

Texas Baptist Forum

January 19, 2007

Posted: 1/19/07

Texas Baptist Forum

Drink to that?

The Baptist church has a dilemma—to condone or condemn the drinking of alcohol ([Jan. 8](#)). Has our lust for building bigger churches caused our pulpits to be silent on this issue?

<-- • [Jump to online-only letters below](#)

Letters are welcomed. Send them to marvknox@baptiststandard.com; 250 words maximum.

Out ((Loud))

“The war in Iraq was unjust; to continue it now is criminal. There is no winning in Iraq. This was a war that should have never been fought—or won. It can’t be won, and the truth is that there are no good solutions now—that’s how unjust wars often turn out.”

Jim Wallis

Sojourners e-mail newsletter

“The emerging Christian generation is more like the world than their predecessors. I think that shows the aggressive nature of culture. ... We do not realize how aggressive and corrosive culture is in the lives of our kids.”

Gregory Kouckl

President of Stand to Reason in Signal Hill, Calif., commenting on research that shows young adults hold much more liberal views on extramarital sex, pornography, homosexuality and sexual fantasies than their elders (ABP)

“The whole ‘Jesus is my boyfriend’ thing is gross. Jesus is not your boyfriend. I mean, he is the lover of your soul, but he’s not going to take you out on a date on a Friday night.”

Connally Gilliam

Author of *Revelations of a Single Woman: Loving the Life I Didn’t Expect* (The Washington Times/RNS)

In 1884, Leo Tolstoy wrote, “Then as now, it was and is quite impossible to judge by a man’s life and conduct whether he is a believer or not.” The overwhelming obstacle why people refuse to believe in Christ is not Christ himself but rather those who call themselves Christians. We must set ourselves apart, by word and deed, from worldly ways. Is having a glass of wine more important than the risk of hindering a believer or nonbeliever?

We, as a church, must choose to embrace or reject drinking. If we choose to condone it, let’s condone it publicly by putting a frozen margarita machine in our family centers. If we choose to shun drinking, let’s be bold in our belief.

Try to explain to a teenager that although our churches preach against the evils of strong drink, we can still enjoy an occasional sip. Hopefully, our children will not generalize this concept to other matters of faith and Christian living. We teach honesty—but what’s the harm in a white lie? We teach that the marriage bed should not be defiled—but what’s the harm in an occasion fling on Saturday night?

Let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay.

James Blakely

Garland

I don’t drink. The smell of beer turns me off. The taste of wine is acidic. Other spirits are not known to me.

The article dealing with alcohol was a spirited disgorgement of Baptist dogma. Having been a Baptist for 74 years, I have heard most of the arguments and am still amazed at the lengths some Baptists will go in striving to make the case for abstinence.

The late W.A. Criswell, comparing Daniel's alleged refusal to drink the king's wine to some biblical defilement of the body gives new meaning to "maybe." His exceptional argument that Jesus made a "special" wine at Cana and inferred that it was a "celestial" drink that all Christians will share in glory gives new meaning to "reaching." One must wonder what Jesus drank as a boy and young man in Joseph's home, or anywhere else, when he did not make the celestial elixir. Some fundamental Baptists cannot grasp the idea that the culture in Israel included drinking wine with meals and supposedly at other times during the day.

The body defilement argument falls upon fallow ground when we see the fundamentalist's penchant for food that raises the body weight well beyond accepted medical standards. When the stomach is stretched beyond comprehension, that surely must be defilement, but the answer to criticism of that fact normally reveals the request for another piece of pie.

I detest the drunkard who drinks too much. I detest the glutton who eats too much. Defilement can be excess.

Edward Clark

Danville, Ky.

Thanks to my "uptight" Baptist upbringing, I was sheltered from mean, abusive drunken behavior. I count that as both a blessing and a challenge to shun legalism and instead live an abundant life.

Ephesians 5:18—"Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit"—issues instructions that may not be easy to follow. However, we as believers should find it irresistible to experience what God has for us.

LeAnne Chelf

Rockdale

Jesus & low prices

Does Robert Parham really believe Jesus would be more concerned about children's health care than low prices for all? ([Jan. 8](#)) Or would Jesus call for socialized medicine so that children's health care would not be an issue? Or would he raise the minimum wage so that fewer workers would receive higher wages, in addition to children's medicine? Or would he mandate a state tax on the wealthy to pay for the children of the low-wage earners who have no medical insurance?

Where does he get such incredible insight into the mind of God?

Bob Stanford

Austin

What do you think? The Baptist Standard values letters to the editor. Send letters to Editor Marv Knox by mail: P.O. Box 660267, Dallas 75266-0267; or by e-mail: marvknox@baptiststandard.com. Letters are limited to 250 words.