal the alcohol-related highway injuries.*” The liquor industry comes out and publishes that they are trying to help the mothers of MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers). I heard the same thing on the news as I was coming back from Tampa the other night. I heard on the news that in Michigan there is a law if anyone is praying over a child when the child dies can go to prison. I heard that with my own ears. That puts every preacher who goes into a hospital and prays over somebody in danger of going to prison. Anyone who prays over an individual and that individual dies goes to prison. Wait just a minute. Do you think that every bar tender that ever dispenses or sells alcohol to a person that gets killed ought to go to prison? Is that fair? We do not think right about this.

Let us consider contentions. Drunkards argue and quarrel — babblings. They destroy the nervous system and mental coordination. It is funny to watch a drunk, but it is awfully bad to be one. . . . *wounds without cause.* Drunks fall off buildings, walk in front of cars, bump into trees, fall off ladders, fall off piers, wreck their cars, sleep on railroad tracks, cut themselves with knives and razors, and get beat up. Drunkenness causes poverty, rags, malnutrition, cirrhosis of the liver, impaired vision. . . . *redness of eyes* – the bloodshot eyes. It is like a raging fire: *At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.* It would be interesting if they would put on national television the intense burning passion of a man for alcohol to drink. Then they should put a picture of a man with DT’s and let them show the padded room where somebody stays in there with the man who has the DT’s. It is not very funny. There is a raging fire within – a fire for alcohol. There is loss of morality: *Thine eyes shall behold strange women* . . . Lot’s daughters became pregnant by their own daddy under the influence of alcohol. Ham had sex in Genesis 9. There is nakedness and immorality. Habakkuk 2:15: *Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!* Lamentations 4:21: *Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz; the cup also shall pass through unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked.* People do things they would never do under the influence of drunkenness – loss of morality, wicked conversation. . . . *thine heart shall utter perverse things.* They say things they would never say and blaspheme God. They say things that they never would say if they were sober. Belshazzar the king under the

influence of alcohol blasphemed the God of Heaven. Daniel came in and reminded him of that when Belshazzar saw the hand on the wall in writing. Daniel said: *But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:* Drunkenness causes wicked conversation. It causes physical imbalance. Proverbs 23 mentions that imbalance: *Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.* It is as a man at sea walking with his balance impaired. It is as a man walking or driving a car that way with DT. Drinking causes hypoglycemia in children. A father gives his preteen child a bottle of beer to teach him how to drink so that he will not sneak around and get it somewhere other than at home. That is really wise advice. Why not let him commit adultery with one of your sisters so that he will not get it down the street? That makes just as much sense. Some parents feel that a glass of wine with their meals somehow teaches the child to drink acceptably. Smart parent? Hardly. In fact, foolish parent would be more definitive. The director of pediatric service at the Metropolitan Nashville General Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee, warned that severe, irreversible brain damage can result from just one can of beer by preteen children. Alcohol is a special danger to children because it tends to cause hypoglycemia, which is a drop in blood sugar. The doctor said the brain needs blood sugar to function. If the blood sugar drops long enough for brain damage, retardation can occur. Parents may not know how dangerous hypoglycemia is. The child does not have to be drunk to have this condition. Just one occasion of very low blood sugar can cause permanent damage unless the child receives medical attention within an hour or so. Dr. John Wilson, assistant professor of pediatrics in Vanderbilt University agrees with this doctor: "Children under the age of ten would be the most susceptible to this condition. Just one can of beer could effect the intelligence or more areas of the brain." By the way, ten-, eleven-, twelve-, and thirteen-year-old children are a whole lot more easily addicted to alcohol than an adult is, because of the fact that they are maturing. They destroy something. "Well, what is wrong with just one drink?" There is a lot that is wrong with it. Addiction: . . . *they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.* It is an addiction. It is an addiction that starts with the first drink. A Chicago newspaper published the life story of singer Lillian Roth, an ex-Hollywood heroine who had become an alcoholic. She described graphically the slavery of liquor when she wrote: "*You know now that alcohol creeps insidiously into your life, so insidiously that you are not aware of it until it is too late. At first it was four or five whiskey shots a night. Soon the four or five became a pint and then a fifth. You could not start the morning without a drink. Then, the two-ounce bottle in your bag grew to six ounces and finally fifths. Oddly, no one ever commented that you were rarely seen without those big handbags. Soon, you were on a fifth of a gallon a day, taking this stuff slowly, a drink or two every four or five hours. Then, it was every three hours. Then, it was every two hours. Finally, it was every hour, then of course through the day and of course through the night. As the years went on and something terrifying happened, you could not hold as much. You began to throw it up. One part of you cried, 'I want it.' The other part cried, 'I cannot take it.' Your body reached a point of revolt. You were sick all the time. Sometimes, you vomited all morning before your stomach retained an ounce of it – the drink your body needed so desperately. The next stage was worse. You lay in bed and drank around the clock – drank, passed out, drank, vomited, drank, passed out. Then, it was still worse, the shakes. Only liquor could relieve that, but your body rejected the liquor. After the shakes, the horrors. The delirium feelings – when you heard sounds that were not there, saw things that did not exist. The hours of pacing your room and tearing your hair. You reached the worst stage of all. Your medicine is your poison. There is no end but madness.*" They do not show the end of the road. It destroys judgment and value system. Amos 2:11: *And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for Nazarites.* (He said, "I wanted preachers. I wanted dedicated men.") *Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith the LORD. But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink; and commanded the prophets, saying, Prophecy not.* What a value system! Isaiah 28:7-8:

