

Proverbs 23:1-35

“When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what *is* before thee: 2 and put a knife to thy throat, if thou *be* a man given to appetite. 3 Be not desirous of his dainties: for they *are* deceitful meat. 4 Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. 5 Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for *riches* certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven. 6 Eat thou not the bread of *him that hath* an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: 7 for as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee. 8 The morsel *which* thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words. 9 Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words. 10 Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: 11 for their redeemer *is* mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee. 12 Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge. 13 Withhold not correction from the child: for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. 14 Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell. 15 My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine. 16 Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things. 17 Let not thine heart envy sinners: but *be thou* in the fear of the LORD all the day long. 18 For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off. 19 Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way. 20 Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: 21 for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe *a man* with rags. 22 Harken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old. 23 Buy the truth, and sell it not; *also* wisdom, and instruction, and understanding. 24 The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise *child* shall have joy of him. 25 Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice. 26 My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways. 27 For a whore *is* a deep ditch; and a strange woman *is* a narrow pit. 28 She also lieth in wait as *for* a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men. 29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath

contentions? who hath babbling? who hath redness of eyes?
30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixt wine. 31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright. 32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. 33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. 34 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. 35 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.*”

Introduction: Beware Of Eating With Rulers, Politicians

“Chapter 23, these sayings, “When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee:” “a ruler” that means royalty... “and put a knife to thy throat, if thou *be* a man given to appetite.” (verses 1-2) that’s why I don’t eat with rulers [laughter], because I like to eat, I don’t want to eat with a knife to my throat. “Be not desirous of his dainties:” delicacies “for they *are* deceitful meat.” (verse 3) so, the idea is, you sit down to eat with a ruler, with a king, potentate, a president, congressman, senators, consider what’s in front of you, because chances are, we would call this ‘*You’re being wined and dined.*’ And he’s not really there to bless you or saying bona petite for a different reason. He’s not there to demonstrate his culinary skills. If you’re sitting down with a ruler, usually there’s a reason that’s happening. And he says ‘*and if you’re a man or woman given to appetite, he’s sucking you right in then, put a knife to your throat,*’ the idea is, ‘*don’t be desirous of his delicacies, they are deceitful meat, because there’s more than what the eye beholds.*’ So just, if President Obama invites you over for dinner, ah, you have to sit there and think ‘*Why am I here? Why am I here, he’s putting this in front of me?*’ If you just go there and all you think ‘*I can have steak!*’ and you’re stuffing yourself, it’ll put a knife to your throat, it’s just deceitful meat...

‘Don’t Make Seeking Wealth Your Overriding Motive In Life’

“Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches

certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.” (verses 4-5) so, the warning, it doesn't say *'Don't be wealthy,'* it doesn't say *'Don't work hard,'* it just told us a man who is skillful and diligent in the things God gives him, moves forward. This says, it's important to notice, ***'Don't labour to be rich,'*** it's talking about motive, ***'Don't make the motive of your life, you know, you're working seven days a week, you get home once every three years to see your wife and kids, kid comes running up and says 'Daddy!' and you say 'What's your name again? Don't live that way.'*** There's labour in life, there's labour in life, it's just the way it is, just to be responsible, there's labour in life when you have higher values and you love people and the things that are around you. But if the only thing you labour for is to be rich, that's the warning here, don't let that be, ***"Labour not to be rich: cease" "that's not God's wisdom, that's your own wisdom."*** Ah, we're told this in ***Timothy 'They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition, for the love of money (not money), the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, pierced themselves through with many sorrows.'*** So this is the idea here, ***'labour not to be rich, that's worldly wisdom, cease from your own wisdom.'*** ***"Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven."*** (verse 5) there's an interesting play on words here, you see where it says ***'for riches certainly make themselves wings and they fly away as an eagle towards heaven'?*** where it says in verse 5, ***"Wilt thou set"*** that word "set" is the same Hebrew word as the word "fly" ***"they will fly away as an eagle toward heaven"*** so what it says is ***'Don't let your eyes fly to, don't let your eyes fly upon that which is not.'*** He said ***'Don't labour to be rich,'*** then he says, ***'the way man is, you let your eyes fly upon that which is not, 'This is what I want, this is what I'm gonna get,' don't let your eyes fly there,' "for riches"*** this is what he's talking about, over in verse 4, ***"certainly make themselves wings;"*** your eyes are flying there, but what you're trying to get, they have their own wings, they fly away as an eagle towards heaven. Money does that, doesn't it? Anybody notice their money flying away this week [am typing this five days from Christmas, a lot of money with wings on it this week]. Every time you go to the gas pump, \$2.79, \$2.99,

\$3.10, your money is flying away. Again, you should all remember our little quip *“Money talks, mine does, it says ‘Good-bye!’* that’s the idea here.

