

To Juice or not to Juice?

**Godly  
Decision  
making**

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## **Godly Decision Making**

### **Godly?**

What does it mean to be godly? What is godliness?

"... a God-honouring manner of life, issuing from a true knowledge of God and his grace in Christ Jesus."<sup>1</sup>

This paper will address what it means to be godly and how godliness affects the decisions that we make in every day life, from big decisions to small decisions.

### **Why do/should Christians want to be godly???**

Firstly we should look at the motivations for living a godly life.

Why do Christians want to live godly lives?

Why should Christians be living godly lives?

How can Christians live godly lives?

Can you be a Christian and not live a godly life?

In 2Corinthians5:14-15, it is Christ's love that compels us to no longer live for ourselves. It is knowing that he has died and risen again for us that motivates us to no longer live for ourselves but live for Jesus. This passage in 2Corinthians is similar to other places in the Bible that talk about God's grace, and how in view of God's grace we ought to be living transformed lives. We ought to be living godly lives because of God's grace to us in Christ Jesus.

Paul's epistle to Titus is all about "...the truth that leads to godliness."<sup>2</sup> It is a knowledge of the truth and God's grace revealed to us in Christ Jesus that lead us to living godly lives.

**"<sup>11</sup>For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. <sup>12</sup>It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age..."<sup>3</sup>**  
**(Titus 2:11-12)**

This passage tells us that it is God's grace that teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness, and therefore by implication it also teaches us how to say 'Yes' to godliness. Grace is "God's unmerited favour to those who only deserve His wrath."<sup>4</sup> The question of how this practically helps us is important. An illustration might help.

There was a man who often went on business trips overseas. He was a happily married man, but found himself away from home often. On one occasion on a trip overseas he was involved in an adulterous relationship with another woman. It came about that on his return home, his wife found out about this act of sexual immorality. His wife

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<sup>1</sup> D.G. Peterson, "Godliness" in *New Bible Dictionary*, ed. J.D. Douglas (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1996), 422-423.

<sup>2</sup> Titus 1:1

<sup>3</sup> All scriptural references are taken from *The New International Version (NIV)*.

<sup>4</sup> J. Bridges, *The Discipline of Grace* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1994), 22.

knowing how much God had forgiven her, found it in her heart to forgive her husband for this destructive act. The husband was amazed at how easy it was for his wife to forgive him. However, one afternoon, the husband returned home from work early. On his way up the stairs to greet his wife, he heard noises coming from the bedroom. As he approached the door, he could hear sobbing, and as he peered into the room he could see his wife kneeling on the ground praying to God. She was pleading with God that he would help her to continue forgiving her husband for what he had done. In actual fact, despite what the husband had initially thought, it wasn't easy for his wife to forgive him. Realising now what his wife had been through and was continuing to go through to forgive him, the husband realised how great it was to be forgiven. Now next time he goes on a business trip overseas and is tempted to commit adultery again, what do you think will be going through the back of his mind? He would be reminded of what it cost his wife to forgive him last time he stuffed up, and it is hoped that this would persuade him to say "No" to this ungodly act.

It should be like this with us saying 'No' to ungodliness. When we see how great the debt that we have been forgiven by God is, we will say 'No' to ungodliness. When we see God's grace to us in Christ Jesus, we will no longer want to be living a life of rebellion against him. We by nature all deserve to be punished for our rejection of God. None of us are worthy to be in a relationship with the creator of the universe and none of us are good enough to be right with him. It is totally by grace<sup>5</sup> that we are in a relationship with God. It is only by Jesus taking the penalty for our rebellion, through his death and resurrection that we can have eternal life with God. How can a holy and just God forgive sinners? What did it cost for us to be forgiven? Well for God to be a just God he must punish sin and it cost Him the life of his own Son, Jesus. Jesus is the righteous one who does not deserve to be punished, who takes the punishment for us who are unrighteous and do deserve to be punished.<sup>6</sup>

When we know how great our debt (that we couldn't pay) was to God, and that in Jesus' death and resurrection he has paid the penalty for us, when we know this **grace** of God we will no longer want to live ungodly lives.

