

Should a Christian assist his/her spouse participate with alcohol, drugs, or gambling?

There are many Christians who drink alcohol socially or use drugs recreationally or enjoy gambling. Other Christians condemn those who do such things as living a life of sin.

1. Are such activities sinful in themselves?

Leviticus **23:13**
Proverbs **3:9-10**
Leviticus **16:8-9**
Proverbs 16:33

Psalms **104:14-15**
1 Timothy **5:23**
Esther 3:7
Mark **15:24**

The use of alcohol, specifically wine, is commanded by God to be a part of the Jewish offerings. It is also used by God to indicate the presence of God's blessing upon a people. Paul encouraged Timothy, for health reasons, to use wine. So alcohol use in and of itself is not prohibited. The scriptures are largely silent on recreational drug use (in contrast to medicinal use). Many identify the "casting of lots," as a picture of gambling but it is usually used as a means of obtaining God's desired will so it would not be considered gambling in the modern sense.

2. At what point do they become sinful?

Proverbs 20:1; 21:1; **23:30-35; 31:4-7**
Psalm 22:18
John **19:24**

1 Corinthians **6:12**
Romans **13:1-3**

The heavy use of wine or the use of "strong drink," is associated with the actions of sinful men. The association with sin is related to drinking to the point of getting drunk or of losing control of normal mental processing. It is associated with a desire to forget one's sorrows. Since it is neither for religious purposes nor for public celebration purposes nor for health reasons, it would appear that the use of alcohol for the sheer purpose of drinking alcohol would also align with the pursuit of sinful activities as the intention is purely self oriented. Drug use could be broken down into two categories, legal and illegal drug use. Although there are currently no legal recreational drugs, their use would clearly fall outside of the arena of use to worship God and outside of the arena of health use so the recreational drug use would be a cause of concern. Since there are no known legal drugs used for recreation, it would immediately fall under the realm of violating God's standards of living in obedience to God. Gambling for personal use, not for the purpose of obtaining direction on God's will would be identified as sinful activities.

3. If the activity is not sinful, can I assist in their participation?

1 Corinthians **8:10-13**

1 Corinthians **10:27-29**

If your loved one has an occasional drink that does not result in a change of behavior nor are they drinking alone nor getting carried away, there is nothing specifically wrong with buying their alcohol or sitting with them when they drink. Be careful though that you do not communicate that

drinking as much as you want is good and acceptable. Although gambling in the Bible is always associated with sin, some gambling may be acceptable as long as both parties agree to the amount of money that will be lost in the endeavor. However, it is also important to consider that the money you are throwing away at gambling is funding an organization which is commonly associated with the destruction of peoples lives and whole families. There is also the secondary effects that often go with some gambling activities, alcoholism, prostitution, stealing, that you might want to consider as well. You need to also be careful that the activity does not become sinful and also that others won't interpret your activity as endorsing an attitude that if "little bit,, is ok, then maybe a lot is really good. Also, others who are more susceptible to pursuing the activity in a sinful fashion may understand from your involvement that the activity is ok. They nature may then result in them overindulging in the activity.

4. If the activity is sinful, can I assist in their participation?

Matthew 23:14-16

2 Peter **2:1-3**

1 Timothy 6:3-5

Proverbs **1:10**

Romans **2:21**

In a sense, when you assist your loved one to participate in such an activity you are teaching them and others. At a minimum you are teaching them that it is acceptable to engage in such activity. The scriptures are clear that it is not a good idea to teach someone to sin and to encourage them in it. The teachers of sinful activities are condemned in the Bible.

5. What about a wife seeking to obey God by living in submission to her husband?

1 Kings **13:16-24**

Trying to live in obedience to God by living in sin is not living in obedience to God. The book of 1 Kings identifies a situation in which a prophet was given specific instructions to not eat nor drink in the land. When another professing prophet had him over for dinner, the first prophet was killed. He was to live in obedience to what God actually told him and reject the call of another trying to help him out. We are held first accountable to what God tells us to do. Another way to think of it, suppose a woman's husband told his wife to engage in prostitution in order to make more money for the family. For her to do so would be disobedient to God's commands concerning adultery and fornication. For her not to do so could be considered being disobedient to her call to live in submission to her husband. Her primary call is to live in submission to God's call and commands.

6. How can I help my loved one who does participate in such sinful activity?

Galatians **6:1-6**

Titus 3:1-4

2 Timothy **2:25-25**

With gentleness and kindness continue to encourage them to turn from the sin that is bringing them down and is moving them away from the kindness and the carefulness of the Lord. You can continue to pray for them and share with them without getting angry or upset. Remember that you also once walked contrary to God and did those things that brought shame and reproach on the name of God and Christ.