Asleep*

Romans 13:11-14 (11) And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to **awake out of sleep**: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.
(12) The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.
(13) Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.
(14) But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.
Paul is urging Christian's to "awake out of sleep." He is speaking of spiritual sleep, not the sleep that is a natural function of our bodies to restore strength. I want to share this story with you, my granddad Warford had a quiver full of children, 19 in all. As he became older, napping became a typical and regular course of life. Once when granddad had sat down to rest, as usual, he fell asleep. Of 19 children one can imagine there had to be practical jokers in the group. Secretly they conspired and very carefully cut off one of his eyebrows. They thought that was so funny, but evidently had forgotten about granddad's switch, but he did not. I do not know how he and grandmother managed with so many children, but they did. Could the reason have been;
Psalm 127:3-5 (3) Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.
(4) As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.
(5) Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.
A religious teacher asked a group of children, "why should you be quiet in church services?" One child thought for a moment

and replied, "because the grown ups are sleeping?" Do children sometime become restless so that adults do not fall asleep in Church services? I know adults may become annoyed at the behavior of a child, however it is deliberate disruption that is to be corrected. And we must remember that children are a blessing and they are deserving of our love, protection, care, and correction if needed, however, I fear there are adults who are asleep spiritually that abuse God's heritage, His warning is stern, turn with me to;
Proverbs 6:16-17 (16) These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:
(17) A proud look, a lying tongue, and **hands that shed innocent blood,**
We are going to stop with hands that shed innocent blood. This will give give us a complete picture of God's attitude toward evil characters that commit abomination. Children are innocent. Shedding their blood is an abomination to God whether inside or outside the womb. Children are God's heritage and have been endowed by the Creator to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Heritage means something received from another. Hence, although children are the offspring of human beings, their presence should be regarded as a gift from the Lord. This is far different from the attitude manifested by many people who regard children in an objectionable way, who, through cruel atrocities by people, such as Herod, show their indifference to human posterity. It is worth our time to investigate Herod because there are people such as he right here in the U.S.A. Turn with me to;
Matthew 2:16-18 (16) Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.
(17) Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,

(18) In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.
Oh that the Lord would bless this nation with lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning for the children that are not. If one were to think that Herod was a wicked person for slaying the innocent, one would be right. But no more wicked than purposely destroying the life of the unborn, and that this atrocity is supported by unjust laws supported by the supreme court and is itself an atrocity. *Listen,* When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn (Pro 29:2).
If only our nation would "awake out of sleep" and give the unborn the protection they deserve. The notion that somehow an unborn child is not a person, defies logic and scripture, are you listening?; Before I **formed thee in the belly** I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations (Jeremiah 1:5). *Unborn children's lives matter. Man is unable to understand how or why God knew the prophet before the pregnancy ever occurred, but so it is with God. This is an interesting revelation isn't it, but God knows all.*
A rather incongruous situation exists among America's politicians, judges, and even many of the rank and file Americans. On the one hand, they claim to be true Americans—genuine patriots. On the other hand, they disdain Christianity and live contrary to the moral principles contained within the Christian religion. They literally labor to subvert the influence of Christianity on the nation. They portray evil as good, and good as evil. Politicians reject Christianity by making laws that contradict the Bible. Judges "legislate from the bench" by insisting that Christianity must not have approval or favor in their rulings. In stark contrast stands the "Father of our country"—George Washington. Not only did he lead the Continental Army to victory over the British, thus

enabling the launching of the Republic, he also served as our first President. He was unquestionably a quintessential Founder, a critical cog in the overall scheme of things. Before retiring to private life after a distinguished career of public service, Washington delivered his Farewell Address to the nation. In that impressive pronouncement, he articulated the foundational keys to the success of the Republic.
*Washington said, "*Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, **religion and morality are indispensable supports**. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them." *These indispensable supports are firmly written into two of the nation's most important documents. But too often they are cast aside in favor of death, reform and perverseness. Killing defenseless babies is a miscarriage of justice in opposition to the very documents that guarantee it's citizens life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*
From; The Declaration of Independence
We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are **Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness**.
From; The Constitution of the United States
We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the **Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity**, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.
Posterity; Future generations, or, All of a person's descendants.
The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States are there to provide security for ourselves and

our posterity. In opposition to these two documents, are laws of the land and a judicial system that deliberately allow destruction of our posterity. Religion and morality as indispensable supports are vanishing. Listen to this; April 6, 2009 in Turkey, President Obama explained: "we do not consider ourselves a Christian nation." *His remark must have elated atheists, agnostics, infidels, antichrists, Muslims and skeptics of Christianity. Is God amused at these remarks? Are you listening?; God's word says;* The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God (Psalm 9:17).

