

Does the Owl Still Call Your Name?

Paths of Struggle and Renewal

Does Alcohol Still Call Your Name?

ON THE LOOKOUT

by William Dumas

For the past hour and one-half I have watched one of my Indian brothers sitting across the street on a windowsill and from where I sit, I can see that he has had a bit to drink.

I have been asking myself, “What is a man of his age doing sitting on a window sill?”

He looks to be about fifty but I could be wrong. (Booze can really age a person.) He is a short man with shabby clothes

and a sharp-peaked cap still commonly used by our brothers his age. What strikes me more, is that he reminds me so much of a vulture. Maybe it is because of his cap and the way he is holding his hands. His head constantly darts back and forth searching up and down the street for someone who will bring the next drink and I pray that nobody ever shows up.

Every once in a while someone will share the windowsill with him, not for his company but for a place to survey the scene. Then they will spy a likely prospect and slowly walk on over to beg or bully the victim for a drink in the bar. Along the street there are other groups doing the same thing, staring thirstily towards the hotel, waiting for someone to come along so they can quench the thirst that only the drinking man knows.

Someone must have received enough money to buy a bottle because a little group has disappeared behind a building

to make quick work of the contents, the way a thirsty man gulps down a glass of cold water on a hot day. Boosted by the spirits in the bottle they will come out more boldly and aggressively to beg for the nickels and quarters needed to buy the next one. After a few more trips behind the building they will forget who they are. Then they will wander around town being abusive to others and especially to themselves. They will tire shortly, walking around blindly and with an empty stomach and will try to make it home. They will be back in the morning long before the bar is opened to start the only thing they care for now: begging for coins for that first drink of the day or to buy a bottle to take behind the buildings.

Yes, my brothers, we are in real bad shape and we must face the fact that we are up to our necks in alcohol and some of our brothers are drowning. We must swim to shore where there is safety and

make a light so our brothers can see to escape.

There are a lot of reasons for the condition so many of our brothers are in, but let's not say it is their problem; it is ours too. It really hurts me to see father, mother and daughter standing together waiting for someone to give them the added problems alcohol brings.

My brother is still sitting on that windowsill. He must be tired for every once in a while his head nods only to be jolted awake by the cold evening air to continue his vigilance. His head continues to move quickly back and forth, up and down the street, as he waits, searching for the drink he craves.

Brother, if you only knew how I feel for you, but there is nothing I can do that will alter the shape you and our people are in. only the faint hope that I have swum ashore and started a warm fire. You, too, can swim ashore from alcohol

and start your fire where it is peaceful and we can all be happy together again.

FRIEND, YOU MUST make a choice between Jesus Christ and alcohol. That's the choice you will have to make. Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God who died for the sins of His people so that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

If a person turns to Jesus, confesses his sin, and trusts Him for salvation, Jesus will supply that person with what he needs through the power of His Holy Spirit.

This is why Ephesians 5 says,

Don't be drunk with wine, but be filled with the Holy Spirit of Christ.

Believe in Jesus and you will have the courage you need. You will have the sense of purpose and the joy you are looking for. I'm making this very simple

and I know it. There's a lot to what I'm talking about, and I think you should find a church where Jesus is the center in order to find out what all this means. Right now I want to be simple about this. The alternatives are simply put in the Bible: alcohol or Jesus.

I can understand why people who don't know Jesus need alcohol to keep their sanity. Once you know Him, He will help you fight the alcohol problem.

What will happen to you if Jesus doesn't help you? You cannot go on the way you are right now, can you?

My advice to you is simple" understand that you have to make a choice between what alcohol can give you and what Christ can give you. Choose Christ and find life.

Parents, you are going to have to also make a choice. I am fully aware of all the arguments that suggest that you have

a perfect right to drink. Let's assume that they are all valid, but even if you do have a right, look what you are doing to yourself and to your children. Honestly now, can you really get through a day without alcohol? Isn't it true that already in the morning you look forward to your first drink? You are drinking at noon, too, aren't you? And in the evening? How many ounces of alcohol a day do you consume? Maybe you can handle this now but what is going to happen if you really come up against a full-blown crisis in your life?

This is a spiritual matter. I invite you to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ and ask Him to substitute the power of His Spirit for the power of alcohol in your life. So much is at stake. Christ can save you from whatever slavery you have fallen into and He can make your life beautiful and meaningful. He can give you resources to face yourself, your problems and your frustrations.

Let's be realistic. Let's not be absurd about this problem. Don't let the enjoyment of the taste of alcohol and the pleasure it gives cloud your mind so that you forget that wine is a mocker. The Bible says it is; you know it is (Proverbs 20:1).

Look at what is at stake. Alcohol can make a fool of you. It can destroy you and the children you love. This is why you need Jesus. Turn to Him and ask for forgiveness and ask for His Spirit.

Alcohol may be too strong for you but the Bible says we can do all things because Christ gives us the strength (Philippians 4:13).

Give Him a chance.