

ASIA-PACIFIC NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Towards Recovering: Addressing the Spiritual Needs of Youth Abusing Alcohol in Kalay Myanmar

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Master of Science in Theology

BY

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ASIA-PACIFIC NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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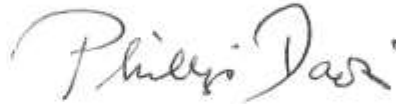
ENTITLED:
TOWARDS RECOVERING: ADDRESSING THE SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF YOUTH
ABUSING ALCOHOL IN KALAY MYANMAR

AS PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN THEOLOGY




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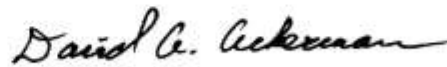
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ABSTRACT

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6. Abstract

This research investigates alcohol consumption and misuse among Christian youth in the Kalay Area of Myanmar, focusing on causes, impacts, and solutions, particularly referencing spiritual concerns. Christian youth frequently initiate alcohol consumption at a young age, often excessively, resulting in considerable negative impacts on the family, church, and community. They grow more distant from the church and decrease in their spirituality. The researcher utilized the qualitative research methodology, which involved performing semi-structured interviews. Despite the well-documented harms of alcohol misuse, the research uncovered a significant theme labeled “seeking peace” as a primary factor. Christian youth in Kalay experience stress due to poverty, little schooling, and a deficiency of Biblical knowledge relating to their

behavior. Consequently, youth frequently resort to alcohol misuse as a means of managing with their stress-related challenges. This research seeks to assist Christian youth in effectively recovering from abuse by addressing their spiritual needs.

This study defines alcohol and examines its effects, including physical, psychological, and emotional impacts. Alcohol consumption also affects families, churches, communities, and spirituality, leading to various problems. The study reviews different perspectives on alcohol use in Scripture, highlighting both positive and negative aspects, as well as theological prohibitions. From a Christian viewpoint, the body is considered the temple of God, and believers are called to live holy lives. The guidance of the Holy Spirit and the use of the Bible are emphasized for meeting spiritual needs, especially among young people.

The research focuses on recovery programs for youth abusing alcohol, exploring the roles of recovery programs, families, churches, and community leaders. Spiritual counseling is identified as a valuable support for recovery, and the study introduces the Grace Intervention Recovery Program as an effective therapy. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with youth abusing alcohol and with leaders involved in their recovery, including those providing training, camps, and rehabilitation care. Due to political instability, data from local authorities could not be obtained; instead, the experiences of leaders and abusers were used as primary sources. Additional information was gathered from books, journals, and online articles.

The study finds that the main reason youth consume, and abuse alcohol is to seek happiness and reduce stress, often influenced by their peers. The absence of a strong national alcohol control strategy is one of the reasons for alcohol abuse. The researcher

attempts to address alcohol abuse by applying the twelve-step program, which involves acknowledging pain and reinforcing positive experiences. It promotes community and church-based recovery programs as possible ways to treat substance misuse.

The author has a desire to apply the research practically and encourages further study not only in the Kalay area but also in other regions. If the research can incorporate quantitative methods and counseling approaches, it will also be beneficial for the ministry in addressing abuse recovery.

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April 25, 2025
Date

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DEDICATION

To my beloved wife, whose constant support and prayers made this degree possible. Her ability to manage our family during my absence has been a pillar of my success. I am extremely grateful to my parents, Pa Thuah Zam and Nu Hlai Thawng for their love and encouragement have been crucial in bringing this dream to life.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

In Myanmar, approximately six percent of Myanmar's population identifies as Christian with most being Baptist or Roman Catholic. Today, "The church has faced significant challenges over time including persecution under military rule and ongoing conflicts between ethnic groups."¹ According to Christian Aid Mission, "Myanmar is also one of the world's largest producers of methamphetamines, which have replaced opium as the drug of choice. Intravenous drug use is widespread and has led to Myanmar's high rate of HIV/AIDS. Alcoholism is also rampant."² Kalay is an area that is heavily involved in the rampant trade of methamphetamines and alcohol.

Kalay Town is located in the western part of Myanmar, positioned between Sagaing Division and Chin State. The city is located along the principal trade route that connects Myanmar to India, specifically Mizoram. A diverse ethnic group and religious affiliation are co-existing. Kham Sian Maung and John Buchanan mentioned in their article that "Kalay is on the edge of Chin state where a large proportion of the population are Christian. The people population at Kalay is mainly comprised of two main people groups-Chin and Bamar."³

¹ Adam Phillips, "Christianity in Myanmar," *The Witness*, February 22, 2025, <https://thewitness.org/christianity-in-myanmar/>.

² "Christian Aid Mission - Myanmar," accessed March 12, 2025, <https://www.christianaid.org/myanmar>.

³ Kham Sian Muang and John Bachanan, "Alcohol Abuse Among Christian Students at Kalay University," *MEGT Journal of Christian Thought and Praxis*, January 20, 2023, 105.

I am a pastor among the Chin people, in Myanmar. I work with the ministry on the border between Myanmar and India during pandemics, revolutions, and political coups. As I was called to pastoral ministry in the rural area, I have been involved in God's ministry for more than fifteen years. The majority of the population is employed as farmers and laborers. They sleep on the farm and in bean fields. They come back on Saturday evening. When they come home, the men drink alcohol with their friends to relax. They join the Sunday morning worship service, and in the evening they prepare again for the next Monday. Especially young males in rural areas are like this; life goes in a circle. They wake up early in the morning and work hard until the sun sets.

During my ministry, I have encountered numerous youth who are users of alcohol and other types of drugs. When I started my ministry, I became aware of the widespread use of alcohol and other drugs among youth. They quit school and worked in the field of country beans despite being young. The community and the church face numerous challenges, such as limited access to electricity and gas, a poor education system, a lack of clean drinking water for health, and a lack of spirituality. Among these challenges, alcohol consumption poses a significant problem for the family unit, the church, and the community. Socially, they developed fewer relationships with people and experienced a loss of trust from others. This also negatively affected their job prospects.

I have observed that alcohol is a substance that makes people dizzy, makes them lazy, and releases them from reality. This alcohol can help young people find temporary

resolution to overcome heartbreak and disappointment, release unhappiness, and reduce stress. However, the use of alcohol can also have harmful consequences for young people. For instance, I had firsthand experience of an incident involving a 23-year-old male who consumed alcohol with peers and operated a motorcycle while under the influence. Traveling at an elevated velocity, they ultimately experienced an extremely serious accident and were transported to the hospital. Fortunately, their lives are preserved. They expended considerable funds for their rehabilitation from the injury. Therefore, my objective is to conduct research on this issue, exploring ways to help reduce alcohol abuse and promote prevention of alcohol consumption.

Background of the Problem

Cultural norms in Chin, Myanmar, shape alcohol consumption. The community views alcohol consumption as unacceptable behavior for both men and women, particularly for women. Alcohol abuse among young males in Kalay is a significant issue along with high rates of drug and tobacco use. The researcher has observed that young male alcohol users in Kalay have limited health awareness. They are not aware of the negative effects alcohol consumption can have on their health, how it can hinder their productivity at work, and how it can affect their businesses.

Moreover, the problem here is that most Christian believers, especially young people, do not try to live a holy life or pursue the spiritual formation of their faith. They live as worldly people and try to become rich and earn money. They do not have time for worship, reading scripture, and meditation in prayer. They take time to work, rise early in the morning, go late to rest, and work until dark. They struggle to find a tiny morsel of

food and clothing. Money seems to be more important than spirituality. How much they try to make money cannot be sufficient for their family life due to the increase in the price of goods. To reduce their stress and fatigue, youth drink alcohol when they return home. Some want to sleep well and use alcohol as a medicine. Eventually, they turn into alcohol abusers and lead a life of intoxication.

In this kind of situation, some are drinking alcohol to relax. Even young people are habituated to drinking and waste their wages which they have earned for all days and months. Parents are reluctant to warn their offspring to tell the truth and fear their anger. They are afraid to instruct their children not to use alcohol because they are unaware of the disadvantages associated with it. The pastors themselves are afraid to say something because they hate caution for ignoring Christian rules. This is the problem we face in my country today. As for me, this is a burden and a burning heart to support their spiritual formation from their temptation to take drugs and worldly things. In addition, we still have many young people who are non-Christians who also need help against their attraction to alcohol.

Alcohol addiction among young people is influenced by various factors such as personality, sociodemographic aspects, broken family relationships, being in a drug environment, and peer groups. Church-based prevention, school-based prevention programs, and family-based interventions have been effective in reducing smoking and alcohol misuse among young people. Geographically, Kalay is located near India and borders with Mizoram. Poverty is one of the main factors of alcohol abuse because people easily trade drugs, alcohol, and other things between Mizoram and Myanmar. The

Kalay people can get all the drugs easily and by doing this they learn to drink from their friends. For some young people, they are led by their parents. Parents let their children buy alcohol, and children are familiar with alcohol, and while doing this they want to try the taste of alcohol and eventually learn to drink alcohol.

Despite efforts by the church and the family to prevent alcohol abuse, the prevalence of alcohol abuse among young people continues to increase. The researcher strives to find a solution and help young people liberate themselves from this abuse. Young males prioritize short-term happiness rather than living a godly life. When they run out of money, they start stealing from their parents and then move on to stealing other items. Their behavior begins to deteriorate; their lives are far from God and they lose hope. They decline morally, physically, and spiritually. It is crucial to encourage young alcohol users to live their lives according to the will of God. This research is critical for overall health outcomes and quality of life and can have an impact on their well-being.

Statement of the Problem

Why do young people use and become abuse to alcohol? The economic transportation, migration, poor economic conditions, political discrimination, exploitation, and devaluation may be the factors that contribute to alcohol abuse among young people. Additionally, it could be due to their friends or a lack of education on the disadvantages of using alcohol. Furthermore, young people may struggle with a weakness in their spirituality.

This research addresses first, the reasons for abusing alcohol. What are the main reasons young people in Kalay, Myanmar, turn to alcohol? Second, this research aims to

address what are the spiritual needs of youth recovery from alcohol abuse. How can a pastoral ministry effectively address the spiritual and physical needs of youth struggling with alcohol abuse? Third, what strategies can be implemented to attract young people back to the church and support their recovery journey? This research seeks to uncover paths to recovery for these individuals, helping them break free from the grip of alcohol abuse.

Statement of Purpose

This project mentioned above is the current issue of my country, particularly to transform the lives of addicted youth as a call to the Pastoral Ministry in Myanmar. At present, we, most of the Myanmar people, are suffering due to the loss of our parents, sons and daughters, innocent children, relatives, leaders, materials, and animals. Because of the political coup, people are challenging disorder in political administration, and discrimination in nationality. People experience disorganization in education. Moreover, Christians face religious discrimination. Many young people are wandering to the neighbor's country to earn money, study, and escape from the danger of the military. In the midst of troubles, most young people went to a foreign country to receive money to be a maid, a housekeeper, or a laborer. Some have unfortunately died and ended their life. They never had the chance to return home to their families.

On the other hand, many youth who could not go to a foreign country left their own place. They do not have work to earn money. They do not have a school for learning. They got married early and had children. They could not survive their life. They worked and earned money only three or four days a week and were thrifty.

Due to a lack of money, many people were disappointed and resolved their hardship by drinking alcohol. Many young people follow their friends who drink and are taught to drink. In this way, youth are out of control and become a person who abuses alcohol. I do not want them to conclude their life lacking value and I want them to realize they are valuable and they are precious and they are saved by the precious blood of Christ Jesus to be a part of His family and worthy of an eternal kingdom.

I want to find out the strategy to attract young people especially Christian youth in Kalay. I am interested in transforming their lives according to the Bible. They need encouragement and strength physically, mentally, and spiritually. I need guidance on how to approach them, provide care and advice. I need more advice on how to deal with them and how to prepare the space to take care of myself.

Youth face these problems for a variety of reasons. Therefore, this study aims to find ways to bring them back to the church and build their lives to align with the will of God by providing physical needs, especially focusing on innovation in their spiritual lives. This project aims to address the spiritual needs of youth to address the issue of alcohol abuse and empowering them to transform their lives.

Significance of the Study

Youth who have experienced weaknesses in their spiritual lives can benefit from this research. Addressing the spiritual needs of young males can reduce alcohol abuse. The findings will also protect the spiritual lives of youth who have recovered from abuse. This research adds to public health strategies and interventions aimed at reducing alcohol use in young people by incorporating spiritual and faith-based elements into their

treatment program. It is helpful for ministers who are struggling with youth alcohol abuse in their own church. It is beneficial for leaders, particularly those employed in private rehabilitation centers. Additionally, this research provides valuable information for families with youth struggling with alcohol abuse. This research is beneficial to community leaders, allowing them to help those struggling with alcohol. We hope that this research will have an impact on youth from the Christian community in Kalay. They will gain a deeper understanding of the negative effects of alcohol consumption as addressed in the Bible. The Bible reveals the reasons for using alcohol and warnings about its abuse. When youth quit drinking alcohol, parents, family, church, and community will experience the impact of peace and love, leading to the creation of a joyful family.

The research offers a great benefit Christian believers, particularly those who lack knowledge about the dangers of alcohol and live in rural areas. It will also have a positive impact on the youth, guiding them away from destructive habits such as drunkenness. This research has given me the ability to create a program that will help young men in Kalay to overcome alcohol addiction. I believe my ministry will be enhanced. Furthermore, this initiative has the potential to influence non-Christians, either directly or indirectly, by demonstrating the transformative power of our ministry.

Assumption and Limitation of the Study

The following assumptions form the foundation of this study: this study is designed to enhance the spirituality of male youth. One of the most effective tools for preventing alcohol abuse is the participation in spiritual activities, which can defend

lives, reduce alcohol consumption, and aid in recovery from abuse. I believe that cultural relevance can be a significant obstacle to recovery from alcohol abuse. During the pre-Christian era, the Chin people typically produced their own wines, including banana wine, corn wine, and tapioca wine. People worked all day and when they came home, they typically drank this type of wine for refreshment and energy. They do not view this type of wine as sinful, as it is part of their own culture. Therefore, these cultures encourage alcohol consumption, which in turn becomes a barrier to combating addiction.