Now listen to this; {America was founded as a republic, not a democracy; and while few today can define the difference between the two, there is a difference--a big difference. Our founding fathers had an opportunity to establish a democracy and deliberately chose not to. They intentionally established America and each of the states as republican--not democratic--governments. In their minds, we were not, and were never to become a democracy. Confirming this, Bill of Rights framer Fisher Ames observed: A democracy is a volcano which conceals the fiery materials of its own destruction. These will produce an eruption, and carry desolation in their way. Declaration signer Benjamin Rush similarly noted: A simple democracy is the devil's own government.

And John Adams also cautioned: Remember, democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There never was a democracy yet that did not commit suicide.

In a democracy, whatever the people desire is what becomes policy. Therefore, if a majority of the people decide that murder is no longer a crime, in a democracy, murder will no longer be a crime. However, not so in the American republic: in our republic, murder will always be a crime, for murder is always a crime in the Word of God. Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure if we have removed their only firm basis--a conviction in the minds of the people that these

liberties are the gift of God, that they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just-that His justice cannot sleep forever. (From; Keys To Good Government by David Barton).}

Now if murder is a crime in a republic, why is murder of unborn children allowed in America? What happened to our republic?

There is another story about children I would like to impart to bring us to the next portion of our study. A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their six year old son and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?" "I wouldn't know what to say," the son replied. "Just say what you hear Mommy say," The son bowed his head and said, "Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?" Well, the Lord has invited the world to His supper. Why do they not come? Turn with me to;

1Corinthians 11:23-30 (23) For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

(24) And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: **this do in remembrance of me**.

(25) After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

(26) For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

(27) Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

(28) But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

(29) For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

(30) For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and

many sleep.
This description of sleep in 1 Corinthians is cause for alarm. While the guilt of corrupting the Lord's supper is possible, and deserving of being judged, therefore, when disciples corrupt the holy ordinance, it brings upon themselves this serious condition mentioned here, unless they repent. Christians must be awake, both in spirit and in truth, when partaking of the Lord's supper--discerning His body. One must in truth, focus in spirit on Christ and partake; Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave to them saying, take eat for this is my body which is broken for you. Then Jesus took the cup, blessed it and gave to them saying, this is my blood of the new testament and they all drank from it. *This is the way it was observed for nearly two thousand years, at the present the opposite is as boldly practiced as if the real scriptural rite had never been observed. Had there not been a small minority within the banner called the Churches of Christ, the real scriptural rite may have been lost altogether. Now concerning the contents of the cup Jesus said;* For I say unto you, I will not drink of the **fruit of the vine**, until the kingdom of God shall come (Luke 22:18). *Listen to this;*
{The Savior does not use oinos, the usual word for wine, but adopts the phrase "genneematos tees ampelou," "this fruit of the vine." Was it because oinos was a generic word, including the juice of the grape in all its stages, that He chose a more specific phrase? Was it because He had previously selected the vine as the illustration of Himself as the true vine, and His disciples as the fruit-bearing branches, and the juice as "the pure blood of the grape"? There is abundance of evidence that the ancients mixed their wines with water; not because they were so strong, with alcohol, as to require dilution, but because, being rich syrups, they needed water to prepare them for drinking. (The Laws of Fermentation by William Patton).}
Mixing water with wine, historically, was to reconstitute the grape syrup into a drinkable beverage. Again, when we look

to the New Testament, There are two main Greek words translated "wine." The first (oinos) is the usual word for intoxicating wine. The other (gleukos) is a word found only one time (Acts 2:13) and referred to fresh-squeezed juice. It was sometimes called "new wine." At His last passover supper, the preparer may have mixed water with grape syrup, which would constitute, 'fruit of the vine,' However the Bible is silent about where, when, and how the 'fruit of the vine' was prepared for the last passover attended by Christ. Whatever the reason, Jesus did not even allude to "wine," fermented or not! He simply made mention of "the fruit of the vine." Now listen to this; **{**Then we come to the actual consumption of this communion wine by Christ and the disciples. Could Christ actually have consumed alcoholic wine? The clear and compelling scriptural testimony is no. For again we have to consider the words of Solomon telling us…

