

## DRUNKENNESS VERSES DISEASE: OR WHAT ABOUT ALCOHOL ABUSE?

**Dr. George C. Scipione, Director of the RPTS Biblical Counseling Institute, replies to the following question from an RPTS alum on April 20, 2009:**

*My question is about the Celebrate Recovery Christian 12-step program. I know of someone who has a problem with alcohol who has been involved with Celebrate Recovery in a local church. Even though Celebrate Recovery claims to have weeded out all the secular aspects of 12-step programs, I am personally skeptical of any 12-step program being Biblical, since the model for them is AA, which comes from a non-Christian perspective. The word "recovery" alone makes me question whether it is Biblically oriented -- a drunkard, like any other sinner, is not recovering from his sin, but is rather repenting of it, being forgiven, and turning from it. "Recovery" implies disease, which is what AA calls the sin of drunkenness by calling it alcoholism. **My question: Is the method of Celebrate Recovery consistent with a Nouthetic approach to the sin of drunkenness?***

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Dr. Scipione's Response in Outline Form (See his YouTube video on this subject at [www.youtube.com/RPTSeminary](http://www.youtube.com/RPTSeminary)):

### Engaging the Heart

- I. The question is asked: what is the biblical position on 12 step programs in general and Christian 12 step programs in particular.
- II. The Biblical approach is both much less complicated than the 12-step approach and much more complex.

### Exposition of the Word

- I. Drunkenness is listed as a "deed of the flesh".
  - A. Proverbs 23:29-35 describes the process of and the problems with heavy drinking.
  - B. Galatians 5:21 deems it a deed of the flesh that bars one from the Kingdom of God.
- II. Drunkenness is a "heart" problem.
  - A. Matthew 15:16-20. Out of the heart comes...
  - B. Galatians 5:16-24; Ephesians 5:15-20. Deed of the flesh; the opposite of being filled with the Spirit.
- III. Drunkenness is eradicated by repentance, faith, obedience.
  - A.** 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Such were some of you; washed, sanctified, justified.
  - B. Ephesians 5:18-20. Filled with the Holy Spirit making melody with the heart to the Lord...
- IV. Drunkenness has no scientific standing as a disease.
  - A. Dr. Silkworth: an allergy to alcohol.
  - B. No proven genetic link.
  - C. The 12-step approach fails to have any notion of sin or repentance towards God, although it acknowledges wrongs on the human, horizontal level.

## Exhortation for Life

- I. The 12-step approach is totally humanistic.
  - A. The history of AA: Dr. A Peterson in the Marriage and Family Syllabus and
  - B. God exists to get men sober.
  - C. Sobriety and not sin is at the core.
  - D. There are some faint shadows of Christianity: group responsibility; total focus on issues; accountability; evangelism of the message, etc.
- II. The Biblical model is:
  - A. Much less complex: 3 step; repent before God, believe in the Person and work of Jesus, obey God's word.
  - B. Much moiré complex in that it takes God's washing, sanctification, and justification and ongoing filling by the Holy Spirit which can never be programmed.