Although different communities may have varying perceptions about alcohol use, biblical teaching on alcohol may provide a clear example of its disadvantages. Young people are likely to be open to discussing their spiritual needs, and incorporating them into this recovery process is crucial for the success of healing addiction.

The Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary provided the resources necessary for this research, including literature and an internet connection, needed to accomplish the interviews. I concentrated on the long-term project, specifically the rehabilitation project.

The study is constrained by both its case and scope. Quantitative research found in the literature augmented the qualitative research done with young men in Kalay. The goal of the research is to identify useful strategies to address drug usage among local populations and foster more community development, transcending just theoretical discourse. Furthermore, including counseling skills into this ministry will enhance both spiritual and physical well-being, enabling numerous individuals to engage in community development by assisting youth struggling with substance abuse or associated issues.

CHAPTER TWO

Related Literature Review

Addressing the spiritual needs of youth abusing alcohol is a critical component of holistic rehabilitation and prevention strategies. Spirituality has been increasingly recognized as a protective factor against substance abuse and as a vital element in the recovery process. Even though there is not much research available about the spiritual needs of abusing alcohol in Myanmar, there are many studies about abusing alcohol in general. This response explores various methods and approaches that incorporate spirituality to address alcohol abuse among youth, drawing on insights from research papers provided.

The prevalence of substance abuse among youth in Myanmar represents a critical public health challenge, particularly in regions like Kachin State, where drug use has dramatically increased. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), opium use doubled and heroin and methamphetamine use tripled between 2012 and 2014, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive intervention strategies.⁴

⁴ Nanda Myo Aung Wan, Wendy Kliewer, and David W. Sosnowski, "Sex Differences in Risk for Substance Use Among High School Students in Myanmar," *International Perspectives in Psychology* 8, no. 1 (January 2019): 39, <https://doi.org/10.1037/ipp0000093>.

The social development model suggests that vulnerability to adolescent drug use begins within family contexts and extends to schools, peers, and broader community dynamics.

It is needed to help youth who abuse alcohol by looking at the problem as a whole. This means considering cultural and sex factors as well as universal strategies that take into account how the experiences of young males and females are different. The research shows that teaching youth about alcohol and strengthening family and peer relationships can help them get better after being abused.⁵

The 2023 article “Alcohol Abuse Among Christian Students At Kalay University,” by Kham Sian Mung and John Buchanan, published in the MEGT Journal of Christian Thought and Praxis, mentions that “Alcohol abuse among college students is a growing global issue, with significant negative consequences for individuals and families.”⁶ The research highlights “freedom” as a key cause of alcohol abuse among students at Kalay University. The article mentions that various solutions include intentional discipleship from parents and church to prepare students for university life. The literature indicates that alcohol abuse affects not only the individual but also their family, leading to social and economic issues. The role of parents and churches in preparing youth for the transition to university life is emphasized, but they do not offer solutions for recovery from alcohol abuse.

⁵ Wan, Kliewer, and Sosnowski, 49.

⁶ Kham Sian Muang and John Buchanan, “Alcohol Abuse Among Christian Students at Kalay University,” n.d., 105.

Studying substance use among the youth of Jimma Town, Southwest Ethiopia, Geleta et al. suggest the need for community involvement in enforcing substance use regulations. This study asserts that “The availability and cost of substances were the primary factors influencing juvenile substance use.”⁷ This study said that the government should prioritize elevating substance costs, and taxes imposed on substance production in order to reduce the use of alcohol among youth. This study shows that the government involvement is important. It said, “The government should prioritize the effective enforcement of laws that prohibit the sale of narcotics to minors and impose penalties on distributors who violate these regulations, as these measures are crucial for mitigating youth substance use.”⁸ Certain research indicates that engagement with the church may be essential for youth to rehabilitate them from alcohol dependency.

Bourne, et al., writing in “Humanities and Social Sciences” in 2018, point to the Biblical justification for the Church’s involvement in alcohol and drug abuse mitigation. The Bible emphasizes the importance of self-control in alcohol consumption and highlights the negative consequences of alcohol abuse, which include health issues and family instability. The study says that “religious institutions carry out programs that lower drug use; however, problems still exist.”⁹

⁷ Tinsae Abeya Geleta et al., “Why Are Youth Engaged in Substance Use? A Qualitative Study Exploring Substance Use and Risk Factors Among the Youth of Jimma Town, Southwest Ethiopia,” *Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation* 12 (2021): 59–72, <https://doi.org/10.2147/SAR.S328079>.

⁸ Geleta et al.

⁹ Bourne, Paul Andrew et al., “Well-Being of the Working Aged Population: Using Two Different Measures of Well-Being and Evaluating Likely Changes in Psychosocial Determinants of Health,” *Scholars Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, accessed April 1, 2025, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270286038>.

They referenced it in their paper as follows: “Paul remarks in Galatians 6:1, Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to yourselves, lest you too be tempted. ... Christians must have an appreciation for the compulsive, irrational, and even violent nature of substance abuse.”¹⁰

Not only the church but also the community support is helpful in addressing the spiritual needs of youth who are abusing alcohol. Jennifer Simmelink McCleary stresses how important it is to take historical, political, and cultural factors into account when trying to stop people from drinking, and she suggests that interventions that are tailored to different cultures may work better. The results show how important community support is for people trying to stop drinking, which means that therapies should include methods that involve the whole community.¹¹ The individual’s proper biblical foundation can influence their spiritual healing strategy.

The article by Lucy Mutare Mathai, “Integration of Biblical and Pastoral Approaches in Dealing with Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the Presbyterian Churches of Kenya” highlights several key points regarding the Bible’s stance on substance abuse and how churches address this issue. She refers to Ephesians 5:18 and Proverbs 23:32-33 to show that the Bible clearly condemns substance abuse. Also, Isaiah denounces the pursuit of intoxicating beverages due to the possibility of addiction. Warnings about intoxication continue in the New Testament, going so far as to say “individuals who partake in such

¹⁰ Bourne et al.

¹¹ Jennifer Simmelink McCleary, *“An Exploration of Alcohol Use in Karen Refugee Communities in the Context of Conflict-Related Displacement”* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota, 2013).

conduct will not inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Mathai also says that,

“The church is encouraged to discipline those who continue to refuse to repent of their substance abuse, signifying a collective need to confront substance abuse. Pastoral interventions, such as sermons and counseling, are crucial in combating alcohol and drug abuse, especially among youth, as they are integral to the growth of both the church and society. The Pastors and leaders assert that substance abusing dulls the desire to seek God, encouraging Christians to act judiciously and make choices in accordance with divine will.”¹²

Alcohol consumption is undeniably entrenched in human civilization, especially inside the Kalay region among the Chin tribe. This research does not intend to comprehensively explore or resolve the issue in its complete form. I contend that even minor advancements or gradual improvement can be attained through this investigation.

To address the spiritual needs of youth struggling with alcohol abuse, it is essential to understand the character of alcohol. What is the reason for avoiding it? The impact of alcohol on the human body is a subject of discussion.

What is Alcohol?

The definition of “alcohol” from Britannica says,

Alcohols constitute among the most prevalent organic compounds. They serve as sweeteners and in the production of perfumes, act as valuable intermediates in the synthesis of other compounds, and rank among the most abundantly manufactured organic chemicals in industry. The two most recognized alcohols are ethanol and methanol (methyl alcohol). Ethanol is utilized in personal care products, medications, and fuels, and serves to disinfect medical devices in hospitals. Furthermore, it is the ethanol present

¹² Lucy Mutare Mathai, “Integration of Biblical and Pastoral Approaches in Dealing with Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the Presbyterian Churches of Kenya,” *International Journal of Culture and History* 9, no. 2 (August 28, 2022): 19, <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijch.v9i2.20225>.

in alcoholic beverages. Ethanol (ethyl alcohol) has been generated since ancient eras, mostly via the fermentation of fruit juices. The fermented juice could be preserved in a sealed container, and this basic wine remained consumable throughout the winter. Diverse sources can supply the sugars and starches that are decomposed into simpler molecules during fermentation. Ethanol is referred to as grain alcohol due to its common production from grains, including corn, wheat, rye, and barley.”¹³

Kids Health Medical Experts report that “alcohol is created when grains, fruits, or vegetables are fermented. Fermentation is a process that uses yeast or bacteria to change the sugars in the food into alcohol.”¹⁴ According to Stephen Miller, alcohol is “America’s most popular drug of choice, promoted by more than \$2 billion a year and people claim it is ‘the gateway drug’ – the first drug people try.”¹⁵ When people drink alcohol, it’s absorbed into their bloodstream. From there, it affects the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord), which controls virtually all body functions.¹⁶ Let’s examine how the Chin people in Kalay use the term “alcohol” in their culture in brief.

1. Alcohol Use in Chin Culture

The Chin people call alcohol as “Zu.” Zu is an alcoholic beer historically drunk by Zomi (Chin) tribes on special occasions. A pot of zu drunk together symbolized peace between two parties.¹⁷ Our Chin forefathers, even though they do not know the living

¹³ Britannica, “Alcohol | Definition, Formula, & Facts | Britannica,” January 31, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/science/alcohol>.

¹⁴ KidsHealth, “Alcohol (for Teens),” accessed March 13, 2025, <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/alcohol.html>.

¹⁵ Stephen M. Miller, *Christians at Work in a Hurting World* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill, 1990), 93.

¹⁶ KidsHealth, “Alcohol (for Teens).”

¹⁷ Muang and Buchanan, “Alcohol Abuse Among Christian Students at Kalay University.”

God, the creator God, use zu as a substance for peace building to forgive each other. When a person intentionally injures someone, or while they are quarrelling, if someone uses sticks and stones and if the person is bleeding blood, they bring a pot of zu and say, “I apologize with this zu; please forgive me.” In this way they make peace. They don't have tea or snacks during their time.¹⁸ Socially, it represented a proposal of give and take, of love and joy. In the practice of ancestor worship, the village leader who led the ritual ceremonies would drink from a cup of zu and then spit it out as he invoked the ancestors’ spirits. To forbid drinking Zu in the pre-Christian Zomi (Chin) society was to reject a significant cultural practice.¹⁹ While it was once believed that alcohol consumption was beneficial before the advent of Christianity, it has drastically changed in the modern era. Alcohol makes problems in the family, church, and society rather than making peace between us. Instead of creating love and peace, it produces division, destruction, disease, and death.

Problem of Alcohol Abuse

A definition of an alcoholic or an alcohol abuser is, “anyone whose drinking interferes frequently or continuously with any of his important life adjustments and interpersonal relationships.”²⁰ Let us look at how alcohol can affect our body, family, church and the community.

¹⁸ Lian Khua Za Pum, interview by the Author, August 30, 2024.

¹⁹ Muang and Buchanan, “*Alcohol Abuse Among Christian Students at Kalay University.*”

²⁰ W.A. Chapple, *How to Impress the Evils of Alcohol* (London: George G. Harrap & Company), 1911, 35.

1. Physical Effects

Generally, it is understood that when a person consumes alcohol, it can make them feel dizzy, warm the blood, slow their speech, and for some, it can make them more talkative and less stable physically. According to Professional Health Forum,

“Alcohol affects the central nervous system. When ingested, the bloodstream absorbs it and distributes it throughout the body, including the brain, liver, and other organs. It alters neurotransmitter activity, leading to mood and behavior changes. It is also intricately linked to physical health, particularly in relation to chronic diseases like liver diseases and cancers. Regular and excessive intake can lead to liver diseases such as fatty liver, alcoholic hepatitis, and cirrhosis. Furthermore, alcohol can exacerbate conditions such as hypertension and diabetes, complicating management strategies for these chronic diseases.”²¹

By looking at this description, young people must understand that alcohol is very harmful to the body, and it severely impacts major organs, such as the liver, leading to conditions like cirrhosis and fatty liver disease. What Kids Health Medical Experts say is that,

“People who have overused alcohol may stagger, lose their coordination, and slur their speech. They will probably be confused and disoriented. Depending on the person, intoxication can make someone very friendly and talkative or very aggressive and angry. Reaction times are slowed dramatically — which is why people are told not to drink and drive.”²²

People who are intoxicated often walk staggeringly on the street. They may think they are moving and talking properly, but they are not. They may act totally out of character. They

²¹ Professional Health Forum, “*Pouring Trouble: Alcohol, Chronic Diseases, and Your Health - Professional Health Forum*,” October 10, 2024, <https://www.professionalhealthforum.com/pouring-trouble-alcohol-chronic-diseases-and-your-health/>.

²² KidsHealth, “Alcohol (for Teens).”

exhibit uncontrollable speech and are prone to anger. They struggle to manage their belongings and exhibit disordered behavior.

People who consume high amounts of alcohol in a short period of time are at danger of developing alcohol poisoning. I have witnessed that a villager in my hometown drank a large amount of alcohol and fell off the mountain side, resulting in death. Alcohol poisoning is exactly what it sounds like — the body has become poisoned by large amounts of alcohol. The article “Alcohol for Teens” says that “violent vomiting is usually the first symptom of alcohol poisoning.”²³ One of my young family members shared that their first experience with consuming a large amount of alcohol led to severe vomiting. Even water and food were impossible to keep down, as everything they consumed triggered vomiting. To continue, the article says, “It also can cause extreme sleepiness, unconsciousness, problems with breathing, dangerously low blood sugar, seizures, and even death.”²⁴ I have experienced a young boy from my village riding a motorcycle while he was intoxicated. He had an accident on the bridge and unfortunately passed away. Alcohol abuse has resulted in the deaths of many people. Courtenay C. Weeks mentions in his book that “Alcohol abuse poses significant health risks, causing harm and death at any age, and disrupts normal cell function, straining natural strength reserves, and potentially leading to liver cirrhosis.”²⁵ Alcohol use has a severely

²³ KidsHealth, “Alcohol (for Teens).”

²⁴ KidsHealth, “Alcohol (for Teens).”

²⁵ Courtenay C. Weeks, *Alcohol and Human Life* (London: H.K Lewis & Co.) 1938, 206.

destructive effect on our body, as consuming it is more likely to lead to disease than to promote health.