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. Proverbs 31:4-5. Now Christ was a king. Can any Christian dispute this? He is not just any king but he is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and Prince of the Kings of the earth. And as a king he was forbidden to partake of alcoholic wine. Are we to believe that Christ sinned as he was preparing to go to the cross? Are we to believe, that as he was observing the Passover, which, typified him as the sinless, spotless, Lamb of God, he was actually transgressing the commandments with respect to alcoholic wine? In a few hours Christ would be interrogated at his trials before the Sanhedrin, Herod, and Pilate. There he confessed that he was a king (from **The Fruit of the Vine CHAPTER 7)**.**}**

In the throes of His feverish last hours, Christ complained of being thirsty. The scripture prediction that was fulfilled by this is in Psalm 69:21. When Jesus expressed His wants by

stating the condition of thirst, someone dipped a sponge in vinegar (sour wine) and placed it upon hyssop so as to reach it up to the parched lips of the dying Saviour. It was done merely to quench His thirst. However this also fulfilled the prophecy that He would not drink of the 'fruit of the vine' again until He drank it new in His Kingdom. Sour wine does not qualify as new wine, nor was it a new day in His Kingdom. Also the 'fruit of the vine' contains a different quality than intoxicating wine. The quality that the 'fruit of the vine' contains is a blessing, turn to;

Isaiah 65:8-9 (8) Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.

(9) And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.

It should be noted that, the juice of the grape is called wine even before it is extracted from the fruit, which disproves the theory that the word 'wine' always means the fermented juice of grapes. It appears someone was asleep when developing this theory. And there is no command, inference or example, Biblically, that the blessing is in a fermented state. Not only is the communion in contention, another vital doctrine is also. Turn with me to;

Matthew 28:16-20 (16) Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17) And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

(18) And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

(19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

(20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the

end of the world.
Mark 16:15-16 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.
(16) He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.
Jesus not only has authority to set the standards to be saved, He has power to enforce those standards. He will judge, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting damnation.
For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad (2Corinthians 5:10).
Now the devil is a noteworthy adversary, however he can be defeated by faith. But what is faith? Faith in Christ is the effect of belief, and baptism is the effect of that faith; listen, only those who have first believed the testimony of God, and by faith repented of their sins, and by faith confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and by faith are baptized into His death for remission of sins, have the full and explicit testimony of pardon. This is the gospel. The gospel invitation is open and You have a choice, disobey and be lost or obey and be saved. Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I **sleep the sleep of death**; (Psalm 13:3). *We solicit prayer requests also, but not a sinners prayer requesting salvation, because such cannot take the place of* He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, come and make your desire known as we gently persuade with song.*

This message approved by
Jack Warford
a minister for Christ

The Fruit of the Vine Sample Chapter

CHAPTER 7

COMMUNION WINE

One of the key issues with respect to the question of temperance is the issue of communion wine. All acknowledge that wine was used at the Last Supper. The question that is in dispute is, "What kind of wine was it?". Was it new wine or was it fermented wine? The text does not explicitly tell us. As we have noted the word "oinos" can mean either kind of wine, but the word "wine" (oinos) does not even appear in any of the accounts of the Last Supper. For these reasons, we need all the more to carefully study the context to determine what kind of wine was used. First of all, we need to note that the Lord's Supper was instituted at a time when Christ and his disciples were observing the Passover. This will provide us with valuable information as to the nature of the wine that was used. What they were actually observing was the Feast of the Passover, which lasted for seven days. The basic law of this feast, also called in Scripture the Feast of Unleavened Bread*, is found in Exodus 12. The relevant portion for our purposes is quoted below.

Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel…Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread. Exodus 12:15,19-20

A fundamental requirement of this feast was that there should be no leaven in the home at all. The emphasis was on the absence of leavened bread. This is undoubtedly because leavened bread was the chief, and perhaps the only, source of leaven in a typical Israelite's home. If so, this becomes an additional argument that alcoholic wine was not in normal use among godly Israelites. It could also be that, as slaves in Egypt, they were fed a diet that did not include any wine. Leavened bread would then have been the only source of leaven that they had to concern themselves with. At any rate the faithful observance of the festival requires the removal of all leaven or yeast from the home. And the two chief sources of leaven, in fact the only sources of leaven that I can think of, are the leaven in leavened bread and in fermented wine. This should be obvious to all, but inexplicably, that has not been the case.

It is agreed to, almost universally, that unleavened bread was used at the Passover. Therefore it is agreed to by all that unleavened bread was used by Christ and his disciples at the Last Supper. Yet strangely enough the same argument has not been applied to the wine. If no yeast was allowed to even be in the house, how could fermented beverages be allowed? It is yeast that causes new wine to ferment into alcoholic wine. But yeast was forbidden to even be in the house! One could argue that the yeast was dead and therefore,

in a sense, no yeast was in the wine. However, this is untrue and does not meet the clear scriptural requirements. There was yeast in leavened bread and so it is forbidden. The yeast is put into the dough and causes it to rise. When it is risen sufficiently, it is baked. The baking process kills the yeast. But the dead yeast remains in the bread and therefore the bread is forbidden, not only to be eaten, but its very presence in the house is unlawful during the entire feast of the Passover. Now when the process of fermentation is complete, there is yeast in the wine. If the wine has reached the maximum concentration of alcohol and the resulting toxicity has killed the yeast, then the dead yeast remains in the wine. Then, like the leavened bread, it is excluded by the law of the Passover. If the process of fermentation has gone to completion another way, that is, the sugar has been depleted before a lethal concentration of alcohol has killed the yeast, then the wine continues to contain living yeast. Either way, the wine is excluded from use during the Passover and its presence in the house is illegal! Are we to believe that Christ and his disciples, preparing to observe the Passover, broke the most fundamental law of this feast? Are we to believe that on the eve of the atonement they sinned and violated the requirements of this festival? We can come to no other conclusion than that, by the fundamental law of the Passover, the wine used at the Last Supper was new wine, was non-fermented, and therefore contained no yeast.

We could rest our case right here and be confident of our position, but there is much more that can be said to clearly, convincingly, and in our opinion overwhelmingly prove that new wine was what Christ used at the Last Supper. Next we read that Christ took the cup and blessed it. Did Christ bless that which he was forbidden to even look at with desire? Solomon instructs us… 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. Proverbs 23:31-32

How could something that we are forbidden to even observe with desire become a necessary ingredient in one of the church's sacraments, a sacrament that we are commanded to perform? We are to look forward to the observance of the Lord's Supper. We are to desire the spiritual blessings that accompany the worthy partaking of the bread and the wine. How can we do that if we are simultaneously forbidden to desire the very elements of the sacrament? This is a contradiction that the proponents of alcoholic communion wine will have to resolve.

Then we come to the actual consumption of this communion wine by Christ and the disciples. Could Christ actually have consumed alcoholic wine? The clear and compelling scriptural testimony is no. For again we have to consider the words of Solomon telling us…

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. Proverbs 31:4-5

Now Christ was a king. Can any Christian dispute this? He is not just any king but he is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and Prince of the Kings of the earth. And as a king he was forbidden to partake of alcoholic wine. Are we to believe that Christ sinned as he was preparing to go to the cross? Are we to believe, that as he was observing the Passover, which, typified him as the sinless, spotless, Lamb of God, he was actually transgressing the commandments with respect to alcoholic wine? In a few hours Christ would be interrogated at his trials before the Sanhedrin, Herod, and Pilate. There he confessed that he was a king.

And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. Matthew 27:11

The implication of Christ's response is clearer in more modern translations.

Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus said to him, "It is as you say." Matthew 27:11 (NKJV)

Christ affirms here that he was a king. Accordingly Pilate had a superscription placed on the cross identifying him as the King of Israel. The Pharisees sought to change this, but Pilate refused.