‘Don’t Eat The Food Of The Stingy’

“Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:” (verse 6) I kind of like this, this is God saying, *‘these are my words, listen to what I’m saying,’* **“Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:”** it’s not talking about eating with Marty Feldman, “evil eye” the word is “stingy” there, “miserly.” **‘Don’t eat the food of the guy that’s got a stingy eye, don’t desire his delicacies, his dainty meats,’** here’s the reason, **“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:”** (verse 7a) he may be putting food in front of you, the stingy guy, but that’s not really who you’re dealing with, it says **‘as he thinks in his heart, that’s who he really is.’** **“Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.”** (verse 7b) he’s saying in his heart, *‘I can’t believe you’re eating another, I can’t believe your taking a second cup,’* he’s saying one thing (*Eat, drink*), he’s doing another, the way he really is, is the way he is in his heart. So, look out, you don’t want to go over to somebody whose a miser, they’re stingy, just let them alone, and have supper. He says **“The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.”** (verse 8) you won’t have any great conversations, because all the time he was thinking *‘He’s asking me for seconds,’* and he says ultimately you’re just going to give it back, obviously there’s only one way for that to happen, he says **‘you’ll vomit it up.’** That’s just good information, an interesting word-picture there, *‘You want your second’s back, here they are, errhhugh!’*

‘Avoid Fools, Don’t Try To Reason With Them’

Verse 9, “Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.” In the Scripture the fool is someone who doesn’t believe in God, someone who can’t receive instruction, sometimes you get you get around a person like that, do yourself a

favour, take a deep breath, be kind, be gracious, but don't try to make a point or win an argument. **“Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.”**

*God Says, ‘You Mess With The Fatherless Or Widow,
Single Mom, You’re Messing With Me.’*

Here we go again, **“Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: for their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.” (verses 10-11)** “landmark” singular here. “the fields of the fatherless” it’s put in a different context, again, **“for”** here’s the reason, **“for their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.” (verse 11)** The fatherless’ redeemer, the orphan’s redeemer, **“their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.” (verse 11b)** So throughout the Old Testament, by the way, the God of Israel, Almighty God, the one true God says **“If you mess with the fatherless, or you mess with a widow, you’re messing with me, because I take their side.”** And here very specifically, this is talking about land and inheritance, which is the way they measured largely their value and wealth in that day. **‘Don’t remove the old landmark, don’t enter into the field of the widow and the fatherless.’** You wouldn’t think about doing this with somebody who was wealthy or had great strength. **‘So, don’t enter into the field of the fatherless, they’re vulnerable is the idea, here’s why, because their redeemer is Mighty, they have a Kinsman Redeemer other than the one you might think.’** They might seem to be alone, **“their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.”** and you don’t want to be on the other end of God Almighty pleading a cause with you. So he says **‘it’ll be good for you if you listen to what I’m saying here.’**

Your Heart And Ears Are Connected

“Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.” (verse 12) He’s going give two things here, your heart and your ears. If your heart is inclined to instruction,

then your ears will be open to words of knowledge, they're connected, you can't separate your ears from your heart. So, **"Apply thine heart unto instruction,"** if you have the kind of heart, you're willing to be taught, you're willing to learn, **"and thine ears to the words of knowledge."** proper way to learn.