There are many passages in the Bible that teach us how we are now to live as people who have been forgiven by God. There are a number of passages that talk about putting off the old self and putting on the new self. In Colossians<sup>7</sup> we are told to "Put to death... whatever belongs to your earthly nature" (v5) and to "clothe ourselves" (v12) with godly character traits.

If you are a Christian it is fare enough to say that you are pursuing godliness. If you have understood God's grace in Christ Jesus you will take seriously godliness and living a godly life.<sup>8</sup>

With this background on our motivations to be godly, we will move onto how decision-making should be done with godliness in mind.

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<sup>5</sup> Look at Ephesians 2:8-10

<sup>6</sup> Look at 1Peter 3:18

<sup>7</sup> Especially Chapter 3 verse 1-17

<sup>8</sup> With all this in mind, we must remember that it isn't our godly living that makes us right with God; it is totally by his grace that we are saved, it is by Jesus dying and rising again. We can't take any credit in our salvation. Yet we are to live "self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age" (Titus2:12)

## **Godly Decisions**

There are many decisions that we have to make. We make a great number of decisions each day. Some decisions are important, some are less important. Some decisions are big and significant, some are small and insignificant. Some decisions are difficult to make, some are easy to make. Some require us to consciously think, and many we do without thinking. Nevertheless there are many decisions that we have to make day to day. And as Christians, we should be always seeking to make wise and godly decisions.

### **3 types of decisions:<sup>9</sup>**

1. **Right/Wrong** – there are decisions that are clearly an issue of right or wrong. The Bible sets out a lot that is clearly black or white. If I was faced with the decision of shooting Adrian in the head with a gun, there are two options. Shoot or not shoot. If I chose to shoot Adrian it would clearly be a wrong thing, but if I chose to not shoot Adrian it would be a right thing (even though you may not like him!!). Likewise I have the choice to have sex outside of marriage if I do so desire. If I decide to have sex outside of marriage, this is wrong; but if I abstain from this practise; it is right.

2. **Wise/Unwise** – there are decisions that are not necessarily about right and wrong, but about wisdom. Often if you make a decision that is unwise it may lead to doing something that is clearly wrong. These types of decisions will be dealt with more in a moment.

3. **Trivial** – many decisions that we make are trivial. In the grand scheme of things these decisions are neither here nor there. The important thing with these decisions is to just make them. A decision such as what colour I should paint my bedroom is trivial. Whether I choose to use Blue paint or Purple doesn't really matter (unless the purple paint costs \$10000 a litre – which in that case it would probably be wise to go with the blue paint for \$20 a litre!).

## **Juice**<sup>10</sup>

To juice or not to juice? That is the question. And that is the title of this paper. Is it right or wrong to go to Juice? Is it wise or unwise to go to Juice? Or is it just a trivial decision? Is it godly or ungodly to go to Juice?

Firstly I want to suggest that going to Juice is hardly a trivial decision. It is definitely not like choosing between two colours of paint to paint your bedroom. I also want to say that going to Juice initially isn't a matter of right or wrong either. I think it comes down to wisdom.

## **Motivations for Juicing**

Our motivations for going to Juice are a big factor on whether it is wise or unwise to go. As Christians we are free to go.

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<sup>9</sup> P.D. Jensen & T. Payne, *Guidance and the Voice of God* (Sydney: Matthias Media, 1997), 90. In this fantastic book they describe these 3 categories as 1. Matters of righteousness; 2. Matters of good judgment; and 3. Matters of triviality.

<sup>10</sup> For others reading this paper *Juice* is an under18's nightclub on the Central Coast.

**"You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love."  
(Galatians 5:13)**

This passage says that we are free people, but that we are not to use our freedom so that we can sin.

### **'Right' motivations**

If you like to dance and listen to dance music... Juice is a great place to go.

