**He Did Not Drink & Drive**

*by Harry Osborne*

The beer breweries and liquor industry are well accomplished at making their vast profits while hiding behind the façade of a socially acceptable slogan: “Drink Responsibly, Don’t Drink and Drive.” Of course, that does not stop them from advertising along highways, auto racing tracks and other places that tie the two activities together. The beer companies and liquor distilleries are also prominent advertisers with that message at Spring Break locations where the vast majority present are under the legal drinking age. Their message is obviously being heeded, but the effect is still deadly. Please note the following news story from Panama City during Spring Break time a few years ago:

A standout St. Xavier [High School] football player died Friday night in Panama City Beach, Fla., after a fall from a motel balcony.

Matt James, 17, fell from a fifth-floor balcony at the Days Inn Motel at 6:30 p.m. Friday, police told WJHG-TV in Panama City. He died almost instantly.

Investigators said James was at the hotel with a group of about 40 kids and five chaperones. Police said he had been drinking and became belligerent, breaking items in the hotel room and arguing with people.

Detectives told WLWT that some of James' friends left and that he went out onto a balcony to argue with people in the neighboring room. Officers said that James leaned over the balcony during the argument and fell.

Police said they do not know where the alcohol came from or how it was supplied.

Panama City Beach police Chief Deputy Dave Humphreys said it appears that James died from blunt force trauma. However, an exact cause of death won't be determined for six to eight weeks until the toxicology report returns.

Humphreys said investigators have not determined where the chaperones were when the incident happened.

Police said the person who provided the teens with alcohol could face charges.

"It's a tragedy anytime this happens. He had a good upbringing and everything going for him," Humphreys said. "Unfortunately, you get alcohol mixed with balconies this sometimes happens. My message is use alcohol in moderation."

Deputies said the preliminary investigation leads them to believe that the balcony did not suffer any structural damage, precipitating James' fall.

Humphreys said it was the second fatal balcony fall so far during this spring break period.

*[From wlwt.com (News 5), April 2, 2010]*

This young man did what the beer and liquor industry advised. He did not drink and drive, but he is still dead! To make matters worse, he is not the only one dead by following the beer and liquor industry’s advice. Every year, there are people who drink and fall to their death from heights. Every year, there are people who drink and drown. Every year, there are those who drink and are electrocuted, killed at the worksite, die in alcohol related fights, expire from alcohol toxicity or otherwise meet the end of their life as a direct result of alcohol even though they did not drive.

Even after seeing the deadly end of the brewer’s art, Chief Deputy Humphreys repeats the liquor mantra, “My message is use alcohol in moderation.” Excuse me, but do you see a problem with the officer’s advice? First, the boy was 17 years old and lawfully prohibited from drinking any alcohol. Second, the obvious acceptance of young people drinking and then advising they do so “in moderation” is an invitation for others to break the law. Third, how can anyone advise people (especially young, immature minors) to exercise the good judgment and wisdom to use “in moderation” a substance that begins to erode good judgment and wisdom from the very first drop? The advice is absurd! The obvious and admitted purpose of using alcohol is to dull the senses and achieve a desired “buzz” in that altered state of mind. Any honest person will admit that drinking intoxicants is not done to enhance good judgment and wisdom, but adversely affects those qualities. The appeals for “responsible use of alcohol” are sheer sophistry at face value!

Let us examine what real “wisdom” advises about drinking intoxicants. Proverbs is one of the books called “Wisdom Literature” in the Old Testament. The majority of the book conveys the words of Solomon, a man blessed with exemplary wisdom by God (1 Kings 4:29-34). In fact, the book of Proverbs begins with these words:

*The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel: to know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding, to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity; to give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion— a wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel, to understand a proverb and an enigma, the words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction* (Prov. 1:1-7).

Since we know Solomon was wise and that he was inspired by the All-Wise God to write the proverbs, let us see what those proverbs advise about the use of intoxicants.

***Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise* (Prov. 20:1).**

Wines available on our market range from 12 to 16% alcohol by volume. The wines of the Bible times had a maximum alcoholic content of 4 to 6% (See J. Free, Archaeology & Bible History, pp. 351-365). If the wine of Bible times was a “mocker,” how much more so are modern wines? Today’s wines would be classified as “strong drink” in biblical terms. The Bible clearly, absolutely and universally condemns the use of “strong drink.” When one considers modern “cocktails” and other liquor, sometimes containing 20 to 25% alcohol by volume aftercutting, the wise advice against such intoxicants is intensified!

***Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things. Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: "They have struck me, but I was not hurt; they have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?"* (Prov. 23:31-34).**

Did you catch that advice? “**Do not look** on the wine.” In other words, do not even view it with desire, much less drink it! Why? According to the wise Solomon, inspired by God, it will harm you in the end. That fact is noted after his advice, just as he had already stated in his preceding words:

***Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine* (Prov. 23:29-30).**

If you are seeking true wisdom in advice concerning intoxicants, there you have it! No, that is not the advice you will get from the beer breweries or the liquor industry, nor is it the advice of our mass media dependent on money from advertising for the intoxicants. Sadly, it is not even the advice you may get from a growing number of those professing to be Christians who seek to justify a “moderate use” of intoxicants. While a growing number even among brethren echo the ridiculous message of the liquor industry, sneak a glass of wine out of the view of their brethren or chill a few beers in their refrigerators, their forgotten Bibles still retain the wise advice they need to heed: **DO NOT LOOK ON IT!**