



“Alabama’s Moral Compass”

Alabama Citizens Action Program and American Character Builders

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“Building Character One Good Choice at a Time”

Matthew 5:13-16KJV

13Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16Let your light so shine before men, that

they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

For the latest resources and news concerning these ministries visit [www.ALCAP.com](http://www.ALCAP.com) and [www.AmericanCharacterBuilders.org](http://www.AmericanCharacterBuilders.org)

### Prayers and financial gifts are needed throughout the summer months. Thank you for your continued support!

Most churches, charitable organizations and mission causes tend to see a drop in giving during the summer months. However, ALCAP and American Character Builders are mission causes that need your continued prayers and support throughout the summer. Relationships with State Lawmakers and Constitutional Officers must be maintained even when the Legislature is not in session. Your financial gifts to ALCAP make those continued contacts possible.

Our American Character Builders school programs provide outreach opportunities for churches, helping them to target middle and high school students AND their families for Christ. These American Character Builders school programs are a way of “heading off” addictive behaviors before those addictions take root and destroy lives and families. It is during the summer months that we are able to spend more time



sharing with churches and associations of churches, as well as local schools, about the American Character Builders resources. We are also working to add new resources to our list of materials.

Churches can give to ALCAP, and individuals, who want tax deductions, should give to American Character Builders. Both organizations are dependent on the faith community for support.

Please don’t forget to continue praying for this ministry as we serve and minister with the churches of Alabama!

The staff of ALCAP and American Character Builders would like to wish you and your family a very blessed and safe summer!

ALABAMA CITIZENS ACTION PROGRAM

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PURPOSE:

The Alabama Citizens Action Program (ALCAP), originally founded in 1937 as the Alabama Temperance Alliance, serves as Alabama’s “moral compass.” This ministry provides an outlet for churches throughout Alabama to fulfill Christ’s command to His followers to be “salt and light” (Matthew 5:13-16).

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## 2013 Legislative Session “wins and losses”

MONTGOMERY—As usual, the 2013 Legislative Session ended with some “wins” and some “losses” with regards to the moral issues confronting our state.



In the win column, perhaps the most significant victory was the passage of House Bill (HB) 57, sponsored by Rep. Mary Sue McClurkin (R-District 43). This bill, signed into law by Gov. Robert Bentley, will require abortion clinics in Alabama to meet the same standards as ambulatory surgical centers. Pro-abortionists complained that the result would be the closure of all abortion clinics in the state because they cannot meet such high standards. For years, these pro-abortionists have argued that if abortions are outlawed, women would be forced to have back-room abortions in unsafe conditions. Yet now, given the opportunity to insure that abortion clinics are safe, they raise objections. Their objections reached a fevered pitch when Rep. McClurkin’s life was threatened during the legislative process.

Another “win” was the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 4, sponsored by Sen. Gerald Allen (R-District 21). This bill, also signed into law by Gov. Bentley, was known as the “Foreign Law Bill.” It makes the application of laws outside the State of Alabama and the United States ille-

gal in Alabama Courts and it protects the rights of Alabama and U.S. citizens.

In the “loss” column was the “Homebrew Bill” (HB9), sponsored by Rep. Mac McCutcheon (R-District 25). This bill, signed into law by Gov. Bentley, allows individuals to brew beer, wine or mead in their own homes and store up to 15 gallons per quarter. It also allows them to transport up to 10 gallons to special events. ALCAP was the lone voice opposing the passage of this bill. Our opposition was based on several factors, but the primary factor was the inability for any regulation or accountability to be implemented.



After passing the House, the bill was caught in a backlog of bills in the Senate. We hoped that other, more pressing matters would keep the bill from coming to the Senate floor. However, late one night, Sen. Gerald Dial (R-District 13) asked for the bill to be brought up out of order. It was, and it passed.

Another bill that we hoped would pass, but did not, was SB446, sponsored by Sen. Bryan Taylor (R-District 30). This bill would have raised the penalty on predatory gambling in Alabama from a Class A Misdemeanor to a Class C Felony and would have resulted in deterring illegal elec-



tronic bingo halls from continually opening in the state. Again, Sen. Gerald Dial was instrumental in the fate of this bill, this time he managed to stop this important legislation. He began a filibuster of the bill and when a vote was taken to end debate, only 18 of the 21 senators needed to end the filibuster voted to do so.

We hope that Sen. Taylor will be successful next year in the last Legislative Session of this quadrum. Legislators will be concerned about re-election in the June 2014 Primaries when they begin their session in January of 2014.