But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean. In Leviticus 10, evidently Nadab and Abihu went into the holy place with strange incense, and God killed them. After He killed them, the Scripture says in verse 9: *Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die:* These two walking into the very holy place of God probably never would have done that had it not been that they were drinking. I read where a drunk man ran a hot poker up the nostrils and rectum of his baby. That is crude and gross, but alcohol is crude and gross. I am telling you that you do tremendous, terrible, horrible, and unreasonable things under the influence. It destroys judgment. It robs of riches. Proverbs 23:21: *For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.* Jack London, the author, died a suicide's death. He wrote those tremendous novels. Visit a rescue mission, and find out how many of those had great, good, high-paying jobs and wealth, but it is all gone. It dries up human compassion. Amos 6:3-6 speaks of the judgment of God: *Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David; That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.* It robs of human compassion. It destroys a sense of danger. Folks in Louisiana several years ago when that killer hurricane came through were urged to evacuate but did not, and they all perished in the storm. Belshazzar had a party while under siege of the Medes and the Persians. That night when he ought to be alert, he had a big party in his defiance against the invading and against the siege. It was a party for thousands of his lords. Liquor was frequent. The hand of God came out and wrote judgment on the wall. While they were drinking, the Medes dug a ditch around the city. The Euphrates River ran right down through the city. They dug a ditch that diverted the river. They marched into the city of Babylon on dry bed and captured the city. It destroyed the sense of danger. There was a man I knew many years ago. His wife left him. She left him because of – I imagine – alcoholic abuse. She left him, went to Chattanooga, and got a job with Miller Brothers in Chattanooga. I worked part time across the street at JC Penney while attending Tennessee Temple School. The day that this happened, I happened to be here; otherwise, I would have been downtown. He went to Chattanooga. He spent two or three days drinking and calling her on the phone. He would say, "If you do not come back to me, I am going to kill you." He drank and got himself really drunk. He went down on the left side of Miller Brothers where the people were coming out. He hid in the crowd, went up to her, and killed her. He turned the gun on himself and took his own life. He had no sense of danger or eternity. That is what alcohol will do with you. It is associated with gluttony, rebellion, and stubbornness. Deuteronomy 21:18: *If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them:* (This is under the law. You see God's attitude toward sin in the New Testament. You see God's attitude toward the prodigal son.) *Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard.* What am I saying? All of this is associated with gluttony, rebellion, and stubbornness. It robs of preparation for the coming of our Lord. Luke 21:34: *And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.* Let me read to you *The Drunkard's Psalm*: "King Alcohol is my shepherd. I shall always want. He maketh me to lie down in the gutters. He leadeth me beside the troubled water. He destroyeth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of wickedness for the effect's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of poverty and have delirium treatments, I will claim the drink, for thou art with me. Thy bite and thy sting, They torment me. Thou preparest an empty table