Child-Rearing

Verses 13 and 14, important, raising kids, have a home, God says listen to the things I say, I'm writing to you, I want you to understand this is my Word. He says **"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell."** (verses 13-14) Ah, this is pretty far away from Dr. Spock and a lot of the psycho-babble we have today, about raising children, it's God's prescription. *'But that's cruel, that's cruel, God's a merciful God.'* If it was cruel he wouldn't prescribe it. He says in the text, in fact what is cruel is someone who withholds correction, because your going to send that soul to hell [comment: the word of "hell" here is Sheol in Hebrew, means "six feet under, the grave," not ever-burning hellfire.] and that's cruelty. It's never cruelty to paddle your son's or your daughter's behind when they need correcting. You never punch them in the face, it doesn't say beat them with your tongue, never beat them with your foot, or your fist, it says with the rod. You do it alone, you don't humiliate them, you don't do it in front of everyone at the dining room table or something. It is something that should be done, and it's not punitive, it's not punishment, it's discipline, it's chastening, it's correction. It doesn't say *'Every time your kid says something you don't like, take him somewhere in a back room and beat him.'* It doesn't say that. Because, dads, you want that child someday to lift his head and say "Father." And if his only concept of a father is every time you do a stinking little thing he doesn't like, he takes you in the back room and he beats the tar out of you while he's saying *'This hurts me more than it hurts you.'* So, don't abuse that. Instruction certainly should be a conversation, instruction certainly should be making a point, correcting. But you have those kids who need a little help, you just have kids like that [I can think of two of them right now], I had one of those. They all need a little help here and there, but I had one who

needed a little help every day. This is one, when he was a baby, before you can think about spanking your kids, this is a baby, grabbing things, and you say 'No,' and he would look at you and go [laughter], and I'm thinking '*Oh, no, this is the anti-Christ, what's happened to us?*' we had one of those. So, certainly, it's wrong to be a maniac, you don't beat a kid because he's got you frustrated, you come home from work and your wife is yelling at you because of how bad they were, so you're going to beat them because your wife is beating you, it doesn't work that way, that's all wrong. And here's the other thing that's wrong, the other thing that's wrong, is to threaten the child, and say '*This is what's gonna happen if you do this,*' and when it happens not to act on it. Because then they learn, you know, because someday their gonna have to learn there's a God who means what he says, who says if you commit adultery, if you rob the poor, if you do these things, here will be the consequences. But if that child grows along, '*Ya, but when you hear that stuff, but it never happens,*' that's what they learn from a parent, if he just screams at them and yells at them with their tongue, and never exercises the correction that God prescribes, God Almighty who knows the human being, he knows the fallen human nature since Eden, says to parents who have children on loan from him, '***My prescription is correction is necessary, it's necessary at two, it's necessary at five, it's necessary at 20, it's necessary at 40, correction is necessary for the rest of your life, or you never grow, you never learn.***' '***Foolishness, he tells us, is bound in the heart of a child, and the rod of correction will drive that far away.***' Here, he says, and there are parents that always think they're smarter than God, you're not. It says "**Withhold not correction from the child.**" The emphasis is, ***withhold not***, because that's what parents tend to do. "**Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.**" (verses 13-14)

*"For Surely There Is An End": And An Afterward Behind
The End'*

"My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine." (verse 15) now that was talking to the parent, here's the Parent talking to the child, "**My son, if thine heart be wise, my**

heart shall rejoice, even mine.” (verse 15) evidently this is a young man who grew up under the instruction of verses 13 and 14. **‘If your heart is wise, my heart shall rejoice,’ “Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things.” (verse 16)** That’s instruction, correction. **“Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.” (verse 17)** now to the son and the daughter again. **‘Don’t be jealous, don’t come home and tell me ‘Well they do it, everybody does it,’** because everybody ain’t going to heaven [or into the Kingdom of God], only somebodies are going to heaven, not everybody. **‘Don’t let your heart be envious or jealous over sinners, but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.’** here’s the reason, **“For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.” (verse 18)** “Surely there is an end,” now it’s interesting, some translations try to put this in the context of *‘surely there’s a reward,’* well there is, relative to the word “expectation.” The Hebrew indicates here, it isn’t just that there’s an end, you know, you take your last breath and that’s all there is, and there ain’t no more. The sense of it is, **‘there is an afterward behind the end.’** Certainly there’s an end of life, but there’s an afterwards behind that. That’s what the Hebrew intimates [see

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/corinthians/cor15-16.htm>].

