“Should My Husband Get Baptized If He Still Wants to Get Drunk?”

My husband is now a newly born again believer and wants to get baptized. My concern is that even though he has asked Jesus to be his savior and wants to get baptized, he won’t give up getting drunk. He says it is his “one thing” he isn’t ready to give up. Should he still get baptized?

I’m so glad you wrote! What’s your understanding of what it means to be baptized? It is an outward symbol of an inward reality: that he has trusted in Christ, is now a member of His family, and wants to testify that a very important change has happened inside.

It doesn’t mean he has his act together. <smile>

You can read all the way through the New Testament and not find any specifications for being baptized other than deciding to follow Christ, and no reasons *not* to be baptized. As your husband walks with the Lord and starts to realize that the abundant life starts with Jesus living inside him, He will provide a different way of viewing getting drunk. But that’s going to take time, and I want to encourage you, one wife to another, to let the Lord be in charge of the timing of that dealing with that behavior. There are reasons he gets drunk that God is fully aware of, and will deal with at the right time.

Please, give your husband a break. . . and a baptism party! Celebrate this great, great news. . . and let the Holy Spirit be the Holy Spirit. He knows all about your husband’s drinking. You pray, and trust God.

Hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

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After reading this article on our website, this wise wife wrote to me:

Twenty-six years ago, my husband and I started going to a local church sometimes. God had been calling us to Him for some time, and at that point I fully committed my life to Him. My husband was born again when a man from church took the time to befriend my husband and explain the gospel to him. My husband continued drinking (I didn't only because I was pregnant).

I didn't say anything to him, but he later told me that he started hiding from me how much he was drinking because he was feeling guilty. One day our pastor stopped by with his family when they were out for a bike ride, and my husband offered him a beer! I was mortified; I didn't know much about being a Christian, but I did know that it wasn't socially acceptable to offer a pastor a beer!

Thank God for that pastor, though, and the people of that church who welcomed us and took a genuine interest in us. The pastor graciously declined with "no thanks" but continued visiting and didn't make my husband feel like a leper or give him a lecture. Not too long after that, an elder of the church encouraged us to start coming to Sunday School Bible study classes instead of just worship services. Because my husband felt comfortable with the pastor, he talked to him about this. He told our pastor, "I want to come to church more often, but I like drinking beer and don't want to stop, and I don't want people to judge me." The pastor told him, "Whether or not you should be drinking beer is between you and God, and no one at church is going to say anything to you about it. Don't let that thought keep you from coming to church or growing closer to God."

So we started going to Bible studies and became more involved

in the church. Within a few months, just after our son was born, my husband quit drinking. It happened this way: My husband later told me that he had been feeling the conviction that he shouldn't be drinking and he knew that he didn't want his son to grow up like he had, with an alcoholic father. But he liked beer so much that he kept ignoring the thoughts. One day when my husband was in the garage, he felt that conviction so strongly that he knelt down on the floor there in the garage and surrendered himself completely to God, and vowed not to drink again. He quit that very day, and God helped him keep that vow. He came into the house to find me, very emotional, and told me what had happened.

I can't take credit for being wise enough not to say anything to him about drinking; that had to be the Lord's work. But I do think that because I didn't say anything to him about it, the struggle stayed between my husband and God and didn't become a power struggle between him and me. I know enough now to know that a wife should not attempt to be her husband's conscience on matters such as this; God calls her to love and honor her husband.

God does not always use the same timeline or the same routes with everyone, and not everyone is equally responsive to God. But that woman can be sure that God IS working with her husband, just as He is working with her, and that His Spirit is dealing with anything He wants her husband to change. She can trust God enough to leave the conviction to Him, and to guide her in what her responses should be in difficult decisions (such as if he wants her to drink with him) and how to honor her husband without compromising her beliefs. I will pray for this woman and pray that her husband will respond to the Lord and fully commit him life to Him.

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“Jesus Contributed to Drunkenness!”

I know drunkenness is condemned in Scripture, yet it seems that Jesus contributed to the drunkeness at the wedding feast when he turned the water to wine.

I’m afraid we can’t agree with your conclusions. First of all, Scripture doesn’t say anything about drunkenness occurring at the wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11). Secondly, to blame the Lord Jesus for drunkenness by changing water into wine is like blaming God for the Great Chicago Fire because He created wood with the capacity to burn. No one is responsible for drunkenness except the person who chooses to overdrink. I think it’s important to draw a distinction between the fact that God created good things in the first place, and the possibility that those good things can be abused. He is never responsible for our sinful choices.

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