

Proactive, Positive and Practical

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Somehow overeating and gluttony failed to make the list. In fact, they are almost encouraged in cherished Baptist traditions like "dinner on the ground."

Rather than adopting such lists of "don'ts" for our framework, the Baptist Center for Ethics and Acacia Resources emphasize the flip sides of issues: pro-health, not anti-alcohol; pro-women and pro-people of color, not anti-discrimination; pro-poor people, not anti-poverty; pro-family, not anti-abortion and anti-pornography; pro-sex education, not anti-human sexuality; pro-character development, not anti-moral failure.

Curricula such as [*Living Wisely, Living Well: Lessons from The Proverbs*](#) seeks to challenge people to think for themselves about issues, and beyond that, reframe the way they think, talk and work on these issues. While it is more difficult to be positive than negative, we are committed to a constructive ethics agenda.

One of these issues is alcohol use.

While the Bible is clear in its condemnation of drinking to excess, it offers more than one message on the use of alcohol. The Psalmist refers to wine as a gift from God and notes that it can "gladden the heart" (Ps 104:15).

Few people will argue that alcohol abuse has serious and deadly consequences.

Drunkenness diminishes a person's ability to perceive clearly, think plainly and judge accurately.

Most people who drink say that they know where to draw the line and that they never "get drunk" or drive while impaired. They point to numerous studies that tout the benefits of moderate alcohol consumption.

Some of these people are in your Sunday school class.

This lesson focusing on teachings from Proverbs about alcohol can generate lively discussion and even debate among your class members. Encourage and facilitate that. Allow people to express their views in a judgment-free environment. Lead them to apply the teachings of Scripture about alcohol in making positive, proactive decisions about health in general: diet, exercise, preventive care, mental and emotional balance.

EthicsDaily.com has numerous columns and features you may find helpful as you prepare for and teach this lesson. The list below is not exhaustive but representative. In addition to alcohol use and abuse, the Web site also regularly addresses other health issues and concerns. You may find some of the following especially pertinent to this lesson:

["Alcohol: A Prescription for Health?"](#)

["Report Documents Severity of Underage Drinking Problem"](#)

["Panel Urges National Strategy to Fight Underage Drinking"](#)

["Parents Troubled by Effects of Alcohol Advertising on Youth"](#)

["Alcohol-related Traffic Deaths on the Rise"](#)

["Alcohol Abuse: An Older Problem Emerging"](#)

["Teens Consume One-Fifth of Nation's Alcohol"](#)

["Habitual Drunk Drivers Pose Serious Threat"](#)

["Alcohol's Addictiveness Leads to Theology of Abstinence"](#)

["The Church's Environmental Impact on Substance Abuse"](#)

["More Americans Drinking Alcohol"](#)

["Baptists and Booze: A European Perspective"](#)

Wisdom, the Proverbs writers say, knows the dangers of alcohol and the benefits of proactive, positive and practical choices.

*[Jan Turrentine](#) is managing editor of *Acacia Resources*.*