

Announcements

Partnership

Saturday, November 08, 2014, 10:00 AM - 2:30 PM

This Partnership Group will go through what it means to be a part of a local church, and consider what it looks like to partner with what the Gospel is doing at One Harbor.

Typically, our partnership group meets over four weeks. However, we will not have another opportunity to offer a four-week group until next spring. Therefore we are hosting a consolidated group on Saturday, November 8th from 10am to 2:30pm at our Morehead City site. All the material typically presented in the course will be covered that day. Lunch will be served and we will also provide childcare.

- Back in Ephesians
- In this section of Ephesians we've been seeing every week that a new life in Christ comes a new way to live
- When Jesus saves you and becomes your Savior, He also becomes your Lord
- He saves you as you are, but He also leads you from where you are to where you need to be
- In this morning's text Paul talks about what that looks like in the very specific area of drunkenness

(Ephesians 5:15-21 ESV)

[15] Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, [16] making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. [17] Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. [18]

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, [19] addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, [20] giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [21] submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

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- Alcohol abuse not a new thing, but it is a particular problem in our culture, especially here in Carteret County
- Got some statistics from the county health dept:
- 34.3% of high school students report underage drinking on one or more of the past thirty days and 17.7% reported binge drinking
- Approximately 7.1% of all crashes in Carteret County involved alcohol - 25% higher than the State's rate
- Those statistics shouldn't sit well with us
- We live in dark times and there is a brokenness to the world
- Drunkenness is many people's normal
- Many of us have been touched by Alcoholism, either through the struggle of a family member or our own struggle
- It's something that has torn up families and ruined lives, no doubt about it.
- But not everyone who gets drunk is an alcoholic!
- Some of you thinking- not underage or drinking and driving so what's the big deal?
- Why is Paul so adamant that we shouldn't get drunk?

(Ephesians 5:15-21 ESV)

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We need to walk in wisdom

- Paul frames the whole alcohol issue as a wisdom issue
- We live in a broken world with complex decisions, and many things threatening to pull us away from God- and we need to walk wisely
- Wisdom in the Bible isn't just what you know- it's being able to skillfully apply what you know to how you live.
- Drunkenness makes that impossible!
- Paul knows that alcohol does something to our minds- and when it is drunk in excess, it dulls our minds to the point of being unaware, and being totally incapable of making wise choices.
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- Paul says that to get drunk is debauchery- greek word for salvation and restoration with a negative prefix on it- in other words, the opposite of saving and restoring
- Idea of coming undone, being unraveled
- It's also translated wastefulness, and the NLT even translates it 'a ruined life'
- Powerful statements on getting drunk! Is it really all that serious? Can't it just be a fun night and a good time?

- Drunk people have come undone- they are vulnerable- they are easily preyed on. They are unsafe to be around, they are foolish.
 - v16 Paul says we are supposed to be making the 'best use of the time' because we're living in evil days
 - We have to remember what the world we're living in is like! It's a warzone! There are enough forces at work to unravel us in this world, and we need to be wise
 - Deployed Marines aren't even allowed to drink alcohol- they need to have their focus at it's sharpest.
 - When we get drunk, our guard is totally down, we are wide open to sin in other ways that could be destructive for us and people around us
 - we are simply not able to be wise when we are drunk!
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- So because of that, because of some of the obvious inherent dangers in alcohol abuse, the standard Christian knee jerk reaction has been prohibition, right?
 - if being drunk isn't wisdom, surely wisdom would be to just never drink again?
 - 'this could lead to problems, let's just ban it for everyone, and shame people who drink!'
 - we respond to license with legalism.
 - But wisdom is more than reacting and swinging the pendulum the other way- and we shouldn't be quick to come up with new laws that aren't in the Bible
 - we know pretty well how to follow a rule, and then we may feel pretty good about ourselves even if the underlying heart problems haven't been dealt with
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- Paul doesn't do that here.

- This would have been a perfect place for Paul to say don't drink alcohol, and He doesn't say it. Instead he tells us not to get drunk.
- Why is that? If drunkenness is so dangerous, why not just ban alcohol altogether?

God's will is for us to enjoy His creation

- Psalm 104 is a Psalm glorifying the creator
- As Christians, all of life is worship, because it all points to our creator
- The beauty of the creator is revealed in the beauty and variety of creation
- Didn't just create the bare minimum to sustain life- He created something beautiful

(Psalm 104:10-15 ESV)

**[10] You make springs gush forth in the valleys;
they flow between the hills;**

**[11] they give drink to every beast of the field;
the wild donkeys quench their thirst.**

**[12] Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell;
they sing among the branches.**

**[13] From your lofty abode you water the mountains;
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.**

**[14] You cause the grass to grow for the livestock
and plants for man to cultivate,
that he may bring forth food from the earth**

**[15] and wine to gladden the heart of man,
oil to make his face shine**

and bread to strengthen man's heart.

- In that fascinating list we see that God gives us bread to sustain us, but He also gives us good things to enjoy beyond simply helping us continue to exist
 - 'oil to make our face shine'- that's not necessary for human existence, but it's nice- like an ancient oil of olay:
 - some of you ladies think you would die if you didn't wear make makeup for a day, but that's not actually true. It's a 'nice to have'- it enhances the flavor of life, but it isn't necessary for life
 - wine is in the same category- God created good things for our enjoyment that go beyond simple survival- it enhances the flavor of life
 - There are some Christians who don't realize that they are allowed to enjoy life!
 - They move through life as if they are only permitted to do what is necessary for survival, and if something is actually enjoyable it must be sin!
 - They picture God as a cranky geezer in the sky who is looking to stifle our fun
 - God is like the Captain of the fun police
 - We think obeying Gods will looks like- NO SMILING, no parties, and DEFINITELY no drinking!
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- That is a total misunderstanding of a theology of Creation
 - The God revealed in creation is a gracious, kind Father who gives good gifts to His children.
 - Like sex- God didn't just create it for procreation, it's also for pleasure! For a husband and wife to enjoy one another, not just to pop out a baby like a machine

- But the fact that it feels good was God's idea! And in the same way, wine was God's idea!
- He created everything for His glory and our good.
- When He created pigs He knew exactly what bacon would taste like.
- And when He created grapes, He wasn't surprised when they fermented into wine! It wasn't a careless oversight and when the first guy figured that out, God looked down shocked thinking 'grapes do WHAT?!'
- Paul makes the same point to the Corinthians when they were debating on whether they could eat meat sold in the pagan markets that had been offered to idols:

(1 Corinthians 10:25-26 ESV)

[25] Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. [26] For "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof."

- God created the whole world, not just churches and Christian bookstores
- And actually, the beauty and color of creation shows us something of the character of God
- God isn't a grouchy old man, but a joyful God
- Creation is for our good and God's glory
- The creator is glorified in His creation
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- This is actually the historic position of the Christian church on alcohol- I'm not being trendy or edgy
- Up until the past 150-200 years, every denomination and branch of Christianity taught that alcohol was a gift from God to be enjoyed in moderation.

- But moderation was too hard, especially after alcohol was able to be mass produced, so instead of fighting for self-control, some Christian groups began fighting for prohibition
- We drifted into legalism. Moderation was too hard, too challenging, so we banned it.
- It's one thing to decide for yourself that you aren't going to drink, but it's another thing to decide for someone else that they have to follow a law not in the Bible
- Why is it so hard to enjoy things in moderation?
- If alcohol is something made by God for our enjoyment just like other amazing things in creation, why does it go so bad so often?
- This problem is actually at the root of all of our sin
- Instead of enjoying things as gifts from God, and then worshiping and being thankful to God, we indulge in things God created and ignore God
- It's God's will for us to enjoy creation, but first of all, God's will is that we enjoy HIM

(Romans 1:20-25 ESV)

[20] For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. [21] For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. [22] Claiming to be wise, they became fools, [23] and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images

resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

[24] Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, [25] because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

- That is at the root of much of our sin- not just doing bad things, but treating good created things as if they were God
- We aren't just supposed to consume God's creation for what it does for us, we are supposed to see how it points us to the goodness of the creator!

We sin when we enjoy something more than God

- We don't just enjoy created things, we are looking to created things for ultimate fulfillment
- That's why we have a continual lust for more- enough is never enough
- Sex in marriage isn't enough sex. Enough money to get by isn't enough money. And enjoying a responsible drink isn't enough drink
- Because we aren't just looking to enjoy God's creation, we are hoping these things will satisfy us in a way they never will.
- Only God can truly satisfy us. Only God is worth worshiping.

- All of the good things are made are only good while they are pointing us back to God, not when they are being treated as God
- Food is amazing. But if it becomes your god you become a glutton and you'll eat yourself to death.
- Sex is great when it is a reminder of God's care for us- he wants us to enjoy one another in the intimacy of marriage
- But when sex becomes our God, it becomes twisted- we hurt one another and do terrible things in the name of sexual pleasure
- Alcohol is the same way. It's great as a gift from God, but it makes a terrible God.
- When you look to alcohol as a source of life, a source of peace, a source of true pleasure, it will destroy you!
- It's one thing to enjoy a drink as a gift from God and a tasty beverage that brings a small amount of joy
- But it's another thing to look to alcohol for comfort. For dealing with your problems. For courage. For ultimate joy. To make you into the kind of person you wish you were.
- When you are doing that, you are looking to gain something from it that it wasn't meant to give you!
- Those are the reasons that God wants you to come to HIM!
- God called out the people of Israel for looking to other places besides Him for satisfaction:

(Jeremiah 2:13 ESV)

**[13] for my people have committed two evils:
they have forsaken me,
the fountain of living waters,
and hewed out cisterns for themselves,**

broken cisterns that can hold no water.

- They turned their backs on God, and then they tried to find satisfaction and fulfillment outside of Him
 - They tried to quench their spiritual thirst with things God made, without coming to the source.
 - We are thirsty for joy, peace, courage, and comfort, but only God is able to quench our thirst!
 - Only God contains living waters
 - Everything else is a broken cistern, not able to contain the living waters we are thirsty for
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- We are looking to be filled w something- that's not wrong
 - In fact, we need this. All of us need fulfillment, if we aren't getting it from one place, we'll look in another.
 - In all Ephesians, Paul never just tells us what we are supposed to stop doing- He also tells us what to replace it with
 - Paul says we are supposed to be filled with the Spirit!

Eph 5:18

[18] And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, [19] addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart [20] giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [21] submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

- If you're like me, this isn't the contrast you would immediately expect
- You would expect don't be drunk, be sober-minded, be disciplined, learn how to say no
- Being drunk isn't contrasted with being sober and straight laced- with being devoid of any fun or humor, but being filled w the spirit and being full of song and joy!
- The problem isn't that we are thirsty and long for fulfillment and joy, the problem is where we look to quench our thirst!- we're looking to quench our thirst but we're drinking out of broken cisterns

The Spirit of God fills us in the way we really need

- Some of you, all day you are anxious, you are tense, you are fearful, and the only way for you to experience joy in life is when it comes to happy hour and you've had a few drinks, and you can finally start to sing and laugh
- But Paul is longing us here, telling us there is a better way!
- Don't turn to alcohol, turn to the Spirit! That's where real joy comes from that can crush your anxiety and your fearfulness!
- Some of you are intimidated by the phrase 'be filled with the Spirit' because of church experiences where this was made to be some alien concept for the super spiritual
- In order to have the Spirit you had to be flailing on the ground with your tongue wagging out of your head or something
- But that isn't what we see here- we see a group of people who are ministering to one another with word and song in

their right minds, giving thanks, and submitting to one another in love

- So what exactly does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?
- Huge rabbit trail, but let me give you what I believe is the most important component
- Look in v20 what the Spirit causes you to do when you are filled by him

[20] giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

- The Spirit focuses our hearts on the goodness of God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Savior
- This is the role of the Spirit- He brings life of God into our lives!
- To be filled with the Spirit is to live in the love of God your Father, and to know the power of Christ in your life
- Look what Jesus says of the Spirit in John:
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(Hitting these two very quick)

(John 15:26b ESV)

[26] he will bear witness about me.

(John 16:14 ESV)

[14] He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

- The Spirit bears witness about Jesus and glorifies Jesus
- He points our hearts to Jesus
- The Spirit makes us aware of our ultimate reality as Christians

- This is actually the opposite of what alcohol does
- Alcohol is a depressant
- It depresses part of your brain and makes you less aware of your problems
- It gives people courage because they forget why they shouldn't have courage.
- It gives joy because they aren't aware of their sorrow
- Makes you less aware
- The Spirit is actually the opposite!
- It doesn't make you less aware, but more aware! But not more aware of your problems, more aware of our resources and spiritual help, of our Savior!
- More aware of the loving community around you, more aware of the presence of God in your life, and more aware of Jesus
- Romans 8 says that through the Spirit we cry Abba Father and know that we are children of God

(Romans 8:15-16 ESV)

[15] For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" [16] The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

- Being filled with the Spirit, we don't receive joy and courage by forgetting, but by remembering!
- We don't need wine to give us courage, bc the Spirit bears witness to our spirit of the undending love of God for us, which makes our hearts bold

- We don't need wine for joy, because we can rejoice that we have been reconciled to God
 - We don't need alcohol to makes us forget our problems- the Spirit reminds us of the power of God which shows us how small our problems really are.
 - It is the Spirit- it is God Himself who fills us in the way we are searching to be filled.
 - It is God who quenches the deep thirst of our soul
 - And when you don't NEED alcohol for those things, you can enjoy it more, not less.
 - You can enjoy it as a good gift from God, not as something you are looking to save you and give you life
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- From this place of living in the Spirit comes real, deep joy, not artificial fabricated joy
 - there is a joyfulness to spirit-filled living that is so tangible you can hear it
 - Paul says we'll address one another with songs, that we will sing and make melody in our heart to the Lord
 - So deep thankful joy starts in our soul, and it will well up and come out toward others
 - not songs of forgetting like you might experience at a drunken party, but songs of thanksgiving to God and of worship, and of remembering our salvation
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- All the things we are seeking when we get drunk and indulge in alcohol are actually only found in Jesus through the Spirit.
 - I have been amazed this week seeing all the ways that alcohol actually points us to realities that are only fully realized in Jesus