ALCAP also supported legislation that would strengthen the regulation of payday and title loan lenders in Alabama. These businesses are often predatory in nature and take advantage of people who are least able to repay their loans. All legislation related to this issue failed to pass, but we are hopeful something can be accomplished next year.



Be sure to take advantage of ALCAP’s online resources at [www.ALCAP.com](http://www.ALCAP.com).



American Character Builders is a 501c3 organization committed to teaching students character and the value of living a healthy lifestyle

IMAGINE IMPACTING STUDENTS IN A WAY THAT WILL FOREVER CHANGE THE COURSE OF THEIR LIVES!—  
**YOU CAN!**

By placing American Character Builders kits in your area schools or by leading your local church to provide these kits, you can make a positive impact on the lives of students in your community!

NOW AVAILABLE—Bible study accompanying anti-bully kit! Bible studies accompanying other kits should be ready in late 2013! Visit our website at [AmericanCharacterBuilders.org](http://AmericanCharacterBuilders.org)

## American Character Builders News

HOOVER, AL—American Character Builders (ACB) was an exhibitor at the Southeast Youth Ministers Conclave in Chattanooga, TN for the second year in a row. This year ACB was able to offer kits to leaders from Tennessee churches through the Tennessee Drug Awareness Council



(TDAC), which had ordered 25 of each of the four kits a year earlier. At least two churches requested kits from TDAC and we are eager to hear reports on how they were used.

Keith Burton accompanied ACB's executive director on this

trip and was an enthusiastic representative for ACB. Keith is the graphic designer who helped get the ACB kits published.

In April, Joe and Joy Godfrey drove to Fort Worth, TX to set up the American

Character Builders exhibit at the annual Youth Ministers Lab at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS). As a student at SWBTS in the late 1970s, Joe had the opportunity to attend several Youth Minister Labs, and now he had the opportunity, with Joy, to ex-



hibit at the event on behalf of American Character Builders.

Contacts with churches, schools and potential donors continue to be made, and opportunities to exhibit these quality resources continue to be sought out.

For more information, to view videos of what can be found in each kit, and to order kits, visit the website...

[www.AmericanCharacterBuilders.org](http://www.AmericanCharacterBuilders.org) or call 205.985.9529

## Drinking and Jesus turning water into wine —by Dr. Mark Creech

The late comedian, Milton Berle, once said he had a friend who swore the Bible condoned getting drunk. He argued the Scriptures taught that the one who sins should be stoned.

I've heard a lot of erroneous arguments myself made from the Bible in favor of drinking. But none more egregious than the one that advocates Jesus endorsed imbibing when he made water into wine at the wedding in Cana. I don't always have the occasion to challenge this assertion, but when I do, I like to ask the proponent to show me, prove that Jesus made an intoxicating beverage that was harmful. Never has

anyone ever been able to do more than show the argument is based squarely on assumption. The facts just don't sustain it.

The Greek word translated wine in chapter 2 of John's Gospel is the word *oinos* – a generic term that does not always refer to a fermented beverage. John D. Freeman has accurately written:

“Throughout ancient times the word was used to refer to fruit juices, primarily grape juice, without regard to whether or not it was fermented, or had turned to vinegar. Recipes for pre-

paring various kinds of wines without fermentation have been preserved by writers of antiquity; and the common practice of boiling their wines, and also of largely diluting them, showed that the action of fermentation was not regarded by the ancients as essential to the existence of *oinos*. Many authorities agree that the Greek use of *oinos* included fresh grape juice.” [1]

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## Drinking and Jesus turning water into wine [Continued from page 2]

So whether one believes that Jesus made an intoxicating wine or a non-intoxicating wine at the wedding in Cana is purely a matter of personal interpretation. For the Bible never definitively says that Jesus turned water into alcoholic wine.

There are, however, a number of reasons why this writer believes the preponderance of the evidence is against Jesus having made an intoxicating beverage.

There is a sense in which God himself turns water into wine year after year in vineyards everywhere around the world. The rains fall from the heavens, the roots take in the moisture, the sunshine, and process the elements. Slowly comes the bloom on the branches, the grapes then form and ripen. In the miracle at Cana, Jesus simply sped up the process.

Fermentation, however, is something that comes about via decomposition. It makes no sense that Jesus would create something pure and at the peak of perfection and then drive it rapidly through the course of fermentation. It's true he could have done it, but why would he do such a thing? The miracle was meant to show the glory of Christ's person. Making what would have amounted to 120 gallons of a dangerous drug, while giving no restriction for its use, certainly isn't consistent with a manifestation of his magnificence. It makes no sense and runs counter to Christ's spotless integrity to purposely corrupt what was natural and healthy for a recreational mind-altering substance.