2. Mental Effects

Alcohol is a depressant, which means it slows the function of the central nervous system. Alcohol actually blocks some of the messages trying to get to the brain. This alters a person's perceptions, emotions, movement, vision, and hearing.²⁶ As the saying goes, "Alcohol makes a wise man a fool."²⁷ In the interview, Rev. Lak Fak Mawi sadly shares about a 51-year-old sports coach's life. A coach was formerly regarded by many as an excellent counselor and a trustworthy individual. But something unexpected happened in his life. Simple things like whether he had eaten or not started to slip from his mind, and he even had trouble remembering things that had happened earlier in the day. His once-shrewd mind, which was full of insightful thoughts, was now cloudy. He was no longer wise enough to give counsel, and his skills diminished in comparison to those around him. Once filled with compassion for his loved ones, his heart became hard toward his wife and kids. He turned into a recluse who seldom ever left his home except to drink. His drinking was little at first, but it increased over the course of a year. Every now and again he would pause, then resume. After five years of this deadly cycle, he became an unstable person overwhelmed by his dependence on alcohol and a shadow of the person he used to be. In the article from Nemours, they say, "In very small amounts, alcohol can help a person feel more relaxed or less anxious. More alcohol causes greater

²⁶ KidsHealth, "Alcohol (for Teens)."

²⁷ Rev. Lal Fak Mawi, Interview by the Author, February 18, 2025.

changes in the brain, resulting in intoxication.”²⁸ People who continue drinking heavily well into adulthood risk damaging their organs, such as the liver, heart, and brain.

3. Psychological-Social Effects

Alcohol abuse affects psychological functioning, producing things like “dulled thinking, inappropriate behavior and emotional responses, self-neglect, withdrawal, and loss of social inhibitions.”²⁹ It also can lead to high rates of interpersonal violence, physical and sexual abuse, risky sexual behavior, and suicide. An example of this happened to a person in Kalay. A man was extraordinarily talented in art and writing, and he held a high-ranking position. However, he had a severe problem with alcohol consumption. As time progressed, his life began to unravel. His wife deserted him, and he was fired from his job. He was compelled to travel from village to village, begging for food. He earned what little he could by dividing firewood, but his life continued to deteriorate. At times, he even became aggressive towards people who refused to assist him, including his own relatives. Initially, he was the one consuming alcohol, but eventually, it consumed him. His life ended in sadness, a tragic reminder of the harmful effects of substance abuse. Myanmar Christian Counseling Centre states their finding that “Alcohol-related problems accompany other psychological abnormalities, including

²⁸ KidsHealth, “Alcohol (for Teens).”

²⁹ MCCC, ““Counselling Alcohol and Drug Addicts and Role of the Church,”” *Myanmar Christian Counselling Centre* (blog), August 5, 2020, <https://myanmarchristiancounsellingcentre.wordpress.com/2020/08/05/counselling-to-alcohol-and-drug-addicts-and-role-of-the-church/>.

depression, high rates of anxiety, problems with impulse control, persisting anger, and more severe disorientation or other mental illness.”³⁰

4. Emotion

Timmen L. Cermak reports that “Alcohol creates mood swings, impairs coordination, decreases memory, and even diminishes problem-solving abilities. All of these effects last long after a person is no longer actively drunk.”³¹ Rev. Lal Fak Mawi said in interview that “long-term alcohol use can lead to abnormal behaviors such as forgetfulness, frowning, loss of masculinity, decreased confidence, feelings of insecurity, and irritability.”³² Consuming alcohol can lead to emotional distress and conflict (Proverbs 23:29). Alcohol's influence on individuals manifests as a descent into abnormality, triggering a cascade of detrimental effects. It transforms people into figures of ridicule, prone to mockery and laughter, while simultaneously inciting aggression and turning them into brawlers, quick to engage in physical altercations.

Social Relationships

Youth who drink are also more likely to get into fights and commit crimes than those who don't. People who drink regularly also often have problems with school. Drinking can damage a student's ability to study well and get decent grades, as well as affect sports performance. The impression is that drinking is cool, but “the nervous

³⁰ MCCC, "Counseling."

³¹ Timmen L. Cermak, *A Time to Heal: The Road to Recovery for Adult Children of Alcoholics*, 1st. ed (NY: Tarcher, 1988), 38.

³² Rev. Lal Fak Mawi interview by the Author, February 18, 2025.

system changes that come from drinking alcohol can make people do stupid or embarrassing things, like throwing up or peeing on themselves.”³³ When a person is under the influence of alcohol, their behavior often changes, and they act like stupid people. They may act irrationally, repeating themselves and engaging in disruptive actions without regard for those around them. They create noise, disrupt the service, and engage in conversation with the preacher during the sermon. They may emit unpleasant odors and neglect their responsibilities. For instance, if the individual is a teacher, they might miss classes, leaving students without guidance or instruction. Such actions affect their personal and professional lives and have broader social consequences.

Furthermore, drinking alcohol leads youth to be sexually active. Teens Health said, “Youth who drink are more likely to be sexually active and to have unsafe, unprotected sex, which can lead to unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.”³⁴ Moreover, the desire of honor and glory is diminished under its influence, and it is replaced by a disregard for achievement and reputation. Additionally, the consumption of alcohol can have a detrimental impact on business operations, resulting in financial instability and disaster. Its most profound effect is the destruction of spiritual connections, which severs ties to faith, interior peace, and a sense of purpose. This leaves individuals adrift in a sea of worldly concerns and immediate gratification, disconnected from the deeper meaning of existence.

³³ KidsHealth, “Alcohol (for Teens).”

³⁴ KidsHealth, “Alcohol (for Teens).”

1. Family Effects

In the family, parents and siblings experience the effects of alcohol abuse, such as “embarrassment that leads the family to withdraw from others, tension, fear, insecurity, shame, loneliness, and social isolation.”³⁵ The families feel the constant worry and emotional toll on parents grappling with a loved one's struggles. Parents are concerned about the health of the abuser, as well as experiencing conflicts and disputes with others. Lal Hre Luai mentioned that “A family where alcohol abuse is prevalent is unlikely to achieve a healthy dynamic, as it can be likened to harboring poisonous elements within the home.”³⁶ A mother lies awake with worry whenever her son, struggling with alcohol misuse, returns home late. The barking dogs make her wonder if her child is finally coming home, but it is just a false alarm. Her mind races with fears: Has he been in an accident? Is he in trouble with others or arrested by the police? A father faces public shame due to his son's drunken antics, leaving him speechless and humiliated. The son's addiction has turned him into a household thief, stealing from family and neighbors to fund his habit. His actions have transformed him from a child into a source of constant worry and shame. Moreover, parents are reluctant to leave their sons who drink alcohol. Jerry D. Hull mentioned that “Alcohol will be one of the key culprits contributing to... divorces. Add family violence, emotional trauma to children, money problems, and a

³⁵ MCCC, “Counseling.”

³⁶ Evan Lal Hre Luai, Interview by the Author, February 6, 2025.

myriad of other implications, and alcohol emerges as a significant negative factor in a family that uses alcohol.”³⁷

2. Spiritual Effects

We rarely find individuals who use drugs like tobacco or alcohol and other substances to be very successful and grow spiritually. They may be involved in ministry, but they often lack the power to transform people's lives effectively. The MCCC stated that “It is very difficult to grow spiritually when one is dependent on and controlled by a drug. As a result there is greater guilt, shame, and alienation from God. Alcohol becomes an idol of worship.”³⁸ Alcohol is akin to a lazy, indolent worker, whose sole purpose in life appears to be to instigate conflict. Laziness affects our business as well as our spiritual decline. It leads to missed opportunities and a lack of innovation, which further exacerbates our financial struggles. Moreover, the spiritual impact is just as profound, as it hinders our ability to connect with our inner selves and find purpose in our daily lives. It negatively affects our business as well as our spiritual health.

3. Problems in the Church

Paul writes about alcohol creating disunity in the church. The Corinthians were using the Lord's Supper as an opportunity for personal indulgence rather than a time of

³⁷ Jerry D. Hull, *No! The Positive Response to Alcohol* (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1989), 78.

³⁸ MCCC, “Counseling”

unity and remembrance of Christ. The wealthy would eat and drink to excess, with some getting drunk, while the poor went hungry (1 Corinthians 11:21).

Moving to the church setting, many abusers “feel out of place, in part because of their own insecurity and guilt.”³⁹ They never feel at home, and healing cannot begin until they bring their darkest secrets before God and we tell them that they belong. They see people surrounded by families, while their own may be dysfunctional or abandoned. The discord and unhappiness caused among the congregation by an individual's abusing behaviors impacts the church's spiritual harmony.

4. Problems in the Community

In our society, alcohol is a normal substance. That makes those of us who don't use it abnormal. The researcher's cousin said to me, “You are very unlucky. If you are a man and do not drink alcohol, you are not a man.” When a person is under influence, he start to fight with family and others, and this causes discomfort to the neighbors. He breaks the glass of the closet. He throws the plate. Break the table. He kicks the television and damages the materials in the house. If someone had the poison, it will only effect himself. However, if some consume alcohol and drug, it will affect not only him, but also the whole family and neighbors. neighbors. Youth drinking alcohol pollute and undermine the community. They cause problems such as brawling and theft. The community feels unsafe and vulnerable to property loss. Individuals frequently criticize

³⁹ Bucky Dann and Daniel G. Bagby, *Addiction: Pastoral Responses* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 114.

and stigmatize their neighborhoods. They cause unnecessary conflicts between parents and neighbors.

Usage of Alcohol in OT and NT

This section briefly examines alcohol use in the Old and New Testaments, comparing positive and negative perspectives with today's context. The views of theologians on this topic are explored. The aim is to understand historical and theological viewpoints on alcohol and their relevance to contemporary issues. John 2:3 describes the use of wine for hospitality at the wedding. It is seen that the word 'οἶνος / oinos' is used. Paul used the word 'οἶνος / oinos' for wine when he sent a letter to Ephesians, warning them not to get drunk. While wine itself may not be harmful, its misuse can lead to negative consequences.

1. Positive Aspects of Alcohol

Melchizedek brought bread and wine to Abram and blessed him, acknowledging God's role in Abram's victory over his enemies (Genesis 14:18-20). In Genesis 27:25 and 27:37, wine is mentioned in the context of significant cultural and familial events. Wine, when served with a meal, represents welcome and readiness for a serious occasion. Alcohol is used as a sacred element in beverage offerings, symbolizing gratitude, devotion, and recognition of God's provision in daily worship rituals (Exodus 29:40; Leviticus 23:12-13). Wine is also part of the offerings of drinks accompanying sacrifices (Numbers 15:5, 7, 10). The best wine was one of the first fruits offered to the priests for food (Numbers 18:12, 14). In Deuteronomy 12:17 and Nehemiah 13:5, wine is included

in offerings as a tithe and stored in temple chambers alongside grain offerings, incense, and other items dedicated to worship. In Joel 2:19, wine is mentioned as part of God's promise to restore blessings to His people. It serves as a symbol of God's provision, abundance, and restoration of His people's dignity. Psalm 104:15 describes wine as something that satisfies the heart of man. In Zechariah 9:17, wine symbolizes prosperity, vitality, and a flourishing life under the blessings of God. Ecclesiastes 10:19 declares that "bread is made for laughter, and wine gladdens life." In 2 Samuel 16:2, wine is used to refresh those who are faint in the wilderness. Proverbs 31:6 describes alcohol as a tool for easing the pain of those who are ill and comforting those in bitter distress.

In the New Testament, Jesus performs His first miracle by turning water into wine at a wedding in Cana (John 2:3). Paul advises Timothy to use "a little wine" for medicinal purposes, specifically for his stomach problems and frequent ailments (1 Timothy 5:23). In Luke 10:34 wine is applied as an antiseptic to a wounded man's injuries in the Good Samaritan parable. Jesus drank wine and gave it to his twelve disciples as a part of his last meal with them before the crucifixion.

2. Negative Aspects of Alcohol

The Scriptures frequently refer the misuse of alcohol with disapproval. The earliest example is found in Genesis 9:20-27, where Noah, a farmer, cultivates a vineyard and consumes wine, which leads to his intoxication. This results in him being uncovered inside his tent, illustrating the possible negative effects of alcohol use, such as a lack of self-control and related family issues. In Genesis 19:32-38, Lot's daughters inebriate him, leading to an incestuous occurrence that he is unaware of because of his state. This story

highlights the risks associated with alcohol abuse and its effect on ethical decisions. In Numbers 6:1-4, the Nazarite vow expressly bans alcohol consumption. The term “Nazirite,” come from the Hebrew word “nazir,” which describes this person who has marked out a special time of consecration for a specific period of unusual devotion to God.⁴⁰ It is found that “A nazir had to face three very demanding limitations: (1) absolute abstinence from all produce of the vine, (2) total forswearing of trimming of the hair, and (3) utter separation from contamination by any contact with the dead body.”⁴¹ In Judges 13:4, the angel of the Lord instructs the mother of Samson not to drink wine because Samson will be a nazir.

3. Dangers of Using Alcohol

In Genesis 9:21-22, Noah becomes drunk and finds himself in his tent. As a result of too much alcohol consumption, Noah’s drunkenness leads to a loss of dignity and respect. The dangers of alcohol abuse can lead to moral looseness and disrespect of others. This passage underscores the importance of maintaining self-control and the respect of others. This event helps young people avoid the destructive path of alcohol abuse. Isaiah 5:11-12 indirectly mentions that people have no regard for the deeds of the Lord and no respect for the work of His hands because of their drunkenness. In 1 Samuel 25:36-37, the text illustrates how excessive alcohol consumption leads to poor judgement and health issues. Nabal’s actions ultimately led to his death (1 Samuel 25:38). Proverbs

⁴⁰ Frank Gabelein, ed., *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*. 2: Genesis - Numbers” (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 749.

⁴¹ Gabelein, “*The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*. 2,” 749.

