

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

“Why Are Some Christians So Uptight About Drinking Alcohol?”

Rom 12:1-2

From Sunday, July 12

Appetizer:

Pastor Phil starts his sermon acknowledging his conservative Christian upbringing, in regards to many things, including alcohol.

Question: What was your view of Christians drinking alcohol growing up? Conservative? Liberal? Frowned upon? Accepted? Was it an issue or not?

Main Course:

- a. It is interesting to consider the history of “The Church” and alcohol. Prohibition in Europe was initiated by Christian leaders to rescue people from self-destruction.

Question: Do you feel that decision was justified or a political over-reaction made out of desperation?

- b. The Talmud was a secondary set of 613 rules for Jewish life constructed by the Teachers of the Law. A strong case could be made that these supplemental laws *began* as a helpful guide to protect Jews from accidentally breaking God’s laws.

When Jesus taught in His ministry, He locked horns with this same group because they treated their laws with the same authority at Scripture.

That which began as a “good thing” became “religion”.

Question: How can we unknowingly end up doing the same? What are some of the unspoken Laws in our “modern day Church Talmud”? Discuss.

- c. Pastor Phil identifies the two pendulum swings that people often are drawn to in matters of holiness: “A List of Rules” (holiness is equated with a list of do’s and don’ts) versus “Cheap Grace” (holiness is a matter of the heart and we are free to do what we want).

Question: Is there still room for “guardrails” in our daily walk with Jesus? How can we prevent a guardrail from becoming a rule that artificially measures the degree of one’s spiritual life so that we don’t become the New Testament version of “Teachers of the Law”?

Dessert:

The message concludes by saying that if Jesus walked the earth today, we are left with two choices concerning today’s topic:

Question:

- a. **Would Jesus drink alcohol?**
 - a. If “yes”, then how and why would Jesus drink? How might one drink in a way that could be described as “holy”?
 - b. If “no”, then what was Pastor Phil’s reason for why Jesus might not drink today when He clearly did 2,000 years ago?

Question: If we choose to drink alcohol, how can we drink in a way that does not conform to the patterns of this world?

Roman 12:1,2 - Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.