

Are You Fit to Lead?

**It is not for kings, O Lemuel,
It is not for kings to drink wine,
Or for rulers to desire strong drink...**

--Proverbs 31:4

So, you are not a king; this has nothing to do with you, right?

Not exactly...There is something to think about. There is a reason for this advice, and the instruction applies to all Christians... *especially* to leaders.

The advise was given to a king *from his mother*. Strong drink (intoxicating drink) was not for king, but it *did* make sense for two categories of people: Those who were 'perishing,' and those whose 'life was bitter.' (v. 6)

The one who is *perishing* may be someone near death, most likely in great pain. In our day we use anesthetics to ease the pain as a person nears death. We wish for our loved ones to be comfortable as they pass from this life. This was the purpose of the strong drink when this proverb was written.

The one whose *life is bitter* is one who has little or no hope. In our day many folks turn to drugs and alcohol to deal with anxiety, despair, depression and loss of hope. Many doctors will even prescribe drugs for your symptoms! (Chemicals are not the *answer*.)

Back to the king and his drink...

The reason a king should avoid intoxicating drink, is to avoid "losing his mind." Yes, intoxicating drink and many drugs (including many prescription drugs) dull the senses so that a person cannot think straight.

As for the king, or any other leader (elders and preachers included), decisions cannot

be made and duties performed properly when he is 'not thinking straight.' Without a clear, sober mind thoughts can easily be perverted (twisted); thoughts pertaining to what is *good* and *right* and *wise*. It is imperative for leaders to be sober-minded, clear-thinking, and free from *any kind of substance* that would impair their ability to think, reason, and lead *God's* people.

Consider the intersecting instruction the Apostle Paul offered:

**And do not get drunk with wine,
for that is dissipation,
but be filled with the Spirit.**

--Ephesians 5:18

'Being filled with the Spirit' is set in direct contrast to drunkenness. It is imperative that we make the connection between the mind and the human spirit. It is imperative that we make the connection between the mind of the Christian and the Spirit of God. Intoxication (even by prescription drugs) directly affects whether or not a Christian is filled with the Spirit of God.

When a person is 'under the influence' of alcohol or drugs that affect the mind (even prescription drugs), he is unfit for spiritual leadership; he simply cannot think straight!

I'm not making this stuff up. I'm not on some sort of campaign against anyone or anything. I'm not mad at anyone. I AM READING GOD'S WORD, and I am making a valid application.

Church, take this instruction seriously.

Leaders! Be wise! Be fit!

Do not scoff...

Be sober!!!