And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written. John 19:19-22

Pilate's legal testimony to the truth was always providentially preserved as part of the historic record. His frequent testimonies to Christ's innocence, as well as his testimony that Jesus of Nazareth was the King of the Jews, is faithfully recorded in the Scriptures. As Nathaniel confessed when he first met the omniscient Christ…

Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. John 1:49

But the passage in Proverbs clearly states that Christ, as a king, was forbidden to partake of alcoholic wine!

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. Proverbs 31:4-5

And if Christ did not violate this commandment, then we know that the wine used at the Last Supper was not alcoholic wine. Now, some may say that Christ himself did not partake of the Lord's Supper. The accounts do suggest that Christ blessed the elements and then gave them to his disciples to eat and to drink. In fact, Christ specifically stated of the wine as he distributed the cup, that they were to drink all of it, and that he would not drink of it until the kingdom of God should come. However this does not weaken our argument at

all. First of all, Christ instituted the Lord's Supper at the end of their meal. All agree that he used the common elements of their meal to institute this sacrament of the New Covenant. Now Christ had partaken of the this meal with his disciples. He himself testifies to this saying…

With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. Luke 22:15-16

This is a very explicit statement. Jesus strongly emphasized his purpose to partake of this meal, as the Greek literally says "with desire I have desired to eat this Passover." And when is this to take place? It is before he suffers. Christ then adds that this will be his last Passover with his disciples and that he will not partake of it again until it is all fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. Similarly Paul says…

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 1 Corinthians 11:25

Paul is saying that when Christ had personally partaken of the Passover meal, then he took the cup and instituted the sacrament. Therefore, whatever elements were used in the Lord's Supper, they were the same as were consumed by Christ and his disciples in the Last Supper, their last Passover meal in this world. And we know that Christ, as the true King of Israel, did not drink any alcoholic wine. Therefore we are certain that the wine used at the Last Supper was new wine, the fresh blood of the grape, representing his blood, about to be shed as an atonement for sin.

This interpretation is confirmed by three facts. First Christ refers to the communion wine as the fruit of the wine.

But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. Matthew 26:29

Now, the clear connotation of this reference is that it is new wine, grape juice freshly expressed from the fruit of the vine. It is somewhat of a stretch to interpret this as a manufactured product produced many months after the grapes have ceased to exist. Secondly, this very communion wine, that he is offering to his disciples, is the very same wine that he will drink with them again in the Kingdom of God. At that time he will have entered into his kingdom. At that time he will be more a king then ever before. Who will believe that he will then partake of a wine forbidden to kings? And finally Christ confirms this interpretation by his actions on the cross. On the cross he refused to accept any alcoholic wine.

And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not. Mark 15:22-23

What Christ was refusing here was mixed wine. This consists of alcoholic wine with additional drugs and spices mixed in to enhance and compound its intoxicating effects. This particular wine was mingled with myrrh. Mixed

wine, as defined above, is always condemned in the Scriptures. The intended use of this mixture was to act as a narcotic or an anesthetic. As such, this was an act of mercy by the Roman soldiers, because they knew the terrible suffering that they were about to inflict on those to be crucified. Christ however refused it. Why did he do so? There are two obvious reasons. One of these has already been alluded to, that as a king such wine was specifically forbidden to him. Secondly, he came to suffer and to pay the full penalty for all the sins of his people. He would drink to the full, to the very dregs, the bitter cup of suffering that the Father was pouring out for him. The use of this wine might possibly have been allowed under the medicinal use of wine as mentioned in the Proverbs.

Give strong drink (shekar) to him who is perishing, And wine (yayin) to those who are bitter of heart. Proverbs 31:6

In spite of this, Christ was determined to make a full atonement of our sins and to pay the price for all of our transgressions. Therefore he refused any mitigation of his suffering. He refused the drugged alcoholic wine. But he accepted wine vinegar, which is non-alcoholic.

After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. John 19:28-30

Christ was a king. He never drank any alcoholic wine. He could not have taken any alcoholic wine at the Last Supper. There could not even have been any alcoholic wine in the house during the feast of the Passover. Therefore Christ and his disciples used non-alcoholic wine at the institution of the Lord's Supper. Therefore communion wine by precedent and by the example of our Lord ought to be non-alcoholic wine.

