

Alcohol

Southern Acres Christian Church Position Paper

Southern Acres Christian Church does not require its members to be total abstainers. The Bible indicates that drunkenness, not alcohol consumption, is a sin (Eph. 5:18). However, because of the pervasiveness of the problem of alcoholism in our culture, we require elders, deacons and staff members to be total abstainers and encourage all members to consider abstaining from alcohol altogether.

Because alcoholism has become a blight of our culture, the issue demands closer attention. Alcoholism is the third largest health problem in the United States. A study by *The Ohio State University Extension* reports that adolescents who drink are four times more likely to become alcoholics than adults.ⁱ Teens fifteen and older who drink alcohol are seven times more likely to have sexual relations than those who do not drink.ⁱⁱ Alcoholism influences men and women from every social and cultural sector. Nationwide, there are 10 million adults and 3.3 million teenagers struggling with alcoholism.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Bible does not regard wine as evil, but drunkenness is forbidden. In Ephesians 5:18, the Apostle Paul exhorts us, “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.” However, it is important to understand the cultural background of the biblical admonition. The alcoholic content of most drinks in the first century was probably half of similar drinks today.^{iv} Wine was used to kill infecting agents in drinking water, so it was commonly diluted to make it go farther. Alcohol consumption in the time of Jesus was vastly different than it is today—liquor was far less potent, often used medicinally, and usually diluted. Therefore, because of the increase in the potency of alcohol today and the decrease in the need and benefits of alcohol in our culture, total abstinence may be the wisest course of action.

That is why we ask every Christian to consider becoming a total abstainer from alcohol. Alcohol can negatively affect your health, lower your inhibitions, and diminish your Christian witness. Abstaining from alcohol ensures that you will never become an alcoholic, and abstinence sets a positive example for your children and others.

Southern Acres Christian Church offers counseling services to help those dealing with addictions to alcohol or other drugs. Most importantly, Southern Acres offers alcoholics a relationship with Jesus Christ. Alcoholics often turn to the drink in order to fill a void in their lives. That’s why Paul encouraged us not to get drunk with wine, but instead be filled with the Spirit. The Holy Spirit can fill the void in the alcoholic’s life, a void that no amount of alcohol could ever fill.

ⁱ McCowell, Urvia and Ted Futris: “Adolescents at Risk: Alcohol Use”, *The Ohio State University Extension* ©2002 www.hec.ohio-state.edu/famlife

ⁱⁱ Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, *Substance Use and Sexual Health among Teens and Young Adults in the U.S.* (Feb. 2002).

ⁱⁱⁱ

^{iv} DOCUMENT – ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA