

introducing leaven into the grape juice, causing it to ferment. By sealing the new wine air tight (“having no vent²⁾) into “new bottles,” it would be kept from the leaven, and would thereby be “preserved.” Fermentation does not preserve anything, but is the process of putrefication and decomposition. Leavened bread will totally putrefy and decompose if not baked very soon after rising. So leavened grape juice will putrefy and decompose, producing the poison alcohol. If this is not so (if leaven purifies rather than putrefies), then why not wait for several months to give leaven a chance to purify the bread before eating it? But if leaven putrefies rather than purifies the bread, then why are we to believe that leaven purifies rather than putrefies grape juice?

From Luke 5:37-39, it is obvious that the ancients knew how to preserve by canning. There are numerous reports from history that the juice was kept from fermentation by being boiled and then sealed in new bottles.³ This preserved grape juice got ever better with age, just as Christ’s blood does. It was therefore very easy for Christ to serve pure grape juice in the cup of the Lord’s Supper in April.

FOOTNOTES:

¹Rene Dubos, *Pasteur and Modern Science* (Madison, WI: Science Tech Publishers, 1988 <1960>), 43-44.

²Louis Pasteur, “Yeast on Grapes—A Paper Proving Yeast is Not Present On Grapes Raised In Filtered Air,” as quoted in *Pasteur and Modern Science* by Rene Dubos (Madison, WI: Science Tech Publishers, 1988 <1960>), 43-44.

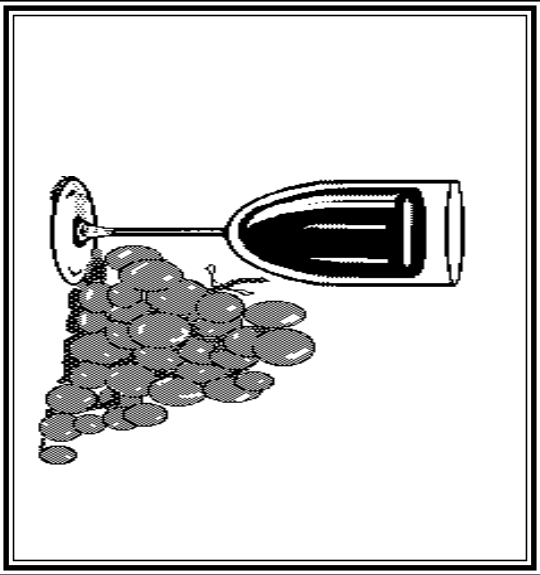
³William Paton, *Bible Wines: or, The Laws of Fermentation and Wines of the Ancients* (Little Rock, Arkansas: The Challenge Press). This is a reprint of an old book which goes into great detail proving that new wine is non-alcoholic grape juice. It also quotes many ancient manuscripts concerning how grape juice was preserved in Bible days. Highly recommended.

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THE BAR

The saloon is sometimes called a bar; that’s true.

- A bar to Heaven, a door to Hell;** whoever named it named it well.
- A bar to manliness and wealth;** a door to want and broken health.
- A bar to honor, pride and fame;** a door to grief and sin and shame.
- A bar to home, a bar to prayer;** a door to darkness and despair.
- A bar to honored, useful life;** a door to brawling, senseless strife.
- A bar to all that’s true and brave;** a bar to every drunkard’s grave.
- A bar to joys that home imparts;** a door to tears and aching hearts.
- A bar to Heaven, a door to Hell;** whoever named it, named it well.



WINE OR GRAPE JUICE IN THE LORD’S SUPPER?

by **Louis A. Turk, B.A., M.Div., Ph.D.**

Which should a church use: alcoholic wine or grape juice in the cup of the Lord’s Supper? Sadly, this question has divided many Christians who otherwise would be in complete doctrinal harmony. Division over this issue is often quite sharp for one major reason: many Christians believe that the Bible teaches that it is a sin to drink any alcoholic beverage; to these people to use alcohol to symbolize the blood of Christ is desecration. This division has a detrimental effect on missions. And unbelievers use this division to justify drinking booze. Also, this division confuses new converts concerning the propriety of consuming alcohol, causing them to wonder, “Is moderate drinking proper for a Christian?”

A pamphlet also entitled “Wine or Grape Juice in the Lord’s Supper?” but written by a man named J.P. Simmons has been widely distributed over the years, and has influenced many churches to use wine in the cup of the Lord’s Supper. Mr. Simmons gives three reasons for holding that wine instead of grape juice should be used in the Lord’s Supper: (1) Christ used [alcoholic] wine in the Lord’s Supper; (2) the church at Corinth used [alcoholic] wine and received no correction from the apostle Paul in this matter; and (3) the symbolism of the Supper demands [alcoholic] wine.

Unfortunately, all three of Mr. Simmons statements are not supported by the Word of God, nor are they supported by scientific fact, but merely by the opinions of mortal men. Also, Mr. Simmons fails completely to answer the arguments of people opposed to using wine in the Lord’s Supper, choosing rather to simply ignore their arguments.

DID CHRIST USE WINE IN THE LORD’S SUPPER?

For example, Mr. Simmons uses three out of the six pages of his pamphlet to prove that Christ used alcoholic wine in the Lord’s Supper. Yet all of his proofs are mere opinions of men. He makes such statements as: “In order to ascertain this point we talked with one well-informed converted Jew and with one Jewish Rabbi,” and “We also wrote the American Board of Missions to the Jews of Brooklyn, N. Y.,” and “Professor A. T. Robertson of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary...said,” and “J. W. Porter...said,” and “Peloubet’s Bible Dictionary says,” but he gives not one Bible verse that states that Christ used wine in the Lord’s Supper! The fact is, the Bible does not use the word “wine” in reference to the Lord’s Supper at all, not even once, but instead uses the term “fruit of the vine.”

And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them; and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God (Mark 14:22-25).

Mat 26:26-30 and Luke 22:13-20 also use the term “fruit of the vine” instead of “wine.” By using the term “fruit of the vine” Christ emphasizes the fact that alcoholic wine was not (and should not be) used.

Mr. Simmons says that “just before his death Christ drank ‘vinegar....’” and that this vinegar was “sour wine.” This however is not true, for Mat 27:34 says “They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall; and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.” See also Mark 15:23.

Mr. Simmons makes no attempt to offer Scriptural proof to refute the argument that the word “wine” is used in the Bible to refer to both alcoholic wine and grape juice. Additionally, Mr. Simmons ignores the many Scriptures in favor of this argument. For example, grape juice is called wine as soon as it comes out of the press: “Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine” (Prov 3:9-10). Also, Is 65:8 says: “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.” The “new wine” mentioned in this verse certainly refers to nonalcoholic grape juice. In fact, this “new wine” is juice still in the grapes, and therefore would be no closer to alcoholic wine than root beer is to alcoholic beer. Proverbs 23:31-32 says, “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.” This verse directly implies that grape juice is considered wine both before and after fermentation. Furthermore, this verse places no restriction on drinking it before fermentation, but directly commands that it is not to be used once fermentation begins, for then “it biteth like a

serpent, and stingeth like an adder.” Therefore Mr. Simmons’ argument that all uses of the word wine in the Bible refer to “fermented, intoxicating wine” is invalid. Webster’s Dictionary further strengthens our position by defining must as “the juice pressed from grapes or other fruit before it has fermented; new wine.” Furthermore, Mr. Simmons’ argument that Jesus made alcoholic wine at the Marriage at Cana also is invalid. Not only can Mr. Simmons not prove that this wine was fermented wine, he also cannot show any proof whatsoever that anyone became intoxicated in the least by drinking it. When the governor of the feast called the wine Jesus made “good,” this cannot be forced to mean “alcoholic.” Some grape juice is better than other grape juice, and if Jesus made it we would certainly be the very best. Mr. Simmons implies that the wine Paul advised Timothy to drink “for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities” was alcoholic wine. However, there is no proof that this was so. I have long used nonalcoholic grape juice as a cure for my stomach problems, and I can testify that when I have an especially eruptive stomach it will work wonders when regular stomach medicines like Tums, Roloids, or Pepto-Bismol totally fail, and grape juice has no side effects such as brain or liver damage like alcohol often does.

DID THE CHURCH AT CORINTH USE WINE WITHOUT RECEIVING CORRECTION FROM THE APOSTLE PAUL?

First of all, it is needful to notice that the word wine is not used even one time in First Corinthians chapter eleven. If the word “drunken” as used in verse 21 indeed means “intoxicated” as Mr. Simmons argues, then how does he know that some other type of “strong drink” besides wine was not used?

Secondly, a strong case can be made that the word “drunken” (*methuer*) as used in this verse does not mean intoxicated at all, but simply means sated. While *methuer* does often mean intoxicated, it does not always take that meaning. Mr. Simmons suggested that readers of his pamphlet look the word up in a Greek lexicon, so I did. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* by W. Bauer translated by W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, page 500, points out that this word is used in Rev 17:6 to refer to a “woman who has sated her thirst for blood.” However, even if Mr. Simmons could prove that this word does indeed mean intoxicated in this verse, he would still not have proven that alcohol was being used in the Lord’s Supper, for

Thirdly, and of most importance, the context clearly shows that the drunkenness referred to was not taking place in the “Lord’s Supper,” but rather every one was eating in the presence of the others “his own supper” (verse 21), eating and drinking in front of “them that have not” (verse 22), thus making the poor ashamed because they had nothing themselves to eat.

And fourthly, while it is true Paul did not rebuke the church at Corinth for using wine in the Lord’s Supper (since they did not do so), it is not true that Paul did not correct them for this drunkenness which was taking place as they ate their “own” supper in the presence of the assembly. On the contrary, he rebuked them in no uncertain terms, saying: “What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despite ye the

church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not" (1 Cor 11:22). In the verses introducing the above verse the rebuke for this drunkenness is even stronger. It left them worse off then before they came to church, Paul said, and was causing divisions. And since there was drunkenness he reasons that there must be heresies also.

Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. (1 Cor 17-21)

IS IT REALLY TRUE THAT THE SYMBOLISM OF THE LORD'S SUPPER DEMANDS WINE?

One statement made by Mr. Simmons will be agreed upon by both sides of this issue: "The fruit of the vine that properly represents the sinless blood of Christ must not have any leaven in it." The question that must be answered to settle the issue, however, is this: Which contains leaven? wine or grape juice? Contentds Mr. Simmons: "That grape juice does naturally contain leaven (a type of sin and evil) ought to be appparent to any one upon a moment's reflection. If grape juice did not contain leaven, it would not ferment." Again, Mr. Simmons is unable to produce one verse of Scripture to prove his contention. Instead, he offers an undocumented quote from a Mr. Frederic J. Haskin, director of the Information Bureau at Washington, D.C. as follows:

The Bureau of Plant Industry of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture says that grapes naturally contain a leavening agent and that this is present in the juice....the leaven is used up in the process of fermentation so that the finished product or wine does not contain any.

Mr. J.P. Simmons then asks a very important question, followed by a challenge: "Does the Bureau of Plant Industry know what it is talking about? We invite proof to the contrary."

I have never met Mr. Simmons, and have never read anything else he has written. Perhaps he is sound on all other doctrines. I truly hate to so publicly prove him wrong on this issue. However, Mr. Simmons wrote his pamphlet as a public document, and it has caused great division among the Lord's churches. True unity comes only from doctrinal agreement. Doctrinal agreement best arises from irrefutable proofs. Therefore, in an attempt to heal this division, I answer his challenge, and offer not only scientific but also Scriptural proof that neither Mr. Simmons nor the Bureau of Plant Industry (if he correctly quoted them) know what they are talking about.

Scientifically speaking, the assumption that leaven (yeast) is naturally present inside grapes is easily proven false. During certain times of the year, there are billions of yeast cells floating about in the air. Some of these yeast cells fall upon the skins of unprotected grapes, and only when the skins of the grapes are broken is the juice contaminated. Evolutionists once believed that yeast could spontaneously spring up out of uncontaminated grape juice by spontaneous generation. The Spontaneous Generation Theory (the belief that liv-

ing organisms can come into being without parents) is of course still the foundational doctrine of the theory of evolution. Louis Pasteur, the father of modern medicine, proved the Spontaneous Generation Theory wrong with a multitude of scientific experiments, and in doing so ushered in the age of modern medicine. His experiments also shed light upon our topic at hand.

