**Four Drunks (SR: Proverbs 23:39-35)**

 MADD and the NHTSA offer these sobering statistics regarding drunk driving: it costs the US $199 billion dollars per year; 2/3 of people will be involved in a drunk driving crash, 28 people die every day in drunk driving crashes (amounting to over 10,000 each year with another almost 300,000 injured), and 200 children aged 14 and younger were killed in accidents in 2013. The National Council of Alcoholism and Drug Dependence gives these staggering statistics: alcohol is a factor in 40% of violent crimes (3 million per year), 37% of the nearly 2 million currently incarcerated have admitted to being drunk during the perpetration of their crimes, and among victims of domestic violence, alcohol played a role in 55% of the cases.

Drunkenness is wholly condemned in the Bible. There are no ifs, ands, or buts about it. Anyone who argues that a child of God can continue in drunkenness is deceived. The child of God must be sober, vigilant, and temperate. Anything otherwise is of the Devil.

 The Bible provides numerous examples for our instruction and by these examples, we come to see from a first-hand perspective, the woes of sin. This of course is true of drunkenness as well. We want to look at four men who demonstrate that drunkenness is unacceptable for God’s people.

**I. Our First Drunk – Noah**

 A. Noah was a good man. In fact, without Noah, the world would have ceased to exist at the great Deluge of Genesis (6:5-8).

 B. God provided an unimaginable expression of grace by instructing Noah to build for himself and his family an ark of gopher wood. In so doing, eight souls would pass through the Flood (6:13-22). Noah appropriated this grace by doing all that God commanded. For this, he remains an unforgettable illustration of salvation by grace through faith.

 C. However, Noah was still a man. And as all men are beset by sin, so was Noah. While he was righteous, he was not perfectly righteous. He was not impervious to the sins of his age.

 D. Noah passed through the Flood with His family by the will of God. After disembarking from the ark, Noah and family offered sacrifices unto the Lord that arose as a soothing aroma, a sign of divine approval (8:20-22). God proceeds to bless and establish a covenant with Noah & his progeny (9:1-17). But this approval did not last long…

 E. Some time after the Flood, Noah established a society and business of viticulture. He planted a vineyard, something he no doubt learned from the very men who were purged in the Flood. When the grapes came to harvest, he produced fermented wine with them. We don’t know how much or for what precise purpose, but what we do know is that the quality of the wine was enough to produce drunkenness.

 F. Noah got intoxicated, disrobed himself, and exposed himself in a manner whereby his sons would see. Ham approached Noah and saw this and also acted in a manner absolutely unbecoming of the people of God.

 G. God tells fathers to train their children up in His nurture and admonition. Noah did the exact opposite and put his son in a condemnable position and cursed his family line because of his choice of drunkenness rather than sobriety.

 H. Any good and righteous man can become ensnared in sin. Noah illustrates that to us and he also illustrates the nasty corrupting effect of evil influence. He failed as a child of God, as a parent, & as a role model b/c of his drunkenness.

**II. Our Second Drunk – Lot**

 A. Lot was nephew to Abram, the great progenitor of nations. He is described in the NT as a righteous and godly man who lamented amidst the terrible conduct of unprincipled men surrounding him (2Pet. 2:7).

 B. Lot was given the chance to choose a portion of the Promised Land after a dispute between his herdsmen and his uncle’s herdsmen. He chose the more fruitful and sensually tasteful land of the cities of the plains.

 C. With his choice, came living in a wicked society corrupted by debauchery, licentiousness, and corruption. But he nevertheless chose it and remained there for quite a long time. In fact, he even became a POW during a conflict between nine kings of the region. In captivity, his uncle Abram rescued him.

 D. Lot, like his uncle Abraham, displayed unrivaled hospitality when the angels of destruction came into Sodom (19:1-3; cf. 18:1-8). He pleased God in doing this and even went to the end of offering everything he had to protect these messengers of the Lord from the lewd conduct of his neighbors.

 E. After the angels drug him from the city with his wife and daughters, his unfaithful wife died and he found himself in a cave away from society with his two daughters. Their hermitage concerned his daughters and they devised a plan to intoxicate their father. Rather than refuse the obviously fermented drink, Lot gulped it down and engaged in two nights of incestuous relations.

 F. While the argument can be made that he did this without knowledge of them “coming in or going out” the text is clear in implicating Lot for dropping his guard. His lack of vigilance and sobriety are condemnable and led to the formulation of the nations of Moab and Ammon who became eternal splinters in the side of God’s people.

 G. Like Noah, Lot illustrates the moral corruption that comes with drunkenness. A righteous man, by God’s own definition, dropped his guard, forsook his influence, and became ensnared in perverse sexual immorality. Shirking our position of influence leads to sin and sin multiplies until it begets death.

**III. Our Third and Fourth Drunks – Nadab and Abihu**

A. Nadab and Abihu were of the high priestly office and were sons of the first high priest, Aaron. They are etched into biblical history as the men who offered unsanctioned fire before the Lord.

 B. Laymen and scholar alike have debated the exact nature of this unsanctioned fire. All agree though that whatever it was it was contrary to the will of God and all can see God’s disapproval in His immediate capital punishment of men of such high office.

 C. An interesting element to consider regarding the event is God’s immediate condemnation of drunkenness by the priesthood (Lev. 10:8-11). Contextually, this seems to have played at least some of the role in Nadab and Abihu’s act of treachery.

 D. What is key for our application from this account is the basis of God’s reiteration of the priestly office policy. He tells Aaron and his remaining sons that anyone who neglects to retain sobriety when in service to Him would be immediately killed. Why? Because it is the duty of God’s servants to instruct His people in the difference between the holy and the profane and the clean and the unclean. Drunkenness can only be regarded as unclean and profane in light of this divine injunction.

 E. Anyone who claims allegiance to Christ must of necessity identify with His priesthood of believers (1Pet. 2). God bans drunkenness as unholy and profane, especially among His people. If you want to serve God, you MUST maintain sobriety; there is no justifiable reason to do otherwise (Rom. 13:13; Gal. 5:21; 1Pet. 4:3).

This is not meant to be an exhaustive study of drunkenness. If that is something you wish to study further, we will be glad to assist you. The point of this lesson though is to present four men who chose drunkenness and illustrate the effects of their choice. In none of these examples or in any other examples will you find drunkenness contribute to one’s godliness; rather, you will find that alcoholic consumption always justifies one’s position before God and his influence among others.

 As with any sin, the Lord Jesus will provide victory to those who choose Him over the passing pleasures of this world. Whether you are a full-fledged alcoholic or a social drinker, know that God desires you to be sober. To please God, you must maintain sobriety and put aside the lusts of men.

 If you want to make a resolution today to put away drunkenness and quit justifying an ungodly behavior, we stand ready to assist you. And maybe there are those here whose drink is not alcoholic in nature, but rather the chalice of other sins, give up your addiction. Become addicted to God. Choose life and sobriety before your cup becomes the cup of divine wrath. Whatever we can assist you with this evening, won’t you let us know as we stand and sing.