31:5 shows that the King forgets what has been decreed and perverts the rights of all the afflicted. Drunkenness can render kings or judges incapable of making fair judgment, leading to injustice and the inability to fulfill their duties effectively. Isaiah 28: 7-8 says that “the priest and the prophet reel with strong drink, they are swallowed by wine, they stagger with strong drink, they reel in vision, and they stumble in giving judgment.” The book of Proverbs has many warnings about the results of over-indulgence in alcohol which can lead an individual to mock or scorn virtuous behaviors and values. For example, Proverbs 20:1 says, “Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise.” It can lead to spiritual neglect and disregard of God’s teaching. Youth must understand that alcohol can distract them from spiritual pursuits and lead to a life that is not aligned with biblical values. Proverbs 23:21 warns that drunkards and gluttons will come to poverty. It also mentions that drowsiness will clothe a man with rags. This metaphor indicates that a life of excessive indulgence can lead to laziness and a lack of productivity, which further contributes to poverty and hardship. Proverbs 32:29-30 emphasizes that alcohol can lead to emotional distress and conflict, physical harm, unnecessary conflicts, injuries from accidents or fights, redness, which is a physical sign of excessive drinking, and yellow eye, which is a sign of liver damage due to excessive use of alcohol.

4. Prohibition of the Use of Alcohol in the Bible.

This section explores whether the Bible prohibits alcohol and the reasons why. I examine biblical arguments for prohibition and discuss the practical need for abstaining from alcohol in everyday life, providing a balanced perspective on this complex issue.

The story of Noah yields a negative outcome: Noah curses his son, his drunkenness diminishes his dignity, and it leads to familial discord (Gen 9:20-26). According to Lot's story, his daughter made him drink wine to conceive a new generation. However, the birth of Moab and Ben-Ammi marked the emergence of nations that would later be hostile to Israel. Lot's drunkenness led to his poor judgment, as he was unaware of his actions. Drunkenness causes people to engage in inappropriate conduct and become embarrassed. As a youth, it is a positive example that drunkenness causes people to go the wrong way. These narratives caution against the waste of divine endowments, emphasizing the essential significance of moderation and steadfast self-discipline. The more extreme position of complete prohibition of alcohol is fundamentally driven by a complex interplay of religious, cultural, and health-related issues.

Leviticus 10:9-11 is a passage from the Bible that address the prohibition of alcohol consumption for priests to maintain their ability to distinguish between what is holy and what is not, and to teach the people of Isreal the Laws given by God through Moses. Numbers 6:3 provides the directives for someone undertaking a Nazirite vow, which include abstaining from specific items, including alcohol and grape-derived goods, to consecrate oneself to God. Jeremiah 35:2-14 illustrates how the Rechabites received the blessing of God for their adherence to ancestral instructions, which encompassed refraining from drinking intoxicating drinks. This verse emphasizes the significance of adherence and fidelity to one's obligations, rather than an absolute ban on alcohol. Proverbs 23:31 says "Do not look at wine when it is red, in the end it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder." Romans 13:13 says, "Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness." 1Cor 5:11 mentions that "Anyone who bears the name of

brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler...not even to eat with such a one.” 1Cor 6: 9-10 says that “Drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God.” In Eph 5:18, Paul commands “Do not be drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.” Let us look at this command from verse 18.

“Do not be drunk with wine” – this is very simple and clear enough. But some will be bound to ask: “What about getting drunk on beer or whisky? The point here is: “do not get drunk with wine.” “Drunk” here is the present passive imperative of “μεθύσκω/methyskō.” The present imperative in Greek grammar refers to a command, repeated or habitual, rather than a one-time action. Pastor Curtis clarified that “The prohibition expressed with the present imperative could suggest that Paul was exhorting them to stop an action or prohibiting them from a course of action.”⁴² Paul’s command to the Ephesians is not to abuse alcohol, rather to be filled with the Spirit, because an abusing of alcohol only lead to destruction and dissipation.

“For that is debauchery” in the Greek word this is “ἄσωτία/asōtia,” which means unsavedness. Pastor Curtis uses the word “dissipation” in his article and translates it into modern slang as “to be wasted.” He points to the wastefulness and destruction of property, relationships, and life that often accompany drunkenness.

In Luke 15:13, the word “διασκορπίζω/-diaskorpizō” is used. It means “wasted” The prodigal son spent the whole inheritance on a loose living. It means being out of

⁴² Berean Bible Church, “Ephesians 5:18 - Christians and Alcohol.” accessed March 20, 2025, https://www.bereanbiblechurch.org/transcripts/ephesians/eph-05_18_christians_and_alcohol.htm.

control, because alcohol now controls the person. Alcohol can cause people's lives to decay. Alcohol is not intrinsically destructive; rather, when overused or abused, it becomes troublesome. Therefore, a complete ban on its consumption may be necessary, especially for young people.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8, ESV, Paul depicted drunkenness as an example of the ways of darkness: "So then let us not sleep as others do. But let us remain awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober." We are children of light and children of the day. We are not of the night or the darkness. Drunkenness is a part of the night; we belong to the day and to being sober.

In Romans 13:12-13, "The night is gone; the day is at hand. So, let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as during the day, not in orgies and drunkenness." Paul exhorts us to cast off the works of the darkness, such as drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. Drunkenness is the work of darkness, and it is like walking in the night. We must put on the armor of light and walk in light because we are children of light.

Paul mentions it again in Ephesians 5:8, "For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light." Going back to chapter 5:15, we look carefully at how we walk. This does not refer to our footsteps, but aims at our lifestyle.

As noted previously, Proverbs has much to say about drunkenness. Proverbs 20:1 addresses alcohol in even stronger terms, saying, "Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise." Drunkenness leading to raucous behavior,

brawling, and people mocking one another is easily observed. I know of a family where two sons often drink alcohol, and when they come home, they begin to argue and eventually end up fighting each other. They brawl, throw stones, and brandish long knives, and no one can stop them. They injure each other and end up in the hospital. As believers, it is very uncomfortable to witness such events. Christians must walk in wisdom; getting drunk is not wise, as repeatedly cautioned in Scripture. The passage indirectly suggests that such behaviors do not glorify God and can lead to a spiritually unfruitful life. It encourages living a disciplined life that honors God through self-control and moderation. For humans, exercising discipline in alcohol consumption can be difficult. Consequently, for Christians, especially among the Chin community in the Kalay region, it may be better to completely abstain from alcohol rather than risk the possible effects of attempting to use it in restraint.

The Scripture show us the positive sense of alcohol and mentioned as a blessing from God. But we need to imagine that whether alcohol in that era was the same as alcohol today. Their research would not go further on this facts. MacArthur criticize on this is “if you want to defend the fact that you can drink alcohol today on the basis of the fact that they drank it in the Bible then you need to reexamine whether what we drink today is the same what they drank then.” He quotes, Plutarch, Pliny and Aristotle to try prove his point that the wine of the Bible was not intoxicating.⁴³ The transformation of water into wine symbolizes Jesus’ power, grace, and the beginning of a new era in God’s

⁴³ Berean Bible Church, “Ephesians 5:18

relationship with humanity. Christians focus on Jesus' miracle of turning water into wine as a demonstration of Christ's power, not to emphasize transforming the water into wine. The scripture aims to convey the transformative power of Christ. It does not promote the use of alcohol or encourage others to consume it. Wine is meant to be used for good purposes, not abused, and without causing harm. Mark 15:23 illustrates that Jesus did not drink mixed wine. Christians often discuss the transformation of water into wine, especially in contexts where alcohol is involved.

In Jeremiah 25:15-16, the "cup filled with the wine of God's wrath" symbolizes judgment. Similarly, Psalm 75:8 mentions "a cup full of foaming wine mixed with spices" in the hand of the Lord, also highlighting God's judgment. In contrast, Matthew 26:27-29 states that Jesus will not drink from the fruit of the vine until he does so anew in his Father's kingdom. Here, drinking new wine symbolizes the blood of Christ and Christ himself. Isaiah 55:1 invites all who are thirsty to come and buy wine and milk without cost, but this is symbolic of the free salvation offered by God. Therefore, the appropriate approach is to accept Jesus as the one who quenches our thirst and satisfies our hunger, rather than using the Bible to justify personal preferences.

Theological Perspective for the Christian Life

This section explores theological perspectives on alcohol use, examining both positive and negative viewpoints. This study is crucial for Christians navigating a corrupted world, especially regarding the spiritual development of youth grappling with alcohol abuse. Understanding these teachings is essential for fostering responsible

choices and guiding young individuals toward a healthy, faith-filled life, shielded from the dangers of abusing alcohol.

In light of the above problems and biblical warnings, a case can be made for a strong argument against alcohol use. Miller states two of the strongest Christian principles in fighting the war on alcohol abuse which are: (a) We are God’s temples, and (b) we are to avoid doing anything that will negatively influence others.⁴⁴ Furthermore, it is our duty as Christians to live as God’s temple, upholding holiness, leading virtuous lives, and experiencing a life filled with the Spirit. Let us study these four concepts.

1. The Temple of God

Paul makes the first principle clear. Our bodies are the temple of the living God. (1Cor 3:16-17; 6:19-20; 2Cor 6:6; 7:1). We are not to abuse the body where He dwells with improper care. Traditionally, we hesitate to destroy structures built by human hands, and it is considered wrong to intentionally damage or demolish church property, as it can lead to severe consequences. How much more severe, then, is it to destroy the body, which is a temple created by God's own hands? If God is displeased with the destruction of a temple built by humans, how much more so would He be displeased with the destruction of the body He created Himself? This is why we strive to help young people who are destroying the temple of God—their own bodies—through alcohol abuse. As God says, “If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple” (1 Corinthians 3:17). For young

⁴⁴ Miller, *Christians at Work in a Hurting World*, 97.

people, this means avoiding behaviors such as alcohol abuse, which can defile the body, the temple of God. Therefore, taking care of our body, the temple of God, is one aspect of a holy life dedicated to God. Physical health is vital as well as spiritual health. The Bible teaches the importance of living a holy life. Conforming to evil desires shows disobedience to God, who dwells in us.

2. Call for Holiness

Considering that everything in this world will eventually pass away, what kind of people should we be? Youth are encouraged to follow a path of holiness, honoring their bodies as sacred vessels of the Holy Spirit because our God is holy. We are called to lives of holiness and godliness. This means striving to live in a way that honors God, reflecting His character in our actions and choices. It's about living intentionally, with our minds set on things above, not just the fleeting pleasures of this world. A life devoted to holiness and godliness is a life well-lived in God's eyes. 1 Peter 1:14-16 urges us to leave behind our former, ignorant ways and become obedient children of God. Just as God, who called us, is holy, we too should strive for holiness in everything we do. The scripture clearly states, "Be holy, because I am holy." This means reflecting God's character in our actions and thoughts, setting ourselves apart from the world's corruption, and living in a way that pleases Him. John Wesley declares that "Our holiness is 'entire;' it is complete in that our surrender is complete; we are 'perfect' in that there is not such a blemish on our obedience as to break our relation with the sanctifying Spirit."⁴⁵ According to John N.

⁴⁵ John N. Oswalt, *Called to Be Holy* (Evangel Publishing house, 1999), 194.

Oswalt, “Holiness is a passion and not a performance. Holiness is not something we must do solely for God's sake. True holiness is not something we achieve through our efforts alone; rather, it is a natural outcome of God’s presence on our lives, that result in us because God lives.”⁴⁶ We are highlighting the transformative power of God's indwelling Spirit. Holiness transforms both identity and behavior, leading a life that reflects God’s character. Holiness transforms our internal being to a new identity, and this identity shapes how we view ourselves and others, fostering humility, love, compassion, and leading us to live a good life. This is the reflection of two commandments of God: to love God and to love others. A good life marked by kindness, integrity, and service to others reflects Christ. This is the purpose of holiness. Jesus said, “Let your light shine before others, so that they see your beneficial works and give glory to your Father.” Our holiness and good work will give glory to God, and it is for the people to see Him. Let’s explore living a good life more.

3. Living a Good Life

The goal of assisting an alcoholic is to help them turn to live a good life. It is allowing them to rediscover a path to a better, more balanced life. Our God desires holiness in every aspect of our lives: in our attitudes, thoughts, and character. We are called to live a life of goodness and righteousness. Ephesians 2:10 reminds us that we are created “to do good works.” We aren't saved *by* good works, but *for* good works. As Rick Warren said, “The Christian lifestyle is to be a lifestyle of goodness.”⁴⁷ He said the good

⁴⁶ Oswalt, 192.

⁴⁷ Rick Warren, *The Power to Change Your Life* (Zondervan Bible Publishers: CA), 2005, 99.

life varies among individuals. Some define it by looks, health, and happiness, while others see it as wealth and possessions. Ultimately, the good life reflects what brings joy, satisfaction, and purpose to each person's existence. The Bible presents a radically different picture of the good life. Rick Warren said "the good life is not based on looking good, feeling good or having the goods. The good life is a life filled with Goodness."⁴⁸ He gives a clear explanation that is "Goodness is being and doing good. And when you are being good and doing good, you are going to feel good and you are even going to start looking good – or at least looking better."⁴⁹ But what exactly is goodness? Rev. Lal Fal Mawi express his opinion in the interview that "God did not create us to pursue destructive paths or become captivated by earthly pleasures. His aim is for us to enjoy a good life." Warren said, "God made you for a purpose. When you live the way God intended you to live, you will feel good. Your life will become meaningful. You will feel good because you are doing what God made you to do."⁵⁰ These words are precious for the young people so that their life will be meaning full. Living a good life is also a purpose of God that He want us to be.

Living a good life often appears impossible to achieve through human effort due to personal imperfections or external limitations. However, being filled with the Spirit brings divine strength to overcome these limits. A good life is about living in accordance with God's will, not just achieving worldly success or enjoyment. Living a happy life is directly related to being filled with the Spirit, for it is the Spirit who transforms, guides,

⁴⁸ Warren, 98.

⁴⁹ Warren, 99.