Here’s why, **‘Listen my son to what’s right, I’ll rejoice when I know you’re doing what’s right, I’ll rejoice when I hear your lips speaking right things, I did all the paddling, all the other stuff, I’ll rejoice, don’t let your heart be envious of sinners, don’t do that, but be in the fear of the LORD, live your life that way,’ “For surely there is an afterwards behind the end.” (verse 18a)** There is a last breath for all of us, there’s an end for all of us, **“and thine expectation”** the one whose wise and obedient **“shall not be cut off.” (verse 18b)** That’s a good bumper-sticker, by the way, **“thine expectation shall not be cut off.”** And if you don’t like “thine” on your bumper-sticker, you can put “your expectation will not be cut off.” But for believers, think about what our expectation is. My expectation is not to retire at 70, I’m moving my retirement age back and back, and play golf in Florida for ten years and drop dead on the golf course. That’s not my expectation. My expectation is to hear the Trumpet blow, and blast off outa here, and in a twinkling of an eye put on a 30-year-old body again that’s glorious, and stand before the King of kings and Lord of lords and see my dad and my grandpa, a lot of good

friends, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Spurgeon and Whitfield, I've got an expectation that's not gonna be cut off, ***I know there's an afterwards behind the end.*** Some people live like there's just an end. You live like a hog, you die like a dog, let's eat and drink for tomorrow we die. No, there's an end, but there's an afterwards behind the end. That's what to be taken into consideration, that's wisdom, God's saying ***'Listen to what I've written to you.'***

Don't Hang Out With Drunkards And Gluttons

Verses 19-21 say ***"Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way. Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags."*** "winebibbers" that's a nice old word for drunks, winebibbers. And I love this, "among riotous eaters of flesh." Sounds like a horror movie...the idea is, don't hang out with drunkards and gluttons, he says, ***"for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty"*** come to nothing, ***"and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags."*** You know, you wake up everyday with a hangover, you're miserable, and you can wake up with a meat-hangover too, I don't mind that once in awhile, but you don't want to do that all the time. Ah, ***"Hear thou, my son, and be wise,"*** look, ***"guide thine heart in the way."*** (verse 19) We're told earlier, to ***'guard your heart, garrison your heart, keep your heart with all diligence, because from it flow the issues of life.'*** This is what everyone needs to understand. Life doesn't flow forth from intellect, or everybody with a high IQ would be a millionaire, everybody without one would be in poverty, there's too many stupid millionaires, and a lot of smart people that haven't made it. Because we're told to guard our heart, now the Bible talks about the heart, if you'll confess with your mouth, and believe in your heart, that's not talking about the one beating in your chest. [Comment: That passage people quote as a means of accepting Jesus into their lives, there's an important thing to realize, and way too many Evangelicals fail to realize. Many people, in an emotional response repeat those words, but are no more converted or have become believers than a jackal or wolf, because they have not believed in their heart, they've only confessed with their mouths.] It's not talking about the heart, the

kidneys, the belly, it's talking about the deepest part of our being where the spirit sits. What drives life is the heart or desire. Desire is deeper than intellectual process, that's why smart people fall into adultery or lose everything to alcohol or drugs. Because desire is a much more powerful force, the heart always makes a convert of the mind. You long for something, look at Lot's wife, she left Sodom with all the right information, intellectually, but her heart longed for what was behind her, and she perished in it. We can agree to what's true, we can have all the information, but the heart, what sits deep within us, where desire is, desire is just a more powerful force. Here it says though, we can guide our heart, we can want something, desire something, and say *'You know, that's not right, Lord keep me,'* **'Guard your heart with all diligence, because from it flow the issues of life.'** Here it says **"guide thine heart"** he's saying that, *'I'm giving you my words, I've written these things out, you have a manual, a manufacturer's handbook,'* he says, **'my son, be wise, and guide thine heart in the way.'** Look, he doesn't say *'Don't be a drunk or glutton,'* please take note of that, he says **'Don't be among them, don't hang out with them.'** It doesn't just say *'don't be one,'* there's more than that. If you hang around with drunks all the time, you're gonna be one. You know, if you hang around with riotous eaters of flesh, let me know who they are, I'll visit them once in awhile, we like to go to the Brazilian Steak House, but you can only do that twice a year, or you'll die of a coronary. Anybody been to the Brazilian Steak House, anyone? OK, great. For the un-initiated, they give you a card when you get there, and it's green on one side and red on the other. When you want to eat you turn the green side up, and they keep bringing you barbequed steak, and meat as long as the green side is up they just keep bringing it. When you need to breathe you flip it over, it's red, and then they leave you alone, they go by your table. If you loose your mind for a little while again, you flip it back over to green, they start bringing more meat. And for one night you're a riotous eater of flesh. And then you have a meat hangover the next day, it's wonderful. You say grace before you do this, it provides great fellowship. But if you did that every day, you would die. So, it says, don't be among them, the idea is. Don't be among them is the idea, it doesn't just say *'don't be a drunk or a glutton, he says* **'my son, don't be among them.'** Every parent's heart would break if you see your kid going out the door, knowing the guy's going out to get drunk tonight, don't be among them, **"For the**

drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.” they’re going to come to nothing, they’re not going to amount to anything, drowsiness will clothe them with rags.