At the Last Supper Christ taught, "I am the true vine" (John 15:1). This completes the imagery of the Lord's Supper. We drink of the fruit of the vine, the blood of the grape, representing the blood of Jesus Christ shed for a complete remission of all our sins. The drinking of new wine, of fresh grape juice, perfectly fits these analogies. As soon as we begin to speak of fermented wine, the perfect parallels disappear and the imagery becomes corrupted. Logically and typically, we ought to use new wine as a symbol of the atoning blood of our Lord. And furthermore, we might ask, how can something that has become corrupted with a toxic chemical be the symbol for a life-giving nourishing drink representing the atoning blood of Jesus Christ? How can something that the Apostle Paul under inspiration states contains the principle of debauchery be used to represent the blood of our sinless Lord, the blood of the spotless Lamb of God? Again, these are questions that demand answers, answers that the proponents of alcoholic communion wine are obliged to give us, if they can.

It is interesting that the New Testament accounts of the Last Supper nowhere

use the word “oinos.” The authors deliberately avoided the use of the only word in the New Testament that can mean alcoholic wine.*** The wine is never directly mentioned and the only references made are to the cup. The only exception to this occurs when direct reference is made to the fruit of the vine. This is significant. It is therefore impossible to prove by direct testimony of the Scriptures that fermented wine was used at the Last Supper. If, as many insist, that the Scriptures require the use of fermented wine for the observance of the Lord’s Supper, the use of the word “oinos” would have cleared the way for that view. It would of course not have established that view, but it would at least have opened the door to that possibility. The total silence of the Scriptures with respect to the use of the only word that can possibly mean alcoholic wine leaves its proponents with a heavy burden of proof. It leaves them with only the possibility of a circumstantial case. And, as we have seen, all the circumstances are actually against their view. This leads us to the certain conclusion that the wine used at the Last Supper was unfermented wine. And if that is the case, that is to be our example. Let us go and do likewise.

* The word “Bread” is not in the original Greek. The texts that speak of the “Feast of Unleavened Bread” actually only say the “Feast of Unleavened.” This is unfortunate because it creates the false assumption that the only leaven that the Jews were concerned about was in the bread. Actually all leaven was forbidden in this feast. The Purified Translation of the New Testament (L. L. Reynolds Foundation, 702 Custis Road, Glenside, PA 19038) therefore more accurately translates this phrase as the “Feast of Unleavened Things.”

**The phrase “moveth itself aright” probably has reference to the effervescence of fermentation, as can be observed in the bubbly, sparkling nature of such alcoholic beverages as champagne. This is another confirmation that the text is definitely referring to alcoholic wine.

*** That is alcoholic wine made from grapes. The only exception to this is the transliteration into Greek of the Hebrew word shekar in Luke 1:15.

The Council of Trent
The Twenty-Second Session
The canons and decrees of the sacred
and oecumenical Council of Trent,
Ed. and trans. J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848), 152-70.
Hanover Historical Texts Project
Scanned by Hanover College students in 1995.
The page numbers of Waterworth's translation appear in brackets.
[Page 152]
SESSION THE TWENTY-SECOND,
Being the sixth under the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius IV., celebrated on the seventeenth day of September, MDLXII.
CHAPTER II.
That the Sacrifice of the Mass is propitiatory both for the living and the dead.
CHAPTER VII.
On the water that is to be mixed with the wine to be offered in the chalice.
The holy Synod notices, in the next place, that it has been enjoined by the Church on priests, to mix water with the wine that is to be offered in the chalice; as well because it is believed that Christ the Lord did this, as also because from His side there came out blood and water; the memory of which mystery is renewed by this commixture; and, whereas in the apocalypse of blessed John, the peoples are called waters, the union of that faithful people with Christ their head is hereby represented.
ON THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.
CANON I.--If any one saith, that in the mass a true and proper sacriflce is not offered to God; or, that to be offered is nothing else but that Christ is given us to eat; let him be anathema.
CANON II.--If any one saith, that by those words, Do this for the commemoration of me (Luke xxii. 19), Christ did not institute the apostles priests; or, did not ordain that they, and other priests should offer His own body and blood; let him be anathema.
CANON III.--If any one saith, that the sacrifice of the mass is only a sacrifice of praise and of thanksgiving; or, that it is a [Page 159] bare commemoration of the sacrifice consummated on the cross, but not a propitiatory sacrifice; or, that it profits him only who receives; and that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead for sins, pains, satisfactions, and other necessities; let him be anathema.
CANON IV.--If any one saith, that, by the sacrifice of the mass, a blasphemy is cast upon the most holy sacrifice of Christ consummated on the cross; or, that it is thereby derogated from; let him be anathema.
CANON V.--If any one saith, that it is an imposture to celebrate masses in honour of the saints, and for obtaining their intercession with God, as the Church intends; let him be anathema.
CANON VI.--If any one saith, that the canon of the mass contains errors, and is