⁵⁰ Warren, 99.

and sustains believers. The Holy Spirit not only changes our character but also directs our activities to serve God's intentions, resulting in a life of love, joy, peace, and meaningful service to others. To experience the guidance of the Spirit, we need to surrender our entire selves to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Let us explore what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

4. Being Filled with the Holy Spirit

We are encouraged to live wisely, making the most of our time and seeking God's will. It is important to avoid foolishness, especially the dangers of drunkenness. Instead, we should strive to be filled with the Holy Spirit. We are going to reflect on Ephesians 5:15-18. It says,

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

According to Tokunboh Adeyemo, “Drunkenness leads to raucous singing and shouting, being filled with the Holy Spirit leads to praise expressed in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.”⁵¹ He mentions that honoring God through worship, praising, and giving thank are the signs that we are filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:20).⁵² and being filled with the Holy Spirit is a transformative experience that equips believers to live a life that honors God and blesses others. By surrendering to the Spirit's control, we can experience His guidance, empowerment, and peace in our daily lives.

⁵¹ Tokunboh Adeyemo, ed., *Africa Bible Commentary* (Nairobi, Kenya: Grand Rapids, Mich: WordAlive Publishers; Zondervan, 2006), 1462.

⁵² Adeyemo, 1462.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

Due to the worsening political situation, obtaining official data from local authorities proved impossible for this research. Therefore, I gathered information through semi-structured interviews with eyewitnesses, individuals actively involved in recovery ministries, and leaders of rehabilitation centers. Their firsthand accounts and experiences provided valuable insights into the research topic, compensating for the lack of official data. The interview subjects included the following: five men and three leaders who are participants in the Bethsaida Restoration Ministry in Kalay, the leader of a rehabilitation center; and a pastor who actively acts and participates in the recovery programs. All interviews were conducted in Burmese, Falam dialect, and an audio recording was made of each interview. In addition, notes were taken during the interviews. Interviews were subsequently transcribed into English. The resulting transcripts were read and categorized by common or similar responses to the questions.

The Nature of the Research Subjects

This research focuses on Christian youth who suffer from alcohol abusing, particularly those belonging to the Chin Christian community in Kale Area, Myanmar. Alcohol abuse among Christian youth due to factors such as their culture, environment, friends, and insufficient knowledge. This research aims to seek and help for creating a better family, church, and community.

This study has the potential to significantly impact young people by teaching them how to recover from their abuse through Scripture. This study employs the qualitative approach. The interviews were instrumental in gathering a variety of facts. In general, we used social science research methods to survey Christian youth in Kalay, specifically, semi-structured interviews. There were two sets of interviews. The first was with leaders of a ministry for young men who are alcohol abusers. These people were interviewed for the purpose of gathering information about alcohol abuse among young people in Kalay. This information is not available in published form, thus, these interviews were used as part of the literature review in chapter two. The second set of interviews were with young male alcohol abusers who are participating in this ministry. The results of these interviews will be shared in chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

Report of Research Findings

A primary cause of alcohol abuse among young people's is seeking peace. One of the most challenging problems facing Christian in Kalay area today is the use and abuse of alcohol by youth. Alcohol use disorders are also higher in Myanmar compared to the regional average.⁵³ Alcoholism is undeniably the most significant drug-related issue. According to a post by Policy News of Movendi International on August 11, 2019, Myanmar ranks highly in terms of the number of years of life lost due to alcohol. Annually, over 12,500 people in Myanmar die due to alcohol-related liver cirrhosis.

Myanmar lacks a comprehensive national alcohol control policy, therefore programs such as the Bethsaida Restoration Ministry are working to fill the gap. This research reports on the findings that are based on the interviews of those who are in this program and currently struggling with alcohol abuse. The perspective of the mentors who are actively involved in this recovery program is also included.

1. Why Do Youth Consume Alcohol?

The research found from the interviews and literature that the main reason why youth consume alcohol and abuse is they want to find “happiness” or “seek peace” in

⁵³ Movendi International, “Myanmar: Rising Mental Health Issues Linked to Alcohol,” accessed March 21, 2025, <https://movendi.ngo/news/2019/08/11/myanmar-rising-mental-health-issues-linked-to-alcohol/>.

their mind. The research interviews revealed that all male youth participants acknowledged there are no benefits to abusing alcohol, yet they continue to do so intentionally. There may be a multitude of reasons, such as stress, poverty, or misguided beliefs. These are their feelings; they want to be free from them, and they seek peace. They are often disconnected from spiritual practices like prayer, Bible reading, and church involvement; they need to revive their spiritual core. Beliefs such as “there is no problem with consuming alcohol; it will not affect our salvation” mislead youth. They grew up in a poor society, which meant they had limited opportunities for education and lacked access to the food and clothing they desired. They have to do hard work as an employee every day. The stress of life’s struggles often leads them to turn to alcohol as a coping mechanism. Five individuals who abuse alcohol consistently stated that they drink because they seek happiness or to feel good.

“To feel good” is another reason that youth use alcohol.

Jonah said

My friends treated me. They said, “If you drink, you will have the courage to talk to the ladies.” I started to drink and felt good, so I continued drinking.

R. Bik said,

I experience comfort in solitude and do not sense loneliness. During periods of increased leisure, I occasionally desire to use alcohol. It alleviates my pain somewhat. I favor solitude as it enhances my well-being. Consuming alcohol diminishes my need for concentration.

S Nawl mentioned that he drinks because, he said,

I tend to drink when I’m experiencing depression, grief, or feeling upset. My parents passed away when I was young, and my daughter and I lived with my grandparents for a short time before they also passed away. I’ve been trying to escape my depression through drinking, as it helps me forget temporarily while I’m intoxicated. However, once the effects of alcohol

wear off, my depression returns. This pattern has led me to become a regular drinker.

Cary expressed that he drank because he wanted to feel good. He said,

Drinking seems to make me more talkative. It gives me the courage to approach and visit our female friends. Occasionally, when I'm angry, I turn to alcohol. When I'm intoxicated, I feel a sense of positivity.

L.SM said,

I don't mind the taste because I enjoy the sensation of being intoxicated—it makes me feel comfortable at ease. However, the morning after can be rough, with headaches that I sometimes try to relieve by drinking again. Alcohol makes me more talkative, and if my parents criticize me while I'm in that state, I can become angry.

Another reason for youth abusing alcohol is curiosity. Young people were curious about taste and intoxication without a goal.

2. How Do Youth First Try Alcohol?

Youth usually first try alcohol with a peer from school. According to Rev. Lal Fak Mawi, he states that ninety percent of youth can learn how to use alcohol from peers. Peer pressure in social environments of party can even become a sign of prestige and respect. You might hear youth praise a classmate by saying, "What a man - Bill is still on his feet after a whole fifth. Bill can really hold his liquor." Another observation of youth alcohol use has identified important strands of parents' influence on the initiation of alcohol. From a very young age, kids see advertising messages showing beautiful people enjoying life — and alcohol. And because many parents and other adults use alcohol socially — having beer or wine with dinner, for example — alcohol seems harmless to

many teens.⁵⁴ Stanton Peele, proof that “Between these two, peer influence was most important for the initiation of alcohol use. In the realm of illicit alcohol, peer social influence has an even more critical role.⁵⁵ In the interviews, Jonah mentioned how he decided to try alcohol. He said that

My friends treated me. They said, “If you drink, you will have the courage to talk to the ladies.” I started to drink and felt good, so I continued drinking.

R Bik said,

I accompany my uncle to the college; they consume alcohol, subsequently inviting me to partake, to which I acquiesce. I initially sought to experiment, but I eventually became a habitual abuser.

S Nawl started to drink by his classmates. He said,

Many students were drinking at school, particularly during breaks. I joined my classmates and started drinking. Since I didn’t have to spend much money, I was curious about the taste, and it led to me drinking regularly.

Cary started to drink by his older brother. He said,

I am working at a firm, and we have cows in the field. My older brothers are drinking, and I decide to join them.

L.SM said

I recently followed my friends to a new alcohol shop. I decided to try something for 300 kyats, but I ended up getting intoxicated and didn’t feel very comfortable. Despite this, I often go with my friends and continue drinking.

⁵⁴ KidsHealth, “Alcohol (for Teens).”

⁵⁵ Stanton Peele, *The Meaning of Addiction: Compulsive Experience and Its Interpretation*, 13. print (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1990), 105.

When a person drinks alcohol three, four times, or more, eventually a heavy drinker gets to the place where they cannot get through the day without a drink; their lives are controlled by alcohol. They have a disease called alcoholism. William Goodman states that “alcoholism is a disease that can be cured, but alcoholics are never free from the danger of getting caught in that trap again.”⁵⁶ William Goodman points that “As alcohol use increases so does death, crime, violence, automobile accidents, divorce, and child beating.”⁵⁷ As a youth, it is important to be careful and to stop before getting the disease.

3. Positive and Negatives of Drinking Alcohol

When we study about the positive and negative of drinking alcohol, it is seen that no one in the interviews talked about the benefits of consuming alcohol.

Jonah said,

Nothing seemed good. I wanted to fight with others. I couldn't control myself. I knowingly did wrong things. My life was ruined. I sold items from my own house, such as my motorcycle, the meter box, and other belongings.

R Bik said that

At first glance, these traits might seem positive, but they can also be exploited by those who abuse alcohol. He learned a valuable lesson from negative impact of drunkenness.

S Nawl said,

⁵⁶ William Goodman, *A “Throw down” on Drugs: One Street Cop Talks about the Drug Scene* (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1987), 28.

⁵⁷ Goodman, 29.

There are no benefits to drinking alcohol. It has cost me a significant amount of money. I worked in China for four years to earn a living, but when I came back, I squandered all my savings due to my excessive drinking.

Cary said,

There are no benefits to drinking alcohol. It leaves me feeling thin and exhausted, and we tired easily, which might be related to poor circulation. I wasted a lot of money on it. As a result, people tend to overlook and neglect us.

L. SM said,

I'm quite confused about my memories from that time. I used to spend a significant amount of money in just one day, and there's nothing good to say about it. My relationship with my girlfriend ended because of the abusive behavior I exhibited while drunk. I would frequently visit places I shouldn't have, and on one occasion, I was even captured by the army due to my intoxication. The fear of the army was so intense that it completely eliminated my intoxication.

4. Addiction

According to the survey, no one feels that they are addicted.

Jonah said,

I wasn't thinking; I was addicted. All I wanted was to be happy. I simply wanted to experience the sensation of intoxication. However, I can stay without drinking."

R Bik said

I am not addicted to alcohol, but I do abuse it. However, I have the ability to control my consumption and can go without drinking for periods of two to three weeks.

S Nawl said,

I don't believe I'm addicted because I'm able to abstain from drinking.

Cary said,

I don't think I'm addicted to alcohol because I believe I can stop if I want to. I never try to quit alcohol.

L.SM said

I don't think I'm addicted; I just want to indulge in pleasure. While I feel happy for a brief moment, I always regret it afterward. I feel self-conscious around others. When I'm drunk, I'm not aware enough to control my speech or actions.

5. What Help do They Want?

Jonah mentioned that “prayer, encouragement, and acceptance are what we need. We would be grateful if you could pray for us, offer us encouragement, and accept us just as we are.” R Bik likes counseling to “speak out about everything I have experienced in the past due to alcohol abuse.” He believed that counseling and encouragement may be helpful for his future and recovery from his abuse. “By seeking support, I hope to overcome my struggles and live a healthier life.” S Nawl said, “Prayer is crucial; it's the most important thing that can help us.” Cary said, “Speak to me like a normal person. Please don't blame me when I'm under the influence.” L. SM said, “Help by prayer because when I'm drinking, I stay away from church to avoid disturbing others.”

According to the interview results, youth frequently use alcohol to relieve discomfort. They want to experience happiness, pleasure and peace. Many young people try alcohol for the first time in social settings, often with friends. When asked about the benefits of drinking, they tend to emphasize positive feeling such as increase confidence, the courage to approach others, and ease in social interactions. They acknowledge that alcohol provides a temporary sense of happiness. During the interview, it became evident that their primary purpose is often intoxication rather than awareness of addiction. They

are not aware that they are addicted. Even if they claim to be able to live without drinking, they are unable to abstain for an extended period of time. This inability to quit suggests signs of dependency. Their statements indicate that they are unaware of their addiction and its consequences.

Grace Intervention Recovery Program (Ministry Plan)

This chapter is practical ministry planning to recover the patients who are addicted to alcohol and to recreate their spiritual growth. The proposed program is called “Grace Intervention Recovery Therapy (GIRT).” This GIRT aims to ensure that recovery is for the individual and also for the family of those who have drug abuse in the family. The end goal of GIRT is to promote recovering individuals to the closest church to them to maintain sobriety, growth in Christ, and be helpful to the church and community to create a better life. As this GIRT is basically based on a faith-based recovery program, GIRT mainly uses the Bible, the power of the word of God. The program may need a medical assistant and other material that may be beneficial for the therapy. Let us look at the 12-day GIRT program outline. This is the main project for recovering from the abuse, and it will assist in their spiritual formation and growing in the will of God.

1. Grace Intervention Recovery Therapy

This Grace Intervention Recovery Therapy is divided into two parts. The first part involves teaching Biblical lessons that align with the 12-step principle of Alcoholics Anonymous, while the second part involves practicing the new principle of mental therapy under the guidance of a leader who is an expert in this therapy. The vision of

GIRT is to facilitate the liberation of young people from alcohol abuse, promote reconciliation with their families, church, and community, promote individual transformation, and encourage active participation in good citizenship.

2. Pre-Preparation of the Project

The preparation of the project for young people who abuse alcohol is essential to help their spiritual needs. This preparation should be done before starting the project, such as building good communication, awareness of the program, agreement with the family, and motivation. Robert Ackerman tells us that “The leader must create a good relationship with the abuser through visitation, helping their needs, and prayer. The therapist will need to be particularly sensitive to assessing the strengths and weakness of the person of alcoholics to build stronger relationship.”⁵⁸

Spiritual Counseling

For the Pastor or caregiver there are two essential ways they can offer vital individual counseling to the abusers. According to Dann and Bagby, the first is “identifying people who have drug abuse problems and persuading them to get help. Second is, giving ongoing support to a person’s efforts at recovery.”⁵⁹ This purpose provides access to counsellors who incorporate Christian teaching into their sessions. This helps people find strength and hope through their faith as they work through their

⁵⁸ Robert J. Ackerman, *Children of Alcoholics: A Guide for Parents, Educators, and Therapists*, 2nd ed., 1st Fireside ed (NY: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 136.