Respect For Your Parents

Verse 22, “Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.” and the word “hearken” is to bend down to listen [Old English, from the German, “to hear and know” from “hear” to hear, and “ken” to know. German equivalent now, “kennenzulernen” “know-to-learn”], the idea is “incline to obedience.” **“Hearken unto thy father that begat thee,”** and this is interesting, **“and despise not thy mother when she is old.”** Are you guys listening to me? Despise not your mother when she is old. When she was young, she made all the sacrifices, that’s why you’re alive. Now it’s your turn. When you were young, she changed your diapers, she sat up with you when you had a fever, she nursed you, then she fed you, now she’s old, *‘When you going, when you coming back? Eeh, what? Eeh?’* Look, she made all the sacrifices when you were the little one, *‘Eeh, I want,’* you were the exact same way, only you were little. When the tables turn, there’s a father, there’s a mother, the Bible says that you’re to honour your mother and father. Whatever you may think, these are the biological vessels God used, you know, I told my kids *‘I saw your mother, laying on a steel table, screaming, squeezing you out into the world, she’s the vessel God chose to give you life, or you wouldn’t be here complaining without her.’* Good advice. **“Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.” (verse 22)**

“Buy The Truth And Sell It Not”

“By the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.” (verse 23) accumulate truth here, also wisdom and instruction and understanding. **“The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him.” (verse 24)** it’s the joy of a father to

see his children walking in truth, John 3rd tells us. **“Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.”** (verse 25) “she that bare thee” there’s the mom. **‘My son, or my daughter,’** Solomon has the quill to the page, the words that he puts to the page come from the one who says over in **22:20, ‘have not I written to thee,’** so this is God speaking to us, **“My son,” my daughter,’** look, **“give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.”** (verse 26) He asks here, he asks you and I, give me your heart. So we must be able to do that. It puts an onus on us. He’s asking for the deepest part of our being, his request is **‘Give it to me.’** That means it must be in our power. **‘My son, give me thine heart, and allow, let your eyes observe my ways.’** In case you’re wondering how he feels, **“A whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit.”** (verse 27) **‘Give me your heart, and your eyes, let me be put, a whore is a deep ditch, and a foreign woman, a strange woman, normally prostitutes, is a narrow pit, easy to fall into, hard to get out of,’** is the idea here. **“She also lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men.”** (verse 28) **‘the adulteress, the prostitute lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth transgressors among men.’** That type of a person, whether it’s a guy chasing a gal or a gal chasing a guy, sexual interest, they increase the transgressors among men. Transgressing is stepping across the line that God has drawn. He moves on. [about the passage “Buy the truth and sell it not,” the Sabbath-keeping Churches of God, and the Worldwide Church of God they came from believe in applying that Scriptural passage literally by not charging a penny for any of their Gospel material, it’s all free of charge, magazines, booklets, Biblical study aids, it’s all free of charge. I sincerely wish all Christian works of God would live by that unselfish motive.]

Sailor’s Verses About Alcohol

“Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who had babbling? who hast wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?” (verse 29) great quiz, who has all of these things? The answer: **“They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixt wine.”** (verse 30) Look, when we go into this, this has become an issue in the Church today, this is a huge