If you would like to tell non-Christians about Jesus' death and resurrection... there are lots of non-Christians at Juice.

If you would like to have fun and hang out with friends... Juice can be a good place to go.

### **'Wrong' motivations**

It is wrong to go to Juice to drink alcohol and/or get drunk. Drinking alcohol in itself is not wrong, but being under the legal age makes it wrong. Likewise with smoking – it is not wrong, but illegal for under 18s. Other wrong motivations would include the use of illegal and prohibited drugs

If you are going to Juice to 'pick up' chicks, you are in the wrong place. Firstly you shouldn't go anywhere to 'pick up' chicks. But if you genuinely want to meet a potential marriage partner, and you are a Christian, you will be looking in a Christian setting such as church or youth group. You don't go to Harvey Norman to buy a Pizza, just like you don't go to Juice to find a marriage partner.<sup>11</sup>

### **Wisdom**

With these things in mind, and having the right motivations, it is a matter of wisdom.

Is it wise and godly for me to go? When you look at all the dodgy elements at a nightclub they far outweigh the one or two good reasons to go. Along with the alcohol, drugs and excessively loud music, there is also the potential for fights and violence<sup>12</sup>; and then there is the inappropriate clothing that females like to wear<sup>13</sup> that is unhelpful for adolescent males. So wisdom would say that it would be best to stay away from these types of places. As Christians we will continue to see a world deeply entrenched in sin around us, but we shouldn't go out of our way to be part of it.<sup>14</sup>

### **Don't trust yourself**

If you choose to go, don't trust yourself. Go with other Christians and always be accountable to other Christians as well. Pray to God that you will not indulge your

<sup>11</sup> Marriage partners... this is a different issue... but at your age... any relationships that you are going into should be with this in mind... if not don't be in these relationships. Also this isn't the place to talk about 'going out' with non-Christians... but it is not wise and potentially destructive to be going out with a non-Christian.

<sup>12</sup> There are often reports of shootings in night clubs around the world... including Australia

<sup>13</sup> Matthew 5:27-30 tells us that to look at a woman lustfully is as bad as committing adultery with her...

<sup>14</sup> Cf. 1John 2:15-17

sinful nature and stumble. Pray that in all things you will make wise and godly decisions when you are there.

### **Big Brother**

If ALL of your actions AND thoughts on the night of Juice were captured on camera... would you be comfortable for the footage to be shown on national TV? What about on PowerPoint at church? Or on video at cell group?? Your actions at Juice should be actions that you are not ashamed of, and that you are not embarrassed for others to know about. This is a good principle for all areas of our lives. In everything we do, either while by ourselves or with others we should not be ashamed if others saw what we did on video.

### **Biggest Father**

Our motivation to be godly shouldn't just be that our friends or parents or leaders might find out about what have been up to, but we should be seeking to be godly. Why should we be seeking to be godly? As was explained at the start of this paper. When we see God's grace we should be motivated to say 'No' to ungodliness. When we know what it cost God to forgive us we should no longer live for ourselves, but we should live to please him.

Our Father in heaven is always watching everything we do<sup>15</sup>. Unlike Big Brother, God sees everything we do and think. Ultimately it is before God that we are accountable – is it pleasing for him to see what you are doing and thinking? Are you making godly decisions that glorify him?

### **Discussion Questions:**

Why should we seek to be godly?  
 What are some alternatives to the 'right' motivations for going to juice?  
 What are other areas of your life that decisions are a matter of wisdom?

### **Further Reading:**

Must read:

P.D. Jensen & T. Payne, *Guidance and the voice of God* (Sydney: Matthias Media, 1997).

Others:

J. Bridges, *The Practice of Godliness* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1996).

K. Hawtrey, *The true and living God* (Sydney: Matthias Media, 1998).

P.D. Jensen & T. Payne, *Pure sex* (Sydney: Matthias Media, 1998).

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<sup>15</sup> Read Psalm 139.