⁵⁹ Dann and Bagby, *Addiction*, 81.

abuse. This will include establishing trust and rapport. The mentor should begin by creating a safe and welcoming environment. Showing empathy, active listening, and genuine concern for the individual's well-being. Build a trusting relationship by being respectful, non-judgmental, and patient. Understand the individual's background, current situation, and spiritual needs. According to Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., "The pastor also has a responsibility to get involved and protect the welfare of the alcoholic's family. Helping the alcoholic can automatically improve the welfare of their family."⁶⁰ He mentions the role of the pastor in counseling that "The pastor can support the family by being an understanding friend. The quality of the relationship is essential to helping the family."⁶¹ This shows the pastor needs to listen attentively and the family will open up and share their deepest feelings with him. In this way, the pastor will often be able to help the family realize that he is there to support them in their struggle.

Steps for Spiritual Formation

This portion includes daily prayer and meditation, Bible study, worship service, serving the church and community, and spiritual therapy for the abuser. The main program includes practicing the twelve steps starts from day one up to day seven. According to John E. Keller, "The greatest number of recovered alcoholics have been restored to sobriety within the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) which began in 1934."⁶² He mentioned that "A man by the name of Bill found his way up and out to

⁶⁰ Howard J. Cline Bell, Jr., *Understanding and Counseling the Alcoholic* (NY: Abingdon Press), 1956, 218.

⁶¹ Bell., 218.

⁶² John E. Keller, *Ministering to Alcoholics* (London: Oliphants, 1971), 35.

sobriety through a dramatic, intense spiritual experience that involved surrender to God in his powerlessness.”⁶³ Here are the 12 steps:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

⁶³ Keller, *Ministering to Alcoholics*, 35.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.⁶⁴

This 12-step approach, which is based on the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), is well-known and beneficial for recovering from abuse. It emphasizes peer support and spiritual growth. The AA program has been helpful for recovery. Inspired by Alcoholics Anonymous, I will offer a new recovery program for a 12-day recovery program for youth who are abusing alcohol. Below, you will find the programs and Biblical lessons.

Day one : Orientation and Introduction

Morning : 1Samuel 2:6, Daniel 3:17, Ephesians 3:20

Afternoon : Realizing that We are all Potential Abuse (Rom. 1:16, 21, 24)

The first lesson involves an understanding the principle that is we all have potential for any addiction. We all require the grace of God as manifested through the blood of Jesus Christ. Because of this on one is a position to judge any else. We all equally need the love and forgiveness of God. Paul notes that “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to *everyone* who believes.” The power of God can deliver on from the bondage of envy, bitterness, and guilt.⁶⁵ The new principle of mental therapy will be implemented daily.

Day two : Self-reflection;

Morning : Lamentations 3:4; 2Corinthians 13:5

⁶⁴ Les Parrott, *Helping the Struggling Adolescent: A Guide to Thirty Common Problems for Parents, Counselors, & Youth Workers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1993), 101.

⁶⁵ Frank B. Minirth, ed., *Taking Control: New Hope for Substance Abusers and Their Families* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 99.

Afternoon : Removing the Blinders–Admission of our abusing (Rom. 2:16)

Romans 2:16 says that God will expose and judge the secrets of man through Christ Jesus. Proverb 28:13 states that he whoever conceals his transgression will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy. Confession and forsaking involve taking full responsibility for one’s current state as an abuse. It is not the fault of parents, a spouse, the community, or even God. It is the individual’s responsibility. Romans 2: 1 states that for in passing judgment of on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. Denying reality was Santan’s first method of deceiving Eve (Gen 3:4).⁶⁶

Day three : Deepening Spiritual Practice

Morning : Colossians 2:6-7; James 4:8

Afternoon : Reaffirming our Helplessness (Rom. 3:20)

We cannot work our way to God by good deed. Roman 3:20 states no one by good works can in himself be justified before God. By accepting Christ, we all were forgiven by God and the distance between us and God was taken away; no more stigma, no more penalty.⁶⁷

Day four : Spiritual Teaching

Morning : Ephesians 4:22, 27 ; Mark 8:35.

Afternoon : Recognizing the power of Fatih (Rom. 4:17)

⁶⁶ Minirth, *Taking Control*, 100.

⁶⁷ Minirth, 101.

Because of Abraham's faith, God viewed him as capable of receiving the promise of a new beginning. Roman 4:17 States that God is "the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were." God accepts us not on the basis of anything we have done or have failed to do, but on the basis of our faith in him and in his power. Romans 4:5 states that "To the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness." This is crucial if we are to believe that God can fully restore us and be our source of true hope for change.⁶⁸

Day five : Relationship with God

Morning : John 15:5; James 4:8

Afternoon : Receiving God's unconditional love (Rom 5:8-9)

We can see what God want us to clearly understand that, because of our faith in Jesus Christ, he is fully for us and not against us. Romans 5:8 states, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. The abuser may feel that they have never had a true friend—a source of unconditional acceptance—but they now can see that a God of unconditional acceptance and love is their staunchest ally, regardless of anything in the past. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through Christ Jesus."⁶⁹

Day six : Faith and trust

Morning : Proverb 3:5-6, Hebrews 11:1, 6

Afternoon : Relinquishing Self-Ownership to God (Rom. 6:13)

⁶⁸ Minirth, Taking Control, 103.

⁶⁹ Minirth, 103.

If we put our trust in Christ we can be free from the pain of every mistake and disappointment as well as from current heartaches.⁷⁰ Paul exhorts that you “Do not present your members to sin as instruments for un righteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.” The decision to give God total rights of ownership and free reign to exercise his Lordship.

Day seven : Forgiveness and Healing

Morning : Learning From the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11)

Afternoon : Reconstructing our Patterns of Living (Rom 7,8 and 9)

This is about turning over one’s thinking to God comes first in this surrender (Rom.7 :23-24). The surrender of feeling to God involves giving our deepest emotional secrets to him and requires a searching of every part of our hearts (Rom. 8:14-16). Romans 8:16 states that “A Spirit of slavery leading to fear again.” God is our Father, to whom we can tell every secret within our hearts without fear. Paul teaches us in Romans 8:38, 39 that nothing will not separate us from God’s love.⁷¹ We have a responsibility to turn our action totally to God (Rom. 9:20, 21).

Day eight : Spiritual gifts and calling

Morning : Romans 12:6-8, 2Tim 1:7, 9

Afternoon : Rounding out the Intensive Internal Audit (Rom 10:9-11)

⁷⁰ Minirth, *Taking Control*, 104.

⁷¹ Minirth, 106.

Rom. 10:11 state that “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” At this point, it is crucial to the abuser recovery for them to believe that their deepest fears have been replaced with hope, to remember that the wonderful gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, and to realize his promise will never disappoint them.⁷²

Day nine : Holiness

Morning : Hebrew 12:14, 1Peter 1:15:16, 1Timothy 2:8-10

Afternoon : Restoring Broken Relationship (Rom. 11:22, 23)

In Roman 11:22, the nation Israel is told to show God’s kindness and to grow in God’s likeness if the nation wants God to continue his favor toward her. God desires to rebuild broken relationship. This verse point out the Christian need to extend the love of God to others. Intimacy is a key factor in restoring the relationship. As these relationships are restored, insight into the way other individuals think and behave is often deepened. This is helpful in identifying, understanding, and resolving feeling and attitudes that affected others negatively.⁷³

Day ten : Incorporate Prayer

Morning : Phil 4:6, 1Thes 5:16-18

Afternoon : Replacing One’s Lifestyle (Rom. 12:1,2,9)

Prayer for the individual’s healing, strength, and guidance. Encourage them to develop a personal prayer routine and stay connected with God through prayer. Renewing one’s mind, giving one’s life day by day to Christ’s total Lordship and control, and

⁷² Minirth, *Taking Control*, 109.

⁷³ Minirth, 110.

loving him without hypocrisy are the goals of this level. The repetition practicing again and again is importance and total submission to the will of God. In Luke 9:23, Christ stated that we must take up our cross daily and follow him.⁷⁴ Cross reflects that die and Christian need to die to the desire of the flesh.

Day eleven : Worship and praise

Morning : 4:23-24, Psalm 95:1-2, Hebrew 13:15

Afternoon : Relieving Others' Burdens (Rom. 13:9,10)

In this part, concentrating on kindness toward others, being willing to serve, and loving them in a Christlike life are involved. In Romans 13;9, 10, Paul states, "Love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." An abuser to keep a clear conscience and willing to be transparent and honest enough to "owe nothing to anyone, except the love of a clear conscience. Conversely, Proverbs 28:9,14 warns that God will turn his ear away from us if we no longer seek to obey Him. He will also allow calamity to come to those who harden their hearts toward Him. God is intensely interested in establishing and maintaining an intimate relationship with his children. Like a good father who knows what is the best for his children, God will discipline us if we stray from a close relationship with Him.⁷⁵

Day twelve : Service to church and community

Morning : Lesson 12, Galatians 5:13, Heb 10; 24-25, Col 3:23

Afternoon : Lesson 12, Reaching out to Others (Rom. 14:15-17)

⁷⁴ Minirth, *Taking Control*, 111.

⁷⁵ Minirth, 112.

The goal of every Christian is to reach out to others to bring them into the process of redemption, renewal, and realization of a full and healthy life in Jesus Christ. In Romans 14:15-17 states that we are not to be stumbling blocks for our brothers but witnesses for Christ in their lives. In this way, we shine as example of what God can do in a human being to effect not only redemption from sin but also recovery from the disease of abusing. Romans 15:1, 2 explain that we are to bear the weakness of others with our strength and not just please ourselves. We are to see others through the eyes of Christ and attain a position of productive service to the Lord. Christian is to see themselves being used regularly by God as vessels for communicating healing to others, as they go forward with the promise that “the God of all hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:13).⁷⁶

1. Spiritual Retreats

Organizing a spiritual retreat is needed for the youth who recover from abuse, which includes a follow-up program, a gospel team trip, and sports and gatherings. Every night, they organize a short worship service program where they can share their stories, perform special songs, recite Bible verses, read Scripture, and consecrate themselves for a new life. The leader can organize the gospel trip for more commitment and experience. In the program, they can proclaim the gospel through their live experiences. Moreover, if it is not possible to organize the two programs above, the mentor or leader can create sports where they can build more fellowship and level up their health, motivation, and

⁷⁶ Minirth, *Taking Control*, 113.

team spirit. In addition, gathering together in a house and having food, coffee, and watching movies is helpful for being strong in intimacy and unity.

Daily schedule

06:00 – 6:30 Am – Washing and showering

06:30 – 7:00 Am – Personal time

07:00 – 7:30 Am – Breakfast

08:00 – 8:30 Am – Group Devotion

09:00 – 11:00 Am – Lecture One

11:00 – 01:00 Pm – Lunch time

01:00 – 03:00 Pm – Lecture Two

03:00 – 06:00 Pm – Recreation activities: Sports, arts, and other hobbies to provide healthy alternatives to substance use. Leading by one mentor.

04:00 – 05:00 Pm – Practical time

06:00 – 07:00 Pm – Practical time

07:00 – 08:00 Pm – Practical time

08:00 – 09:00 Pm – Practical time

09:00 – 10:00 Pm – Practical time

2. Participation of the Family

In the family of someone who abuses alcohol, it creates a toxic situation that poisons all the relationships. For the purpose of recovery and solving the problem, the best way to communicate with him is not to blame him, but to encourage him to attend the self-help program. One thing we heard in the personal interviews is that they don't

like blaming. Cary said “I need prayer support, and I ask that you speak to me like a normal person. Please don’t blame me when I’m under the influence.”

Families should practice active listening, being present and listening without judgement. Create a safe space for the individual to share their thoughts and feelings. Encouragement is crucial to offer positive reinforcement and celebrate their progress, no matter how small. Show empathy and compassion for their struggles and avoid criticism or blame. Encourage the individual to participate in church activities, such as youth groups, Bible studies, and volunteer opportunities. For the community, it is easy to avoid the parents who have a prodigal son or daughter on the “far country” trip of alcohol use. “The family needs tender, loving and affirmation. The drug abusing son or daughter needs prayer, attention and love,” says William Goodman.⁷⁷ Dianne Doyle Pita mention in her book, “The family member may attend family treatment meetings, which are an adjunct to the family session, either individually or in a group.⁷⁸ It is helpful in teaching the other family members about the disease of addiction and how to deal with their family member.

3. Church’s Role

The church should clearly state the strong arguments against alcohol abuse. The church must be informed about the realities of alcohol abuse and its impact on individuals and families. It is essential for the church to demonstrate compassion and provide support

⁷⁷ Goodman, A “*Throw down*” on Drugs, 28.

⁷⁸ Dianne D. Pita, *Addictions Counseling: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide for Counseling People with Addictions*, Rev. and updated ed, A Crossroad Book (NY: Crossroad Publ. Co, 2004), 101.

to both those struggling with alcohol abuse and their families. To effectively address this issue, the church should form alliances with other local churches and organizations dedicated to combating alcohol and drug use. By collaborating with these groups, the church can amplify its efforts and create a more significant impact within the community. Additionally, it is crucial for the church to invest both time and resources into these shared causes, taking a more proactive stance in the fight against substance abuse. And we should instill in youth the healthy self-concept they need to resist the pressure their schoolmates will put on them to “just try it.”⁷⁹ The attitude of the church towards the youth should be healthy, telling truth but in love as Paul advised (Eph. 4:15). The church should organize programs for family enrichment, proper counselors, and awareness education. The church should have more trained counselors, especially the pastors. There have been testimonies from recovered addicts that they could come back to life only when they recognized the power of God. The church should therefore have greater concern in combating this evil.⁸⁰

Implementation

As I have noted from the outset, the recovery program will be grounded in real-life experiences and a biblical perspective. I aim to introduce a new principle by integrating ideas from Alcoholics Anonymous, a previous lecture on mental therapy by Dr. Moe Sat Kyar, and personal experiences. Additionally, gathering materials from online sources, YouTube, and Google has been beneficial in completing this research.