issue, social drinking. I mean, there used to be discernment that was used. [i.e. believers drank in extreme moderation, as the Bible teaches, or not at all if they couldn't do otherwise.] Again, there isn't anywhere in the Bible that says you're in sin if you go out to dinner with your wife and have a glass of wine, it's sin for me, it doesn't say it's sin for you. If you put money in the offering bucket, that pays my salary, you don't put it in there so I can go out and buy alcohol, that's an abuse of a sacred trust as far as I'm concerned. That's the rule for all the pastors here. Besides the fact of stumbling people, it says if you love your brother, Romans 14, you're not going to do any of that. [Comment: Calvary Chapel back in the Hippie days started out as a *spiritual hospital church*, reaching out in healing for the alcoholic, drug abusing Hippies who were coming into their doors by the thousands, many of them healed of alcoholism and drug addiction instantly. They have continued in that line as being a church for people struggling with addictions as well as for normal folks. The Bible, even as Pastor Joe is aware of, teaches extreme moderation in alcohol consumption. I know where alcoholism comes from, it comes from a long period of continuing overconsumption, building up one's tolerance over years, until you can't give it up. If one practices the Bible admonition for extreme moderation in consumption, one will never become an alcoholic. This is what needs to be taught our children and teens. I've been down that road, so I know it's true. My great, great father-in-law, a Sicilian, would sit at the head of the table, with a jug of homemade wine at his feet. We all had small wine glasses at the meal. He would fill each of our glasses. Very few of us had the guts to ask him for a refill. This is the type of wine consumption (practiced by most Italians and Jews alike, bringing their children up by example and proper practice) that is Biblical, and an example of extreme moderation. No one practicing this form of extremely moderate consumption will become an alcoholic. I did become one, and by God's grace, he healed me so I was able to walk away from alcohol, I am what I call a recovered alcoholic by divine miracle. But I can't touch it again, I blew my chance to be an extremely moderate user of it. If you overconsume, and you have children, they will learn by watching you, and will probably become alcoholics too. As Pastor Joe says, more is learned by sight, watching, than by verbal instruction of a parent.] They say in America one out of every fourteen people takes the first drink becomes an alcoholic, that would be playing Russian Roulette with fourteen chambers, it's become a big issue

in the Church today, it shouldn't be. Again, when there's revival, when the Holy Spirit moves, bars close down, we read about the great revivals through the Church, and the JESUS MOVEMENT, when I got saved, that's when I stopped taking LSD, it's not when I started, *'Hey, I'm saved now! You got a hit of acid?'* no, I didn't start getting stoned, I didn't start drinking then, I stopped, I got saved, I was filled with the Holy Spirit, my mind was blown. And now all these years later, because that moving of the Holy Spirit has cooled, and now there's people who want to be cool, they think it's cool to go out and have a few brewskies, well maybe it's ok for them, but not for me, and because I don't find myself comfortable with that, and then I'm the legalist. I'm not a legalist, I drank more than you're ever going to drink, I took more drugs probably than you're going to take, I got set free from it, I'm emancipated, I'm not a Pharisee, I'm not a legalist, I was bound in it, it was taking me to hell, I got set free. I have no desire to be in any bondage again. I remember the day when the Holy Spirit set me free from that, and God's Word, again, look at the world we're living in, what they're deciding in the Supreme Court now, look at this kid walking into the church in Charleston South Carolina, and mowing down nine innocent people, our brothers and sisters. Look at what's happening in the world, and ask yourself a question, does the world we're living in need some more cool Christians knocking down brewskies, or does it need some more Christians that are filled with the Holy Ghost? Right? [applause]. ***'Don't be drunk with wine wherein there is excess,'*** it says in ***Ephesians chapter 4, verse 18, 'Let ye be being filled with the Holy Spirit.'*** He says here, look, ***'whose the person who has woe, sorrow, contentions, arguing, babbling, that has wounds without cause and redness of eyes?'*** he says, ***'I'll tell you who, it's the person who sits long at wine, it says they who go to seek mixt wine.'*** doesn't it say for every ounce of alcohol you drink you'll kill ten thousand dendrites, and I don't know about you, I killed enough of them in the late 60s and early 70s that I need all the ones I got left, whatever dendrites are, that's the shape I'm in, I just don't need to kill ten thousand more dendrites. ***"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright."*** in the fermentation. It says, ***"At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."*** (verses 31-32) it's like a poisonous snake, the idea is, once it gets into your system [beyond extreme moderation that is]. Habakkuk says this, ***'Woe unto him that***