It would take a long volume to describe the many different kinds of experiments that he performed while dealing with the problem of spontaneous generation. A spectacular one was to remove with a fine needle the juice from grapes with undamaged skin, and to show that if this was done with all precautions necessary to avoid contact with air or objects, the juice did not ferment until yeast had been added to it. This experiment he repeated late in 1878 in a modified and much extended form to counteract new claims by the famous French scientist Claude Bernard, who suggested that the spontaneous generation of yeast was possible after all. In addition to its scientific interest, this episode has the merit of illustrating Pasteur's working methods: his ardor in returning to already conquered positions when they were threatened, and the suddenness with which he took decisions when he judged that an important issue was at stake.

Wrote Pasteur concerning this 1878 experiment:

Without too much care for expense, I ordered in all haste several green houses with the intention of transporting them to the Jura Mountains, where I possess a vineyard some dozens of square meters in size. There was not a moment to lose. And this is why.... I have shown....that the germs of yeast are not yet present on the grape...at the end of July.... By taking this moment to cover some vine with greenhouses almost hermetically closed, I could have, in October at grape harvest time, vines bearing ripe grapes without any yeasts on the surface. These grapes, being crushed with the precautions necessary to exclude yeast from the air, should not be able to ferment or to make wine. The fourth of August, 1887, my greenhouses were finished and ready to be installed....During and after their installation, I searched with care to see if yeasts were really absent from the clusters....The result was what I expected....the vines covered by the greenhouses bore no trace of yeast....Toward the tenth of October, the grapes in the greenhouses were ripe; one could clearly distinguish the seeds through their skin and they were as sweet in taste as the majority of the grapes grown outside....On the tenth of October, I made my first experiment on the grapes of the uncovered clusters....The result, I may say, surpassed my expectation....Today, after a multitude of trials, I am just where I started, that is to say, it has been impossible for me to obtain one single time the alcoholic yeast fermentation from clusters protected with cotton. A comparative experiment naturally suggested itself....It was to be expected that if exposed greenhouse clusters in the open they would now ferment under the influence of the yeasts which they could not fail to receive in their new location. This was precisely the result that I obtained.?

The results of Louis Pasteur's scientific experiments have been confirmed repeatedly, and are irrefutable proof that Mr. Simmons' argument is dead wrong.

Not science only, but the Scriptures also deavastate Mr. Simmons' argument. Deut.32:14 says, "hou didst drink the pure alcohol of the grape." If the blood is squeezed from a grape, it is not alcohol that runs out, but grape juice. This grape juice is called "pure" in this verse. It contains no leaven, else it would not be pure. The Bible does not say that "a little leaven purifich the whole lump," rather it says "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Cor 5:6). Leaven (yeast) is a living organism that feeds on (among other things) grape juice. Alcohol is literally yeast urine. The yeast consumes the grape juice and urinates alcohol.

The yeast also reproduces at a terrific rate, totally permeating and corrupting the grape juice, until it has finally dies, poisoned by its

own urine. The dead yeast cells then either fall to the bottom or float around in the alcohol. Fermented wine is not even pure alcohol, as the yeast poisons itself and dies before it can consume all the grape juice. Alcoholic wine, therefore, is simply leavened grape juice. Alcoholic wine is not the pure blood of the grape, but is the unpure urine of the yeast. It is not the fruit of the vine, nor is it the fruit of the yeast. It is the *wine* of the yeast. Do you think yeast urine constitutes a suitable symbol of the blood of Christ? To say that leaven can purify grape juice is equivalent to sayings that sin can purify the blood of Christ. That would even imply that His blood needs purifying. God forbid!

Another important verse concerning this issue is Lev 10:8-10:

And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations: And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean.