⁷⁹ Miller, *Christians at Work in a Hurting World*, 98.

⁸⁰ MCCC, "Counselling."

1. First Steps

In order to practice this therapy, the most important thing is making a clear decision like, “I must change, I need to transform, I want to live a new life,” etc.

After making a clear decision, the first task is changing the belief system. Like Paul said “I can do all thing, through Jesus Christ who strengthen me (Phil 4:13).”

Second, the therapist and the patient working together is necessary. Third, the agreement and decision-making must be taken before taking mental operation. An agreement is to do everything the therapist wants him to do. The fourth point is that preparing a comfortable room or space is needed. The fifth point is the patient needs to lie down and sleep for his relaxation during treatment and after the care. Step one to five is preparation, and after that the therapy is ready to do the operation continue to steps six to twelve.

Minirth supports that treatment for alcohol intoxication typically involves observation in a safe environment. They allow the patient to “sleep it off.”⁸¹ Treatment involves supportive care, which includes airway protection for the patient to breathe properly, hydration to prevent dehydration, and vitamin supplements to prevent complications.

2. Contextualized Twelve Steps

1. Shift your belief system— “I can do it; I can overcome it. God is with me.”
2. Cooperation: This is working together with the patient and therapist.

⁸¹ Minirth, *Taking Control*, 80.

3. The patient must agree to follow the therapist's instructions when making decisions.
4. Preparing a comfortable room requires a quiet space that is free from voices, distractions, and noise.
5. Relaxation mind: first let him lie down to relax on the bed or on the chair.
6. Visualize the bad image; Let him see his brawling, damaging things, disputing with others.
7. Listening; Let him hear people who have bad feelings about him, gossip about him, overlook him, or are angry.
8. Smelling: Let him smell the smell of alcohol, how it was dirty when they vomited, and slept on the street.
9. Tasting the alcohol: Let him taste how bitter let him realize the loss, injury, brawling, mocking by others.
10. Touching on disadvantages: Let him know how alcohol affects our liver, brain, and everything we have mentioned above. Reimagining how the family is affected.
11. Catching a positive image: Let him see his transformative image, people praising him, welcoming him, amazed at his wonderful life, and even see the smiling face of the family and new Godly friends.

12. Experiencing a new life: Let him imagine that he lives a holy, good life and is filled with the Spirit. He envisions himself as a new temple of God. He aspires to live a life filled with praise, prayer, and purity. Worship and leading the people, etc.

While I was studying the 12-step principle, I had the opportunity to practice it, but not every aspect. The case is like this: A young man from Malaysia has a girlfriend working in Singapore. They frequently meet in Malaysia and have a strong relationship, with plans to get married soon. However, he recently contacted me via video call, expressing his inability to cope with the distance. He felt overwhelmed by his longing for her, to the point of contemplating suicide. Despite their positive relationship, he couldn't stop making video calls, sleeping, or eating due to his obsessive feelings—what could be described as an addiction to love. He was nearly out of control. I reached an agreement with him and provided mental therapy using this new principle for an hour, accompanied by prayer. The following day, he began to feel better. We continued praying, and he eventually recovered from his obsession through divine grace. This experience has led me to understand that this principle is highly beneficial in addressing the spiritual needs of young people.

The financial help will be provided by the church because this program should be carried out under the leadership of the church. Hopefully, this program will be organized in June 2025, halfway through the year. The author hopes that other churches will also contribute to this program, and the dream will be blessed by God. This program will not only change minds but also benefit the researcher himself. During the interview, the

author was touched by the abuser's words—to accept them as normal people when they come to the church, even if they are under the influence of alcohol. This changed the author's mind about accepting them, as the researcher did not want to be involved with alcohol abusers.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary

The research explores alcohol consumption and misuse among Christian youth in the Kalay Area, Myanmar, focusing on causes, impacts, and solutions, particularly concerning spiritual concerns. The research specifically targets youth in the Kalay area of Myanmar, who often start drinking at a young age, leading to negative impacts on their families, church, and community. They often resort to alcohol misuse as a means of managing stress-related challenges. The research aims to help Christian youth recover from abuse by addressing their spiritual needs.

The research states, in order to recover from abusing alcohol, spiritual formation is vital. It suggests that intentional discipleship by parents and churches is crucial for preparing students for university life. The study also emphasizes the need for community and church structures to enforce substance use regulations and execute recovery programs.

This research addresses the comparison of historical and modern views of alcohol, focusing on its negative effects on physical, mental, and emotional health. Alcohol damages the physical body of a person such as liver disease, cognitive impairment, mood dysregulation, memory impairment, and maladaptive behaviors. Mentally, it can compromise cognitive functions, leading to mental health disorders. The research explains that excessive alcohol consumption can cause emotional damage to a person by ruining interpersonal relationships, hinder academic and occupational performance, and increase the risk of engaging in reckless or unlawful behaviors.

The analysis explores the biblical perspectives on alcohol, emphasizing its sacred applications and potential misuse. It advocates for responsible consumption, particularly among youth, and emphasizes the body as a temple of God. The study also examines alcohol's role in sacred rituals and its potential to impair judgment and detract from spiritual obligations. It calls for abstinence from alcohol consumption to sustain spiritual and physical well-being and uphold biblical principles.

The research reveals a significant prevalence of alcohol misuse among youth in Kalay, Myanmar, fueled by pursuits of happiness and stress management. The study highlights the lack of a comprehensive national alcohol control policy and the challenges faced by individuals struggling with abusing. Alcoholism is a complex problem caused by many factors such as culture, peers and misguide of the belief.

The "Grace Intervention Recovery Therapy (GIRT)" program presents a faith-based approach to help individuals overcome alcohol dependency while fostering spiritual development. The leader will use the Bible, but in some cases, the leader will also use medicine if necessary. It is holistic, engaging not just the affected individual but their families to encourage reintegration into the church and community. The program focuses on relationship building, motivational enhancement, and family concordance, with spiritual counseling and support rooted in Christian doctrines.

The recovery program I developed synthesizes personal experiences with biblical insights to propose an innovative therapeutic model that combines Alcoholics Anonymous's core principles, cognitive behavioral therapy, and experiential accounts.

Conclusion

The study provides a thorough examination of alcohol usage among Christian young people in the Kalay area of Myanmar, emphasizing its causes, consequences, and potential solutions, with a particular emphasis on spiritual issues. The study focuses on the beginning of alcohol consumption among youth and the disadvantages of their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being, as well as on their families, churches, and communities. Stress management and cultural factors are cited as key contributors to this problem, which is caused by the absence of a strong national alcohol control strategy.

The study shows the importance of spiritual education and purposeful discipleship by parents and churches in preventing alcohol abuse and preparing young people for life's challenges. It promotes community and church-based recovery programs as possible ways to treat substance misuse. The "Grace Intervention Recovery Therapy (GIRT)" program is described as an innovative, faith-based treatment that combines spiritual counseling with therapeutic approaches such as cognitive behavioral therapy and Alcoholics Anonymous principles. This comprehensive program not only helps individuals recover, but it also promotes family reunification and community involvement.

By combining biblical insights with practical methods, the study recommends responsible consumption or refraining in order to sustain spiritual values and enhance overall wellness. It is an effective resource for addressing alcoholism in faith-based communities.

Recommendations

To expand on the findings of this qualitative research, the following recommendations are made for future studies:

1. Further study is needed on this topic
2. This can also be done in other areas.
3. Quantitative and counseling research can be conducted on this topic.

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Appendix

Interview #1

Name : Jonah

Age : 23

Date : Jan 31, 2025

1. Tell me about the time when you first tried alcohol?

Answer. My friends treated me. They said, 'If you drink, you will have the courage to talk to the ladies.' I started to drink and felt good, so I continued drinking.

2. How long have you been consuming alcohol?

Answer. I have been drinking for ten years.

3. How do you feel when you consume alcohol?

Answer. I felt dizzy; I actually felt good in that state, being dizzy. I immediately had the desire to drink. When I was drunk, I spoke excessively. I said things I shouldn't have said: I claimed I had the courage to fight people. I was telling lies and began to boast to impress others.

4. How do you like most about drinking alcohol?

Answer. I liked drinking alcohol the most when I was fatigued, stressed, or heartbroken. For a moment, I felt happy when I was drunk.

5. What good benefits does drinking give to you? What bad thing does drinking cause you.

Answer. Nothing seemed good. I wanted to fight with others. I couldn't control myself. I knowingly did wrong things. My life was ruined. I sold items from my own house, such as my motorcycle, the meter box, and other belongings.

6. Do you consider yourself addicted to alcohol?

Answer. I wasn't thinking; I was addicted. All I wanted was to be happy. I simply wanted to experience the sensation of intoxication. However, I can stay without drinking.

7. How you attempted to quit drinking alcohol? If so, tell me about the circumstance.

Answer. I earn money, but when I get more, I spend it all and run out. I try to quit, but I cannot.

8. Why you are attending this program?

Answer. The community couldn't control me; the village leader couldn't punish me. My friends invited me to attend this short training, and I myself also wanted to listen to the Word of God.

9. What changes do you hope to achieve regarding you consumption of alcohol?

Answer. I want to change my life. I aspire to attend a seminary, become a minister and a preacher, and I want to stop abusing alcohol.

10. What help do you need to change and to sustain (keep) the positive change?

Answer. I would appreciate prayer support as I work to change my life.

11. How can the church and church leaders help you to achieve this change?

Answer. Prayer, encouragement, and acceptance are what we need. We would be grateful if you could pray for us, offer us encouragement, and accept us just as we are.

Interview #2

Name : R Bik

Age : 27

Date: Jan 31, 2025

1. Tell me about the time when you first tried alcohol?

Answer. I accompany my uncle to the college; they consume alcohol, subsequently inviting me to partake, to which I acquiesce. I initially sought to experiment, but I eventually became a habitual abuser.

2. How long have you been consuming alcohol?

Answer. I have been consuming alcohol for ten years.

3. How do you feel when you consume alcohol?

Answer. I felt good; I had the courage to talk to the lady, something I never dared to do before. Now, I have the courage to speak up. I am easy to communicate with, and I find it comfortable to talk with friends who have experienced abuse.

4. How do you like most about drinking alcohol?

Answer. I experience comfort in solitude and do not sense loneliness. During periods of increased leisure, I occasionally desire to use alcohol. It alleviates my pain somewhat. I favor solitude as it enhances my well-being. Consuming alcohol diminishes my need for concentration.

5. What benefits does drinking give to you? What disadvantages does drinking cause you.

Answer. As I mentioned earlier, we can easily make new friends even after just one meeting. We are generous with our friends, often sharing with them. At first glance, these traits might seem positive, but they can also be exploited by those who abuse alcohol. On the other hand, I learned a valuable lesson: due to my drunkenness, I was fired from my job, I stole, and I lost my memory. I had the opportunity to continue my studies with a

full scholarship, but I lost this chance as well. Although we can easily make new friends, on the other side, we often lose our relatives and good friends who have strong character.

6. Do you consider yourself addicted to alcohol?

Answer. I am not addicted to alcohol, but I do abuse it. However, I have the ability to control my consumption and can go without drinking for periods of two to three weeks.

7. How you attempted to quit drinking alcohol? If so, tell me about the circumstance.

Answer. I try to quit it. However, I can't quit for a long time. After a long time, I want to drink it again. At first, it tastes bitter, but later I feel that it is sweet.

8. Why you are attending this program?

Answer. This is my sixth time attending this campaign. I realized that I cannot quit on my own. I want to stop drinking. My friends invited me, and I also wanted to stop, so I attended this campaign. I believe that if I do not abuse alcohol, I can reach even higher than this level.

9. What changes do you hope to achieve regarding you consumption of alcohol?

Answer. I really want to change my life. I plan to apply for a passport and continue my Master of Divinity course in Singapore. My goal is to become a lecturer in a seminary. I am doing my best, and I believe God will allow me to achieve this.

10. What help do you need to change and to sustain (keep) the positive change?

Answer. Prayer without ceasing is what I need most. Sometimes, I need counseling to speak out about everything I have experienced in the past due to alcohol abuse.

11. How can the church and church leaders help you to achieve this change?

Answer. Counseling and encouragement may be helpful for my future and recovery from my abuse. By seeking support, I hope to overcome my struggles and live a healthier life. With faith and determination, I am confident that I can achieve a brighter future.

Interview #3

Name : S Nawl

Kum : 24

Date : Jan 31, 2025

1. Tell me about the time when you first tried alcohol?

Answer. I began drinking in grade 8. At that time, many students were drinking at school, particularly during breaks. I joined my classmates and started drinking. Since I didn't have to spend much money, I was curious about the taste, and it led to me drinking regularly.

2. How long have you been consuming alcohol?

Answer. I first drank when I was 16 years old. Since then, I've been consuming alcohol for more than 8 years, although I'm not certain of the exact length of time.

3. How do you feel when you consume alcohol?

Answer. When I drink, I experience a warm sensation in my body, followed by dizziness and a loss of control. My speech becomes slow, and my body feels unstable. I struggle to think clearly. Even though I'm aware of everything, it feels surreal, like a dream. I find this feeling appealing.

4. How do you like most about drinking alcohol?

Answer. I tend to drink when I'm experiencing depression, grief, or feeling upset. My parents passed away when I was young, and my daughter and I lived with my grandparents for a short time before they also passed away. I've been trying to escape my depression through drinking, as it helps me forget temporarily while I'm intoxicated. However, once the effects of alcohol wear off, my depression returns. This pattern has led me to become a regular drinker.

5. What benefits does drinking give to you? What disadvantages does drinking cause you.

Answer. There are no benefits to drinking alcohol. It has cost me a significant amount of money. I worked in China for four years to earn a living, but when I came back, I squandered all my savings due to my excessive drinking.

6. Do you consider yourself addicted to alcohol?

Answer. I don't believe I'm addicted because I'm able to abstain from drinking.

7. How you attempted to quit drinking alcohol? If so, tell me about the circumstance.

Answer. I attempt to quit, but I can only manage to stay sober for about two to three weeks. Then, I end up drinking again.