The concept itself defames the very character of Jesus and puts him in violation of the spirit, if not the letter of the law of God, which reads, “Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbors, pouring it from the wineskin till they are drunk, so that he can gaze on their naked bodies. You will be filled with shame instead of glory” (Habakkuk 2:15, 16).

With something of a modern parallel, David Brumbelow in his book, *Ancient Wine and the Bible*, states the scenario Jesus would have never created at the wedding in Cana:

“You can be assured that as the guests returned home they were not guilty of drunk walking, drunk donkey-riding, or drunk chariot-racing. No drunk men went home that day and beat their wives and children.” [2]

Moreover, if one was to assume Jesus drank such wine in participation with the wedding guests, as some have argued, then that act in itself would have violated Proverbs 31:4-5, which reads, “It is not for kings, O Lemuel – not for kings to drink wine, not for rulers to crave beer, lest they drink and forget what the law decrees, and deprive all the oppressed of their rights.” Is not Christ the King of kings?

Is it reasonable to think the very Son of God would take into his body a recreational intoxicant, risk falling into sin, and endanger the great mission of the redemption of mankind? Banish the thought!

Moreover, it should also be noted that Jesus' first miracle – the turning of the water into wine – was a sign of the new covenant God was making. The writer of Hebrews explains, “For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance – now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant” (Hebrews 9:15). It besmirches the fresh, sweet, stainless, incorruptible nature of the new covenant that Christ brings with a beverage of fermentation. The word “ferment” itself means agitation, unrest, commotion, tumult, turmoil and mayhem. These are all matters the new covenant in Christ remedies, erases, and corrects in life. If the miracle of turning water into wine was the creation of a beverage inflamed with alcohol, then these negative associations would seem to tarnish the purity of that holy covenant.

This author understands many fine, even devout Christian people; disagree with the argument that the wine Jesus miraculously provided at Cana was not fermented or intoxicating. But there is nothing in John's account or the Bible's teachings as a whole, where one may conclusively show an endorsement for the recreational use of alcoholic beverages. Hardly! Orin B. Whitmore has eloquently summarized the matter, saying:

“Is all wine ‘a mocker’? [Proverbs 20:1]. Then it was a ‘a mocker’ that Jesus made for the guests at the wedding feast in Cana, and ‘a mocker’ which Jesus introduced to his disciples at the Passover table, and bade them to drink. Does all wine ‘bite like a serpent’ and ‘sting like an adder’?” [Proverbs 23:32]

“Then Jesus made wine for the guests at Cana with the ‘bite of a serpent’ and the ‘sting of an adder’ in it. Do you believe it? No, a thousand times no! Did Jesus give to His disciples a cup in which were the ‘bite of a serpent and the sting of an adder,’ and tell them that cup contained that which represented his blood, His life-giving blood – shed for the remission of their sins? Do you believe it? No...” [3]

According to the World Health Organization, alcohol today is responsible for nearly 4% of deaths worldwide, more than AIDS, tuberculosis, or violence. [4] In the United States, its abuse is the third leading cause of

preventable death and precipitates an economic drain on the nation's resources of approximately \$223.5 billion annually. [5] This doesn't even account for the costs of heartache that it endlessly brings to millions and millions of people.

If one believes the wine Jesus miraculously made at Cana was intoxicating in nature, much like those of today, then the burden of proof lies with those who believe this to decisively demonstrate it in the text, as well as explain why it seems to find no support in the entire context of Scripture. Furthermore, they must effectively answer the question of why Jesus would create and encourage the use of a hazardous and deadly drug.

For this writer, effectively addressing these assertions from Scripture is about as provable as saying the Bible endorses drunkenness because it instructs the person who sins to be stoned. The preponderance of the evidence just can't sustain such claims and makes them somewhat laughable.

### Resources

- [1] Freeman, John D. *Shadow Over America*. Nashville, Tenn., Convention Press, 1957, pgs. 89,90
- [2] Brumbelow, David R. *Ancient Wine and the Bible*. Carrollton, Ga. Free Church Press, 2011, pg. 142
- [3] Ibid, pg. 145
- [4] *Alcohol Kills More Than Aids, TB, or Violence: WHO*. Reuters, 11, February 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/02/11/us-alcohol-idUSTRE71A2FM20110211>
- [5] *Alcohol and Public Health*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 October 2012, <http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/factsheets/alcohol-use.htm>

All passages of Scripture quoted from the *New International Version*

Mark Creech is the Executive Director of the Christian Action League (CAL) of North Carolina, Inc. [www.ChristianActionLeague.org](http://www.ChristianActionLeague.org)



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