- Alcohol is just a shadow of the reality of Jesus
- did you know that in John 2, Jesus' very first miracle was turning water into wine?
- Ever wonder about that? What was He trying to say? Why wasn't it something more significant, like curing a blind man or raising a dead person?
- Instead, Jesus took a party that was about to end bc it ran out of wine, and he created 150 gallons of the best wine anybody had every tasted so the party could continue!
- Jesus was saying, yes, I have come to heal and to cure and to preach, and to lead, but first of all I have come to bring JOY! Life with me is like being at a banquet that never ends, because I am the Lord of the Wine!
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- And what about at the end of his life?
- On the very day before he was crucified, at the Last Supper, Jesus drank wine w His disciples and said some very strange things-

(Matthew 26:27-29 ESV)

[27] And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, [28] for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. [29] I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

- Jesus has them drink wine, and tells them it is a symbol of His blood that is going to wash their sins away.

- The death of Jesus isn't just a significant event we are supposed to remember- it is a feast we are supposed to eat and drink!
- It gives us life, it gives us courage, it gives us joy, it gives us salvation!
- It is only because of the death of Jesus in our place that we have forgiveness of sins, so that we could be made children of God
- It is only because of the death of Jesus that we can know beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is for us and He loves us
- It is because of the death of Jesus that we can have boldness and courage even when life is falling apart, because the same God who didn't spare His own Son for us is holding our lives in the palm of His hand!
- We are supposed to drink that truth down, and it is richer than the best wine, it gives us exactly what our souls need!
- Wine is just a shadow. Just a picture of the joy found in Jesus Christ.
- Alcohol is a foretaste, Jesus is the fullness!
- We see it in his life, we see it in his death, and we even see it in our future with Him.

Matthew 26:29 I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

- One day we will be with Jesus and we will sit at a feast with Him, and we will drink the best wine we've ever tasted.

- The kingdom of heaven will be a feast!
 - But the real feast isn't the food or the drink. It is the presence of our Savior.
 - The real joy won't be the wine, it will be in the endless love written on His face for us.
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- Wine is just a picture, just a shadow of the joy that is in Jesus.
 - Don't fall in love with the shadow and miss the savior.
 - Don't be too easily pleased, content to waste away your life at a drunk party, while the God of the heavens calls you to belong to Him.
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- Going to do something a little different this morning, interview Jordan
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- Tell me about the struggle you had with alcohol.
 - How did you finally realize you needed Jesus?
 - What does your recovery look like now, and how have you seen God's grace in it?
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- I love Jordan's story, because the real good news isn't that he's sober.
 - The good news is that through the Spirit he is falling in love with Jesus
 - Some of us will drink, some of us won't, but by God's grace we will be filled with the Spirit and coming to love Jesus more and more

- True freedom isn't being able to drink- true freedom is in knowing Christ, loving Christ and being loved by Christ

RESPONSE

- Not all of you struggle w alcohol-
- But we are all looking for the same things, we are just looking in different places
- We are looking for joy, for fulfillment, for meaning.
- Alcohol tends to be a place people look when they've exhausted every other place and haven't found what they're looking for.
- That is why I think an alcoholic coming to that place they call – 'rock bottom' is such a great metaphor for what each one of us has to do to be saved
- We have to admit that we are broken, and we need a Savior
- That we have been trying to drink from broken cisterns, but they aren't holding the water we need to satisfy us
- Some of you need to repent from relying on alcohol to give you only what God can give you
- Some of you might not struggle with alcohol at all, but you've realized this morning that you aren't living filled with the Spirit
- It's important to ask ourselves these questions-
- When life is hard, where do you find your joy?
- When you're hurting, where do you seek comfort?
- When you are spent, where do you look for refreshment?

- If the answer to those things is alcohol, you may have an alcohol problem, but as long as the answer to those things isn't Jesus, you will continue to have a problem.
- Your life will be empty because you're drinking from a broken cistern
- If some things revealed to you, speak w someone in your community group this week- don't figure this out alone

COMMUNION

- Jesus said His blood was true drink
- The grace given us by his death means that even as we struggle, the war is over- our salvation was won by Jesus
- We drink down his grace and salvation, and our spiritual thirst is quenched
- Prayer in the back- if the Spirit has exposed some things in your heart, don't wrestle w them alone, healthy to talk to someone- Bible says to pray for one another