



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on July 13, 2011

Australian Liquor Industry Puts Warning Labels on Bottles

The Australian liquor industry, under an ostensibly voluntary arrangement, has announced that it will carry health warnings on its bottles such as, “Drinking can harm yourself and others.” Of course, many recall that warning labels told Americans 40 years ago that cigarettes (commonly known decades before as “cancer sticks”) could be hazardous to their health.

Can the need for all these warnings be attributed to a growing number of people’s ignorance of the Bible or of Greek civilization? Thousands of years ago, Greeks urged “moderation in all things” and the philosopher Epicurus — incorrectly attributed with advising riotous living — encouraged people to live quiet and peaceful lives, eating good foods and avoiding hangovers.



The Bible many times warns of the dangers of drunkenness, and suggests that these dangers go beyond simple physical peril and discomfort. In American history, movements such as the Women’s Christian Temperance Union worked to bring people to see they should not seek salvation in a bottle.

The cultural and religious heritage of America, as well as that of Australia, is firmly grounded in the enjoyment of life, which means that a glass of wine or a fine cigar, in moderation, is not regarded by the majority of people as wrong. So America had its bout with Prohibition and concluded that trying to keep citizens from drinking as a matter of civil and criminal law was calamitous. The amendment that repealed Prohibition left the final determination concerning the legality of alcohol consumption to local governments, which reflect community standards much more accurately than does Washington.

Conscience and religious seriousness, however, appears to work wonders. So while Orthodox Jews, for instance, are required to drink wine in some practices of Judaism, alcoholism among this demographic group is low. Many devout Christians are likewise encouraged to consume wine in the Eucharist, yet these religiously serious believers are also much less likely to over-imbibe than most of their fellow citizens.

When secular societies “warn” their citizens, however, the results are seldom favorable. Besides, there are always exceptions which effete elitists cannot grasp. When a G.I. in combat wants a cigarette, for example, the tobacco may be harmful, but not as harmful as an anxious soldier catching an enemy bullet. Likewise, handing out cigars when one becomes a father is a celebration of life itself.

What about alcohol? Medical doctors, at one time, actually prescribed alcohol as medicine — because, for some things, it was the only practical medicine available. If one was facing surgery without anesthetic, some strong drink may not only have given one the courage for the surgery but may even have prevented shock. And, in recent years, the health benefits of moderate wine consumption have



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been discussed more and more in the media, such as the MSNBC article: "[Is wine good for you?](#)"

Efforts by government to protect its citizens from every danger in life always fail ultimately. The God of the Bible, many readers of the Good Book will maintain, did not tell man to live his life in a plastic bubble, nor did He tell him to deny the innocent and moderate pleasures of life that are part of Creation. People with any smattering of common sense do not need government bureaus and industry associations to tell them that binge drinking is not good behavior. All they need is to act reasonably, seek wisdom in their decisions, and to live in liberty.



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