therefore to be abrogated; let him be anathema.
CANON VII.--If any one saith, that the ceremonies, vestments, and outward signs, which the Catholic Church makes use of in the celebration of masses, are incentives to impiety, rather than offices of piety; let him be anathema.
CANON VIII.--If any one saith, that masses, wherein the priest alone communicates sacramentally, are unlawful, and are, therefore, to be abrogated; let him be anathema.
CANON IX.--If any one saith, that the rite of the Roman Church, according to which a part of the canon and the words of consecration are pronounced in a low tone, is to be condemned; or, that the mass ought to be celebrated in the vulgar tongue only; or, that water ought not to be mixed with the wine that is to be offered in the chalice, for that it is contrary to the institution of Christ; let him be anathema.

What Is The "Fruit of the Vine?"

by Robin W. Haley

The question in our title does not have reference to “what is meant by” or “what does the fruit of the vine symbolize.” We will assume that every Christian who may read this tract will understand the institution and observance of the Lord's Supper upon the first day of every week. The question of our study centers upon the liquid that is imbibed when we partake of “the cup which we bless” (and drink, 1 Corinthians 10:16). Our interest comes down to this question: does it really matter what we drink when we drink the cup of the Lord? By this we mean, should the “fruit of the vine” be juice or alcoholic wine?

Brethren, let us answer this question forthrightly and follow the answer with our reasons for so concluding. We ought not to use fermented, alcoholic wine as the fruit of the vine in the Lord's Supper. There is something incongruous in remembering the blood that was shed to purchase us for God (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18,19) by using that which the Bible teaches is sinful to drink even “socially.”

Now, we do not have the space to go into all the questions regarding the use of beverage alcohol, but suffice it to say just here that those who contend for it (and especially its use on the Lord's table) can make no sound argument for it from Scripture. Thus, we are convinced that not only is its use not expedient, it is not authorized in any fashion.

Antitype of Passover

Let us here know and understand that, as the Passover was a type of the sacrifice of Christ, there was absolutely no wine associated with its institution or observance until many, many centuries after this feast was commanded by God. An interesting reference to Christ as our Passover is made in First Corinthians five. The context deals with church discipline and the matter of a brother who was committing the grossest of fornication (see verse 1). Paul's prescription was for the church to remove that sinning brother, thus remove that “leaven.” His “leaven” would be a bad influence upon the Lord's people. Why remove it? So that they could be a “new (clean) lump.” We as Christians are to be “unleavened” (free from outside influences and impurities). Therefore, leaven is seen as unwanted pollutants. Why would God forbid a leavening influence in the church (the Body of Christ) and yet permit it in the bread (the body of Christ) or the fruit of the vine (the blood of Christ) as we “keep the feast” in the unleavened manner of sincerity and truth (verse 8)? Since the Jews today use wine in their “Passover” feast, we must not conclude that we may do so in “our Passover” remembrance of Christ. Such a conclusion is without any foundation whatsoever.