before me in the presence of my family. Thou annointest my head with hellishness. My cup of wrath runneth over. Surely destruction and misery shall follow me all the days of my life. I shall dwell in the house of the damned forever.” Abstinence is the answer to this matter of alcohol. Let me show you something very quickly. I skipped over it a while ago. Prom time is coming up. Proms are associated with alcohol. Proms are associated with immorality. I played in the high school band. I played in the college band. I played in the band in the army. I know what goes on at the dance floor. This article was written by the humor columnist for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*: “An Atlanta father whose daughter is graduating from high school this year called and asked, ‘Do you know what is going on with senior proms?’ *I confessed I did not. The last time I thought about a senior prom was twenty-one years ago. ‘Many things have changed since you and I were that age,’ the father said. I asked for specifics. ‘First, you would not believe how much some girls are paying for the dresses to wear to the prom. My daughter has spent up to three to four hundred dollars. Most of the boys rent their formals, but still they have to buy their dates flowers. Many parents fork over the money to their sons to rent limousines. Kids today are taking limos to their senior prom. It is because of all the concern about drunk driving. Parents would rather rent their kids a limo and not have to worry about them being in a wreck or getting thrown in jail for driving under the influence.’ I said that sounded like sound thinking to me, but why did they not simply drive their kids to the prom and then pick them up when it is over? That would solve the drunken driving thing and save the money they would have to spend on a limo. ‘I asked my own daughter the same thing,’ the father replied. ‘She said that any kid whose parents drove them to the prom would be the laughing stock of the school.’ It has been a long time. I suppose I have forgotten how tough peer pressure can be on a teenager. ‘You have not heard it all,’ the father said. ‘I know one group of parents who chartered a bus for their kids and put a bar and a bar tender on the bus so that the kids could ride to the party without having to worry about getting stopped by the cops. A lot of proms are in hotels. Some parents are even renting hotel rooms for their kids so that they will not be out driving drunk. The hotels make parents come down and pay in advance and give permission for their children to stay in the room. I am sure the parents know that the kids wind up sleeping with their date, but again, they say it is better to have them in bed with their dates than in a car with them.’ I asked the man if he allowed his daughter to take part in any of this. ‘No,’ he said, ‘She says she will never speak to me again.’ What appears to be happening here today is high school students are no dumber than they are holding drunk driving over their parents heads to get to do a lot of things like riding in limos and shacking up with their dates. He said, ‘Times have changed.’” When I growing up, my mom would say, “You had better be home. If I find out you have been drinking, I will tan your hide.” Proms are not innocent things. They are associated with immorality. They are associated with alcohol. They are not innocent things.*

Let us consider the condemnation — the woe of the judgment on the legalizer. I am just about through. God’s woe is upon the legalizer, the person or legislators who make the laws. We have just about forgotten the responsibility of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is responsible for their law they made about the Constitution of the United States. Do you understand that? Do you understand when people make laws that they are responsible to God about those laws. I read in Isaiah 5:22-23: *Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!* Isaiah 10:1-2: *Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!* There is judgment on the legalizer. There is judgment on the dispenser, a man who sells it. Habbakuk 2:15-16: *Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness! Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered: the cup of the LORD’S right hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful spewing shall be on thy glory.* If you think that there is no judgment upon the dispenser, get Dr. John R. Rice’s book on *Alcohol and the Kennedy Family*. That is an eyeopener.

There is judgment on the user. Galatians 5:21 says that no drunkard shall inherit eternal life. Let me deal with the drug traffic on the dispenser of drugs. In Revelation 21:8, notice the word *sorcerer*. *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers (drug dispensers) . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.* Revelation 18:23: . . . *for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries (drugs) were all nations deceived.* There is judgment on the dispenser. There is judgment on the user. Revelation 9:21: *Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries (use of drugs), nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.* What is the answer? The answer is abstinence. If you are a partaker, and you say, "I am hooked," Jesus Christ is the Answer. He still saves. He still sobers men. He still deals with the sins that enslave us in our life. Proverbs 20:1: *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.* Now, it would be nice when I come to the pulpit to always preach something that makes you go away feeling good. There are a lot of things that we are doing that we do not need to feel good about, because we are going to feel worse down the road. Part of preaching is preaching the whole counsel of the Word of God. The Bible has a whole lot to say about alcoholic beverages and about the social drink. I remind you of that this morning. If you are unsaved this morning, you need to get saved. Christ is the Answer. You cannot save yourself. Religion will not save you. That is the reason Christ Jesus came into this world to die on the cross to pay for our sin debt so that a holy God would not do wrong in forgiving sinful men of their actions. Christ died to make it possible for God to show mercy upon us, because justice was satisfied at Calvary. Would you come to Christ?