8. Why you are attending this program?

Answer. I'm eager to attend this campaign because I feel hopeless and I'm seeking peace of mind. I found out about the camp through friends.

9. What changes do you hope to achieve regarding you consumption of alcohol?

Answer. I don't have big aspirations, but I desire to be free from my bondage and to participate in God's ministry at the church to the fullest extent I can.

10. What help do you need to change and to sustain (keep) the positive change?

Answer. As human beings, prayer is crucial; it's the most important thing that can help us.

11. How can the church and church leaders help you to achieve this change?

Answer. We don't all share the same motivations. Some friends attend church while intoxicated. In these situations, it's crucial for the church and the pastor to offer care and encouragement.

Interview #4

Name : Carry

Age : 32

Date : Feb 1, 2025

1. Tell me about the time when you first tried alcohol?

Answer. I am 20 years old when I first drink alcohol. At the time, I am working at a firm, and we have cows in the field. My older brothers are drinking, and I decide to join them.

2. How long have you been consuming alcohol?

Answer. I have been using alcohol for 12 years old.

3. How do you feel when you consume alcohol?

Answer. At first, I don't like it much, but I continue, mainly because I want to experience the dizziness.

4. How do you like most about drinking alcohol?

Answer. Drinking seems to make me more talkative. It gives me the courage to approach and visit our female friends. Occasionally, when I'm angry, I turn to alcohol. When I'm intoxicated, I feel a sense of positivity.

5. What benefits does drinking give to you? What disadvantages does drinking cause you.

Answer. There are no benefits to drinking alcohol. It leaves me feeling thin and exhausted, and we tire easily, which might be related to poor circulation. I waste a lot of money on it. As a result, people tend to overlook and neglect us.

6. Do you consider yourself addicted to alcohol?

Answer. No, I don't think I'm addicted to alcohol because I believe I can stop if I want to.

7. How you attempted to quit drinking alcohol? If so, tell me about the circumstance.

Answer. I'm not sure I can stop drinking by myself, but I've never attempted to quit before.

8. Why you are attending this program?

Answer. After hearing about this campaign, I decided I wanted to change my life. This was because every time I drank, I would regret it and feel bad about myself afterward.

9. What changes do you hope to achieve regarding you consumption of alcohol?

Answer. If I can change or if God gives me the opportunity to change, I would like to work and save money. My goal is to be the one who takes care of my family.

10. What help do you need to change and to sustain (keep) the positive change?

Answer. I need prayer support, and speak to me like a normal person. Please don't blame me when I'm under the influence.

11. How can the church and church leaders help you to achieve this change?

Answer. I'm unsure, but I need encouragement. Please remind me not to drink too much, that I'm still the same person, and that quitting will be harder later on. If I can manage without drinking, I should just quit and stay sober.

Interview #5

Name : L.SM,

Age : 23

Date : Feb 1, 2025

1. Tell me about the time when you first tried alcohol?

Answer. I recently followed my friends to a new alcohol shop. I decided to try something for 300 kyats, but I ended up getting intoxicated and didn't feel very comfortable. Despite this, I often go with my friends and continue drinking.

2. How long have you been consuming alcohol.

Answer. I started drinking at the age of 13 and have been drinking for the past seven years.

3. How do you feel when you consume alcohol?.

Answer. At first, I felt uncomfortable, but I now enjoy drinking during wedding ceremonies or events and find it pleasurable.

4. How do you like most about drinking alcohol?

Answer. I don't mind the taste because I enjoy the sensation of being intoxicated—it makes me feel good and ease. However, the morning after can be rough, with headaches that I sometimes try to relieve by drinking again. Alcohol makes me more talkative, and if my parents criticize me while I'm in that state, I can become angry. It also gives me the courage to approach women. At first, they might not be interested, but once we start conversing smoothly, they often end up admiring us. I felt like I lacked confidence.

5. What benefits does drinking give to you? What disadvantages does drinking cause you.

Answer. I'm quite confused about my memories from that time. I used to spend a significant amount of money in just one day, and there's nothing good to say about it. My relationship with my girlfriend ended because of the abusive behavior I exhibited while drunk. I would frequently visit places I shouldn't have, and on one occasion, I was even captured by the army due to my intoxication. The fear of the army was so intense that it completely eliminated my intoxication.

6. Do you consider yourself addicted to alcohol?

Answer. I don't think I'm addicted; I just want to indulge in pleasure. While I feel happy for a brief moment, I always regret it afterward. I feel self-conscious around others. When I'm drunk, I'm not aware enough to control my speech or actions.

7. How you attempted to quit drinking alcohol? If so, tell me about the circumstance.

Answer. I've attempted to quit several times, but I've only been able to abstain for three weeks at most. Whenever there are events, I find myself using it again. Whether I'm invited by friends or not. I remain hopeful that I can quit for good.

8. Why you are attending this program?

Answer. I was invited by my friends to learn about the salvation work of God through Jesus Christ. I also want to quit my abusive behavior through this campaign.

9. What changes do you hope to achieve regarding you consumption of alcohol?

Answer. If I can stop my abusive behavior, I will be able to work well and provide better care for my mother.

10. What help do you need to change and to sustain (keep) the positive change?

Answer. Help by Prayer.

11. How can the church and church leaders help you to achieve this change?

Answer. When I'm drinking, I stay away from church to avoid disturbing others. Even when I'm drunk, I appreciate it when people communicate with me respectfully. I'm hoping this campaign will help me quit my bad habits. Without a job, I often feel the urge to drink, which is why I want to find work.

Mentor Interview #1

Name : Evan. Lal Hre Luai
 Ministry Name : Bethsaida Restoration Ministry
 Date : February 6, 2025

Motivation Q's

1. What is your main motivation to do this program?

Answer. Most young people go back to abusing alcohol after proclaiming the gospel within one week of training. One week training is not good enough for them. They committed to drinking alcohol again. Due to these issues, I came up with the idea to establish the "Bethsaida Restoration Ministry," which aims to provide continuous assistance and close care to young people for a minimum of one month. This ministry began with a focus on providing care for individuals suffering from abuse.

2. What do you want to achieve by helping them. What is your purpose?

Answer. The primary objective is to remain steadfast in the Christian sacred life. Although they may not serve as preachers, I desire for them to be valuable contributors to

the Church. I have a compassionate heart not only for them, but also for their family and their parent.

Ans. As a mother, she constantly concerns herself with her son, who is misusing alcohol, when he arrives home late. The parent is having difficulty sleeping. The parents are concerned for their son when the dogs bark; the mother contemplates: is my young son returning? Negative, it was not. The mother contemplates what will happen to my son? Did he have an accident? Is he in a conflict with others? Has he been arrested by the police? The mother cannot sleep the entire night.

As a father, he confronted the public due to his drunken kid. The strength of the father is not completely restored. He is reluctant to speak. He is unable to express his thoughts. He made his father feel shame in front of people. When the son reduces his funds for beverages, he resorts to stealing, whether he takes rice from a grain store or appropriating money from his parents. He will crack the key in the closet. He transforms into the household robber.

The Effect to the Neighbor and Community

When young men get drunk, they become overly talkative and discuss topics they shouldn't be discussing. Even a single word can cause conflict among siblings. The two fight each other, and this causes discomfort to the neighbors. He breaks the glass of the closet. He throws the plate. Break the table. He kicks the television and damages the materials in the house. If someone had the poison, it will only effect himself. However, if we consume alcohol and drug, it will affect not only him, but also the whole family and neighbors.

The Effect to Himself

Answer. They regret their drunken mistake and hesitate to meet people. They feel that they are confident. Their life was full of shyness, fear, and lost confidence.

3. Do you have any personal experience with drinking alcohol?

Answer. Originally, I am not good enough. I am not an impeachable individual in the perception of society. I am not hooked, although but I am formerly a heavy drinker. I experience recovery from alcohol abuse.

Positive outcome

Answer. The family where people are abusing alcohol, that family will never get a healthy family. I realize that they look like keeping poisonous things at home. If we can save someone from alcoholism, it is a joyful and good health for all family members.

Preparation Q's

1. How did you train to help the people who have drinking problem?

Answer. I usually teach God is Almighty; He can do all things and also teach to be born again. In Christ, we shed our old lives and begin a new one (2 Cor 5:17). I encourage them that "We can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengthens me," based on Phi 4:13.

2. How do you invite people to come?

Program Q's

1. Does this require any kind of government approval?

Answer. Not yet.

2. How do you set up the program, ministry?

Answer. Due to their addiction, we cannot compel them to cease directly. Over the course of five days, we meticulously manage and arrange time to progressively decrease their alcohol consumption. We provide injections and supplements to restore their energy levels. Typically, we can commence the training shortly after one week.

3. How effective do you think it is?

Answer. Through the establishment of the “Bethsaida Restoration Ministry,” I believe, I succeed. They believe in Jesus Christ as their savior. Although it may appear that our efforts are in vain, I am confident that even a single individual’s transformation of their life holds immense value and worth.

4. What do you think, what is the real need to recover their abusing.

Answer. They need encouragement, and please be careful not to blame them. Appreciate them and be patient with them.

Mentor Interview #2

Rev. Lal Fak Mawi

Ministry Name : Independence Presbyterian Church of Myanmar

Date: Feb 18, 2025, 10:00-11:30 Pm

Motivation Q’s

1. What is your main motivation to do this program?

Answer. Most people say, “It’s okay to drink alcohol,” but the Bible states that drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Their belief that they can enter Heaven while engaging in such behavior is misguided. Although they identify as Christians, call upon the name of God, and aspire to reach Heaven, they are not following

the path that leads there. As a result, they struggle to pray and find peace, often believing themselves to be good.

Proverbs 24:11 reminds us, “Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter.” If you say, “Behold, we did not know this,” I acknowledge that God has given me this calling to help those suffering from alcoholism. This is my primary motivation for leading this program.

Ephesians 5:18 “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit.”(NASB)

2. What do you want to achieve by helping them. What is your purpose?

Answer. I want them to receive salvation, to be freed from the bondage of addiction, to create happy family lives, and to return to a healthy lifestyle as they recover from their struggles. God did not create us to pursue destructive paths or become captivated by earthly pleasures. His aim is for us to enjoy a good life.

3. Do you have any personal experience with drinking alcohol?

Answer. I have had several personal experiences and have gained valuable insights from them. I only share what I have witnessed firsthand.

Positive outcome

1. How did you train to help the people who have drinking problem?

Answer. When we organize a one- or two-week program, our goal is to help participants stop drinking by the fourth day. We provide medication and support, encouraging them with patience. We assign one or two dedicated individuals to care for them humbly and steadfastly. We remain by their side until they are able to eat and regain their sobriety.

2. How do you invite people to come?

Answer. The work of the Holy Spirit is essential in our efforts. We invite individuals repeatedly, even if they initially deny our invitation. The most effective approach is to have someone who has successfully recovered from addiction extend the invitation because ninety percent of youth can learn how to use alcohol from their friends. Therefore invited by their friends is also effective. Prayer is vital, and it is important to embody the love of Jesus Christ in our interactions. Accompanying them as a friend is crucial, ensuring that we do not overlook their needs or struggles.

Program Q's

1. Does this require any kind of government approval?

Answer. Not yet.

2. How do you set up the program, ministry?

Answer. We typically allocate two weeks for the initial program, followed by an additional week for follow-up activities such as group prayer, gospel outreach, and community service projects.

3. How effective do you think it is?

Answer. Transforming their lives depends on the work of the Holy Spirit. Our role is to demonstrate love, teach them to value their lives, and share the love of God through the gospel. If even one person experiences a transformation, we can consider it a success. I believe we have effectively carried out each program.

4. What do you think, what is the real need to recover their abusing.

Answer. Since this is a short-term ministry, I am not fully satisfied because we need to implement more follow-up programs to ensure they can sustain their recovery and stand firm on their own.

Mentor Interview #3

Name : Rev. Van Neih Sanga (Home Father)

Ministry Name : “Chanchuahna Run” means “House of Salvation”

Date: July 4, 2024 (9:30 -11:00pm), March 14, 2025.

Motivation Q’s

1. What is your main motivation to do this program?

Answer. My life was transformed in 2008 when I decided to serve God and demonstrate His grace. While praying on Mount Carmel, God revealed to me in a dream, saying, ‘You are responsible for those who are sleeping on the road.’ This calling reminded me of the Scripture: “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

2. What do you want to achieve by helping them. What is your purpose?

Answer. My life was once like theirs, but after experiencing the love of God, I became passionate about transforming their lives. I want them to be born again and to receive new life in Christ.

3. Do you have any personal experience with drinking alcohol?

Answer. Yes, I was addicted to alcohol, but by the grace of God, I am now free from its bondage.

Positive outcome

1. How did you train to help the people who have drinking problem?

Answer. The ‘Chanchuahna Run,’ which translates to ‘House of Salvation,’ is a long-term treatment program for individuals struggling with drug and alcohol addiction. Initially, we focus on helping them stop drinking within a month, while ensuring their physical health improves with the assistance of civil doctors to restore strength and energy. The core of the treatment involves teaching the love of God and the value of life through Scripture.

2. How do you invite people to come?

Answer. When I first encountered individuals struggling with addiction, I would invite them to stay at my home for two or three weeks to receive care. If they still needed support after that, I would arrange for them to go to the center. Nowadays, I no longer need to extend personal invitations because people are aware of the center, and those who are willing to seek help are sent there with the support of their parents and relatives.

Program Q’s

1. Does this require any kind of government approval?

Answer. Yes, the ‘Chanchuahna Run’ has been officially registered by the government, specifically with permission granted by the Myanmar Anti-Narcotics Force.

2. How do you set up the program, ministry?

Answer. We follow a daily schedule and keep to the timetable.

3. How effective do you think it is?

Answer. From this center, two males missionaries and ten women are actively leading in the church. While I wouldn’t say we’ve achieved 100% success, we have reached about 40% success."

4. What do you think, what is the real need to recover their abusing.

Answer. The entire church and all its ministers should participate in this recovery program. We require financial support, as well as additional preachers, teachers, and trainers, so that we can effectively address the real spiritual growth needs of our community.