

Dear friend:

Do you find it difficult to say ‘No’ to liquor? Or has consuming liquor become a habit that you cannot quit? You probably would have taken the first sip of liquor ‘just for kicks’ or out of curiosity or peer pressure.

Liquor affects millions of people. Initially, one who consumes liquor may not realize the change in behaviour, but people around will. There are mood swings, impaired judgment and problems in family and other relationships.

### A Wise Saying

All Scriptures warn us against addiction to alcohol. An ancient wise advice says this:

*Drinking... makes you loud and foolish. It's stupid to get drunk.*

*Don't associate with people who drink too much wine or stuff themselves with food.*

*(Proverbs 20:1, 23:20)*

### Liquor and Health

Medical science tells us how harmful alcohol is to our health.

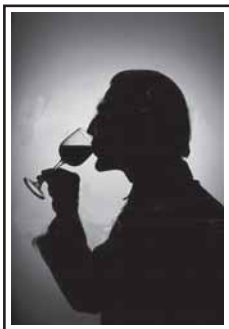
★ A major health hazard is the damage it does to our liver. Early warnings are abdominal pain, tiredness, swelling of the ankles and redness of the palms. Doctors call it “Cirrhosis of the Liver.”

★ Drinking, smoking and stress can affect our heart. White fat tissues get deposited in the corners of your heart making it difficult to pump the blood thereby causing a heart attack. Those with diabetes need to be extra careful, because, alcohol increases, what the doctors call, the “Serum Triglycerides.”

★ Alcohol dilates the blood vessels, reduces attention and slows down the reaction time. Alcohol can cause deficiency of ‘Vitamin B Complex’ (Thiamin) resulting in mental disorder or ‘dementia’. It also damages the cells in our Pancreas leading to chronic inflammation of the gland.

### Alcoholism

Studies have shown three distinctive stages in the life of an alcoholic. Each stage has its own signs and symptoms:



**The Early Stage:** Habitual consumption of liquor is a progressive disease. The first warning sign is the need for more drinks to get the same pleasure feeling which he or she got earlier with just one or two drinks.

**The Middle Stage:** There is loss of control. The alcoholic often talks big and spends big. By now, he or she would have got into many financial and relationship problems and may even abstain from drinking for a while in an attempt to recover. However, the ‘dry drink’ symptoms they experience almost certainly make them to slip back.

**The Chronic Stage:** By now, there is a noticeable physical, mental and social decline in behaviour. There is ethical and moral breakdown – the person may borrow, lie or even steal to keep liquor in supply. The hands start to tremble due to lack of co-ordination and life becomes stressful. At this stage, an alcoholic is more sober while drinking than when not having a drink. This is the end of the road, a slow painful death !

### Quitting Liquor

Quitting alcohol certainly protects you from the health scares. If you have a problem, get help or treatment as early

as possible. If you had tried and failed, why don't you seek help? You can stop further damage to the vital organs in your body. The good news is – if you seek help, your chances of quitting would go up immensely. Unless ‘self-motivated’, it is often difficult to quit. Approach ‘Alcoholics Anonymous’ in your city or any de-addiction centre close to you. Please note:

*Your will to live can sustain you when you are sick, but if you lose it, your last hope is gone.*

*Proverbs 18:14*

The stigma of being labeled ‘Addicted’ is perhaps the primary cause for many not seeking professional help. Instead of finding fault with others and your life situations, recognize that you alone are responsible for your habit.

### What the Scripture says

The Holy Bible advises us that drinking can lead to penury and ruin our lives.

*Drunkards and gluttons will be reduced to poverty. If all you do is eat and sleep, you will soon be wearing rags.*

*Wise people walk the road that leads upwards to life, not the road that leads downwards to death.*

*(Proverbs 23:21; 15:24)*

Instead of taking liquor for our well-being, the Bible asks us to seek the guidance of God's Holy Spirit to direct our lives.

*Do not get drunk with wine, which will only ruin you; instead, be filled with God's Holy Spirit.*

*What I say is this: let God's Holy Spirit direct your lives, and you will not satisfy the desires of the human nature.*

*For what our human nature wants is opposed to what God's Holy Spirit wants, and what God's Holy Spirit wants is opposed to what our human nature wants. These two are enemies, and this means that you cannot do what you want to do.*

*(Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:16-17)*

### True Freedom

You can experience freedom from liquor by asking the Lord Jesus to help you in quitting liquor and living a life with purpose and meaning. Jesus has given us the following promises in the Holy Bible. You can claim these promises and ask the Lord Jesus to help you quit liquor and lead a life of true joy and peace:

*- I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness.*

*- I will never turn away any one who comes to me.*

*- Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest.* (John 10:10b, 6:37b; Matthew 11:28)

True freedom is indeed knowing God. God's Holy Spirit can make us wise and reveal God in our lives so that we know Him personally.

### Ravi's experience:

Here is a true life story of how Ravi, an Army officer overcame his drinking problem:

*"I followed my father's footsteps; joined his profession and became an officer. Unconsciously, like my father I also took to partying, drinking and smoking. I felt my wife Anita was not fun to be with, so I tolerated her but had my own lifestyle. I added a wide circle of friends with whom I partied and drank. Soon I ignored my wife altogether. Everyone was asking Anita to step out of the marriage, including my mother and sister. I could not live a day without my usual forty cigarettes and a bottle of 'Old Monk'.*

*Anita, however had a deep faith in God and she spoke to me about Him. Then things changed! My hard heart softened, and came to realize*

*there is a God who loves even me. I soon experienced the stirring of God's love in me. Anita willingly forgave all my wrong-doings. The growing awareness of God in my life totally changed my lifestyle. I just did not feel like having my usual cigarettes and drinks. Now I realize that indeed God can change any person."*

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