giveth his neighbour drink,' you think it's cool to spread this, share it? *'Hey, be cool, have a few with us.'* **'Woe to him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also,'** woe unto the person, God says, that's doing that, that causes somebody else to stumble, that gives them license to do something. Hey look, we got between 200 and 300 people coming every Friday night here in the addictions meeting. Ask them if it's cool. Ask them, who watched their families fall apart, who are right now saved and trying to regather as much of life that's been broken as they can. Ask them. It bites like a snake, look at the statistics, Google alcohol in America, it's more dangerous than heroine. *'I'm only a social drinker,'* really? Would you be a social heroine user? Alcohol is way more deadly statistically across this nation than heroine. Alcoholism is not a disease, ok? If alcoholism was a disease, there wouldn't be bars, because everybody who would go in would get infected. *'Don't sneeze on me if you drink, please, because I don't want to catch it.'* The Bible is clear all the way through, drunkenness is a sin, it's a willful act. It's not a disease, it's not a sickness, it can be an addiction. It says here it's like a poisonous snake, you get bit by it [by building up your tolerance over time, drinking more and more] it starts to get in your bloodstream and your system, it's not good. It says **'listen to me, I'm writing to you, I love you, this will be good for you if you listen to the things I say.'** Here it gets worse, if you're drinking [again, in excess] **"Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things."** (verse 33) *'You know, each time I have another bottle, she looks prettier, if I keep drinking I'm gonna leave with her soon.'* Or *'If I drink a little longer I'm gonna take a chance with this guy.'* Your eyes will behold strange women, everybody knows. **'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.'** (verse 34) Anybody ever have that experience? [I was a subsailor serving on the U.S.S. Blenny (SS 324), and one of my enginemen friend/shipmates did, it was actually hilarious because he lived to tell about it. He and some other of the crew members were on the banks of the Themes River in New London CT, fishing and drinking bottles of Techilla at night, he must have passed out as the tide was rising. Next thing he knew, he woke up and noticed he had his arm wrapped around a log floating in the water, and he saw lights in the distance. He had drifted a couple miles out to sea! He proceeded to paddle furiously for an hour or two, till he reached shore. He came ashore

on a beach with a chain link fence across it, which marked the border of the New London airport. He scaled the fence and made his way across the runways, I think being chased by guards. I'll stop there, even though it has a funny ending. I have always looked at verses 33-34 as "the sailor's verses of the Bible." Beat that one Pastor Joe if you can.] I remember laying down in bed so drunk that the bed was like doing this, I was in the midst of the sea, and you put your leg out, put your foot on the floor hoping to stop the currents [it works], you know. Drunkenness, it's like somebody lying down in the midst of the sea, lying on the top of the 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."** (verse 35) ["I will seek it yet again" this is when it has become a real problem, approaching or arriving at alcoholism.] And you wake up in the morning, and I've woken up in the morning, black eye, **"they have beaten me, and I felt it not:"** that's because you were so pickled you didn't know what was happening to you. **"when shall I awake?"** listen to this, **"I will seek it yet again."** We need Christ to stop it, it's like you get on the shore, and you go lay on the beach, after being turning white all winter, and you get blistered, you get sunburned so bad, and you say *'I'm never going to do this again,'* and you're out there again burning the next summer, you are so, you're going to go out there and do the same thing. You come home, you're drunk, puking, sick, up the next morning, black coffee, honey, all kinds of stuff, *'I'm never drinking again,'* you are so, you're going to go out the next weekend, doing the same thing, unless you let God Almighty speak to your life through the death and resurrection of his Son, you let the Gospel of Christ set you free, for whom the Son sets free is free indeed. And he sets us free so we can be a light, you don't hear light, you see it, so we can be salt. You don't hear salt, you taste it. We live in a world that's inebriated. What do you think's going to happen, if we justify drinking just in the context that it's legal, what's going to happen when social marijuana is legalized across the country? You know, we're gonna have people sitting in church, especially if we have special musical guests, shades on, rock'n out, you think, *'there's one, they were smokin' in the parking lot before they came in here.'* I assume you guys don't want me to have a few brewskies on the way to church, before I teach. I'm not gonna do that, because I've read Leviticus chapter 11, when God strikes down Nadab and Abihu with the fire from the altar. ***'Be sober, the Bible says, be vigilant, be watching,***

because the Lord comes in an hour you think not. When you see the things that are happening around us, lift your head, your redemption is drawing nigh, and he's coming, though it isn't any surprise for the Church, but in regards to the event itself, the timing of it is like a thief in the night, it's in a day and an hour when you think not, you don't expect it. Look what's happening in the world. How much longer can it be before he comes? ***'Any man that has this hope purifies himself, even as he is pure.'*** It's a cleansing of, it doesn't give us license for all kinds of things. Sadly, I could go on, never mind, I won't do that. Let's bow our hearts, let's pray, if you want to come up and argue with me after church, I'm up here. I'll smell your breathe as soon as you get up here though. [loud laughter]...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on Proverbs 23:1-35, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

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