“Wine” Never Used

Again, when we look to the New Testament, the advocates for fermented wine on the Lord's table find no solace. There are two main Greek words translated “wine.” The first (oinos) is the usual word for intoxicating wine. The other

(gleukos) is a word found only one time (Acts 2:13) and referred to fresh-squeezed juice. It was sometimes called "new wine." To say that this must have been an intoxicant from Acts 2:13 misses the point of why the accusation was hurled at the apostles. Notice what was going on: "But others MOCKING said, They are filled with new wine (gleukos)" (Acts 2:13). The behavior of the apostles was so strikingly different from any ordinary drunkenness precipitated the crowd in saying they were filled with "new wine," something impossible upon which to become drunk.

"Offspring" of the Vine

Perhaps the most convincing evidence is our Lord's "total abstinence" (so to speak) in using any words that may become misconstrued in meaning with reference to His memorial supper. He did not even allude to "wine," fermented or not! He simply made mention of "the fruit of the vine." It is more than interesting to note that the word He used for "fruit" is not the ordinary word that refers to produce. Rather, He used a word also translated "offspring," as was used when He rebuked the unbelieving people of His day saying, "Ye OFFSPRING of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. (Matthew 12:34). And again, "Ye serpents, ye OFFSPRING of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell?" (Matthew 23:33). This word is related to "that which is generated or begotten." The only thing from a vine that is generated or begotten is its berry or the juice from its berry—not alcohol. That is something that is produced as a by-product through a process.

Therefore we conclude that the use of fermented, intoxicating wine on the Lord's table is not authorized and is therefore sinful for these reasons: there is no precedence for its use in the Old Testament; neither word for "wine" in the New Testament is associated with the Lord's Supper; and the "fruit" of the vine is specifically that which is generated on the vine (the berry), not alcohol. Brethren, let us not pollute the Supper with any form of leaven (or yeast) in the bread which we eat nor in the juice which we drink.

Q&A home

Communion chalice - spread of infection?

What illnesses can be transmitted by sharing the communion cup at communion services?

The health risks of drinking from a shared communion chalice are negligible. The number of bacteria on a person's lips is small and it has been estimated that the number of organisms that are deposited on the rim of the shared chalice is less than one hundred. Even if a person did acquire some bacteria from the chalice it is likely that most of the bacteria would be harmless commensals rather than pathogens or disease causing bacteria. Infectious agents also need to be present in large amounts in order to infect a person. For example, if a person had a heavily infected cold sore on the lip it is likely that the person would be shedding large amounts of virus through the cold sore, which would raise the possibility that such infection could be transmitted to the lips of the next person using the chalice. However, in that scenario most reasonable people with cold sores would decline to use the shared chalice much as they would avoid exposing others to risk by kissing. If we take the example of a more serious infection such as TB it would be necessary for the bacteria to be present in large quantities on the infected person's lips. It is also important to emphasise that it is not common to acquire that infection by swallowing. TB is usually inhaled and in order to acquire it by ingestion large amounts of the TB bacillus would have to be ingested over a long period of time. It is also worth noting that organisms that infect through the mouth are usually not present on the lips. In summary the communion chalice would not be regarded as a significant vector in the transmission of infection.

Q&A home

The Elephant's Child
Germs and The Common Cup.
Artistic_2404
The lip of our church's lovely silver chalice (pictured left) with the gold lining is not touched by people's hands.
The edges of your plastic individual cups were touched by an altar guild member, when she inserted them into the trays.
Then, your cup was touched by you, when you removed it from the tray.
Did you wash your hands after you shook hands with the greeter before church? Does your congregation "share the peace" during the service? How clean are YOUR hands?
I've seen our communion assistants grabbing the cups by the edges and rearranging them in the tray, too.
Did the communion assistant wash his hands before serving? Are you sure? The transmission of germs is going to be a lot less successful on that dry wafer of the Host than it will be on a non-porous plastic cup, which may have oils from the altar guild lady's fingers on it.
I think I'll stick with the chalice, for a whole HOST of reasons, of which GERMS are only one.
Oct 14, 2009 2:50:51 PM | Faith

Rev. 01162018
Study Aids; Bible Commentary by E.M. Zerr
This message presented to; BaronOk-Feb2010/OkcOk-March2010/ PortOrchardWa-May2011/Pine Mt.Ar-July 2011/ BrokenBowOk-Nov2015/PineMtAr-Nov2015/WestvilleOk-Dec2015/