

Christian Relationship Help: What to Do With Five Common Alcoholic Dilemmas *by Karla Downing*



This Christian relationship help will tell you what to do with five common alcoholic dilemmas. When someone you care about drinks, you naturally want to make him/her stop. Drinking isn't good for the person or your relationship. People who care about a drinker can get too caught up in rescuing, fixing, or controlling the problem and in doing so lose the ability to make wise choices for their own lives.

[Proverbs 23:29-30](#) asks these questions: "Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaints? Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes?" Answer: "Those who linger over wine." However, the people who care about a drinker also have woe, sorrow, strife, complaints, pain, and questions. Here are five of the common dilemmas they have to decide what to do about:

Do you buy the alcohol? Some people buy the alcohol and even drink with alcoholics to watch them or to keep them drinking at home where they are safe. Whether the alcoholic can drink in your home or not is a boundary issue for you. Buying the alcohol only makes you an enabler. Providing money for the alcohol also makes you an enabler. And drinking will only make you a drinker too.

Do you pour out the alcohol? Many people try to control the drinking by pouring out the alcohol. The reasoning is "If it isn't there, it won't get drunk." The reality is that more will be bought and your budget will get even tighter, so it doesn't help to throw it out. Throwing it out also makes you the watchman and keeps you focused on the drinking.

Do you take the car keys? This is a tough dilemma. You have complete control over whether you drive with an intoxicated person and you shouldn't under any circumstances. You should also do whatever it takes to not allow your children to drive in the car with someone who has been drinking. You do this by taking two cars to places you know there will be drinking or

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Written by admin

Thursday, 04 October 2012 05:48 - Last Updated Thursday, 04 October 2012 07:16

calling for a ride. Arguments can be made for taking the keys and not taking the keys. If the alcoholic will let you take the keys, then do because drinking and driving is dangerous for the alcoholic and others on the road. However, most alcoholics won't allow you to take the keys without a scene and consequences to you. When you believe it is your responsibility to prevent the alcoholic from drinking and driving, you will become overly focused on what he/she is doing--precisely what you want to stop.

Do you count and mark the bottles? This is another attempt to monitor the alcoholic. Does it really matter how much someone drinks--two, three, four, or more? Isn't it really the fact that the drinking bothers you that matters even if it isn't every day or is less one day than the other? This is simply an attempt to convince you that the person has a problem, is getting better, or getting worse when you know the truth already. Sometimes, this is also an attempt to help you win an argument with the alcoholic by being able to argue that the drinking is out of hand. It doesn't matter: the response will be the same whether or not you can provide a number.

Do you drive him/her around after the DUI (driving under the influence ticket)? You can do this if you want but only if it is easy for you and you don't have to change your schedule. If it is a sacrifice for you, then you are bearing the consequences of the drinker's choices. Wouldn't it be better for him/her to face the full consequences of the drinking by having to figure out how to get around without a car? This would go a long way toward increasing the odds that there won't be another DUI.

This Christian Relationship help tells you what to do with five common alcoholic dilemmas. God holds each of us responsible for our own actions. When dealing with an alcoholic, it is good to let the alcoholic be responsible for the drinking and its results. Keep that in mind when you make decisions about how to respond to these situations.

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