Notice that the reason Aaron was not to drink wine was because God said wine is unholy and unclean. To use wine for the Lord's Supper therefore would be to symbolically declare Christ's blood unholy and unclean. No true Christian would ever intentionally do this. Let's not let Satan trick us into unintentionally committing such blasphemy. Furthermore, please notice that so major a sin did God consider drinking alcohol in the tabernacle to be that the death penalty was to be its punishment. Consumption of alcohol in the house of God is not a matter taken lightly by God.

IS IT EVER OK TO DRINK ALCOHOL?

On page two of Mr. Simmons' pamphlet, he says, "The premise that all drinking of [alcoholic] wine is essentially wrong is false." Mr. Simmons realizes that this is a *moral* problem, that it is a question of determining *right* from *wrong*. His whole pamphlet is actually an attempt to justify his application of "situational ethics" to the consumption of alcohol. That he believes that moderate social drinking is not actually a sin is evident from his statement that "it was only the excessive use of wine that was forbidden to bishops and deacons" (page 2). How many drinks make a person a drunkard? is a question he avoids, however. On page four he attempts to remove from wine the stigma associated with intoxicating liquor by stating, "had alcoholic drinks always been confined to wine, prohibition would probably never have been necessary." This truly is an amazing statement, especially considering the fact that the Bible says "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov 20:1). Wine caused Noah to expose his nakedness, bringing a curse upon his grandson, Canaan (Gen 9:20-29). Wine caused Lot to commit incest with his two daughters (Gen 19:30-38).

Wine, the Bible says, will cause preachers to err and stumble in judgement:

But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink, they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. (Is 28:7)

By way of example, I am thinking right now of a very promising young missionary, from one of the finest Christian homes I have ever known, but sponsored to the mission field by a church which uses wine in the Lord's Supper. This missionary became an alcoholic, and brought great shame to the Lord on his mission field. His ministry was ruined, and he had to return home in disgrace.

Such great potential destroyed by wine! Most likely he reasoned that if wine was ok for the Lord's table, surely it was also ok for everybody else's table. Again, history shows that God is right: wine really *is* a mocker, strong drink really is raging, and whoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1).

Wine, Prov. 23:29-35 says, causes "woe," "sorrow," "contentions," "babbling," "wounds without cause," "redness of eyes," and moral impurity; "thine eyes shall behold strange women," "Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh." Prov 23:20-21 commands us "for the drunkard and glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." "It is not for kings," we read in Proverbs 31:4-5, "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 the afflicted." Other passages of Scripture exposing the evils of wine or the virtues of total abstinence are Is 5:11-12 and 22-24; 28:1-3; Luke 1:13-17; Micah 2:11; Thins 1:7; Dan 1:1-15; Hosea 7:14; Is 56:10-12; Jer 35:1-19; Joel 3:1-3; Judges 13:1-5; and 1 Cor 5:11. The fact is, alcohol is an extremely dangerous, addictive, mind-altering drug which kills millions of people every year. In every case where the context shows the word "wine" to mean alcoholic drink, the Bible forbids us to either drink it ourselves, or give it to others: "Woe to him that giveth his neighbour drink" (Habakkuk 2:15-16). Every alcoholic began his road to shame and ruin with just one drink. One drink makes a person one drink drunk. Therefore, even just one drink is "excess."

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-10).

Realizing that the evil of alcohol keeps many souls from entering Heaven, God forbid that our children be given their first taste of alcohol at church from the Lord's cup! See Dan 5:17-31.

It must be concluded therefore that unfermented grape juice is the only suitable element for the cup of the Lord's Supper.

CAN GRAPE JUICE BE PRESERVED?

Since writing the above, I have learned of one more argument that needs to be confronted with the truth. The argument goes like this: "Alcoholic wine must have been used by Christ when He instituted the Lord's Supper in April, because grape juice would have turned to wine for sure during the eight month interval between grape harvest and April." This argument is proven wrong by the words of our Lord Jesus Christ himself:

And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better. (Luke 5:37-39)

Note that the "new wine" discussed in these verses is of necessity grape juice that has not yet fermented, else it would not be able to ferment so as to develop the gases that would burst bottles (Compare Job 32:19). The bottles, of course, were not of glass, but made of animal skins. The danger was to put the new wine in old (and therefore contaminated) bottles, thus