

“No Bill, you don’t need another drink!” The pastor of his wife’s church fellowship came and sat down beside him. He felt truly sorry for Bill. His heart and mind in fervent prayer, he spoke to Bill and said, “You see Bill, I know how you feel because I had the same experience years ago. I was a lost man with no hope to ever be free from the bondage of alcohol. But one day I was led to Jesus, the Son of God who came to destroy the works of the devil. I heard the Good News that Jesus came to seek and to save those who are lost. Indeed, Jesus came to set the captives free. So the Lord called me to repent of all my sins and to believe the Word of God. Then I was cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus who forgave all my wrongdoing. The Lord set me free and gave me a new life in union with him.”

The pastor’s testimony sank into Bill’s heart. He came to his senses and he knew at once, “This is my chance to be free!” So the pastor showed Bill the way to God. The two men knelt down and prayed. Bill repented of all his sins and received Jesus into his life. He experienced how God took control of his life and he was eventually delivered through the power of God.

Under the lordship of Jesus Christ, Bill’s life changed. His wife and kids returned to him. Family life was restored. He started to fix his house and furniture, to bring order to his life. Last but not least: worshipping God became important within the family. Bill experienced the words of the Bible, “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*” (2 Cor 5:17).

If you are a prisoner of alcohol, this message is for you. There’s no need to despair. What God did for Bill he is ready to do for you.

If you really want to be freed from the bondage of excessive drinking, this is the way to go:

- Know and admit that you are by nature a sinner, hopeless, helpless and in need of a Saviour (see Rom 3:11-12).
- Repent (be truly sorry) for all your sins and wrongdoing. Confess your sins before God and before men wherever this is necessary (see Mark 1:15).
- Put in order the damage you did to other people, wherever possible (restitution, see Luke 19:8-9).
- Believe with all your heart that Jesus died for you on the cross of Calvary to save you, to cleanse and forgive you (see John 5:24).
- Receive the Lord Jesus into your heart and life to become a member of God’s family (see John 1:12). Let a devoted Christian leader or an experienced Christian assist you in counseling, guidance and prayer.
- Let Jesus Christ be your Saviour and Lord in your whole life. Under his divine guidance you will be enabled to live a fulfilled, a victorious life in him.

THE DANGER OF BACKSLIDING

Experience has shown that a person, who has been dependent on alcohol, may have great difficulties in completely leaving the old lifestyle and his/her particular problem. Even though a conversion has taken place and the person has turned to God, he/she may fall back into the old habit at times. If this happens, it is important to repent and to apply the help given from the Bible which says, “*My dear child-*

ren, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins; and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:1-2).

It may also be a great help if a devoted Christian leader or another experienced believer would accompany you, by giving you advice, encouragement and support.

DO NOT TOUCH ALCOHOL ANYMORE

Whoever you are, God is calling you to a complete change, to a new start and a new life in Jesus Christ. Even if you are not severely addicted, but realize that you have a problem, it is a great help to completely abstain from alcohol. There again you may receive real help from an experienced Christian.

God is inviting you right now with his words, “*All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away”* (John 6:37) (see also Matth 11:28; Acts 3:19). *Ulrich Spycher*

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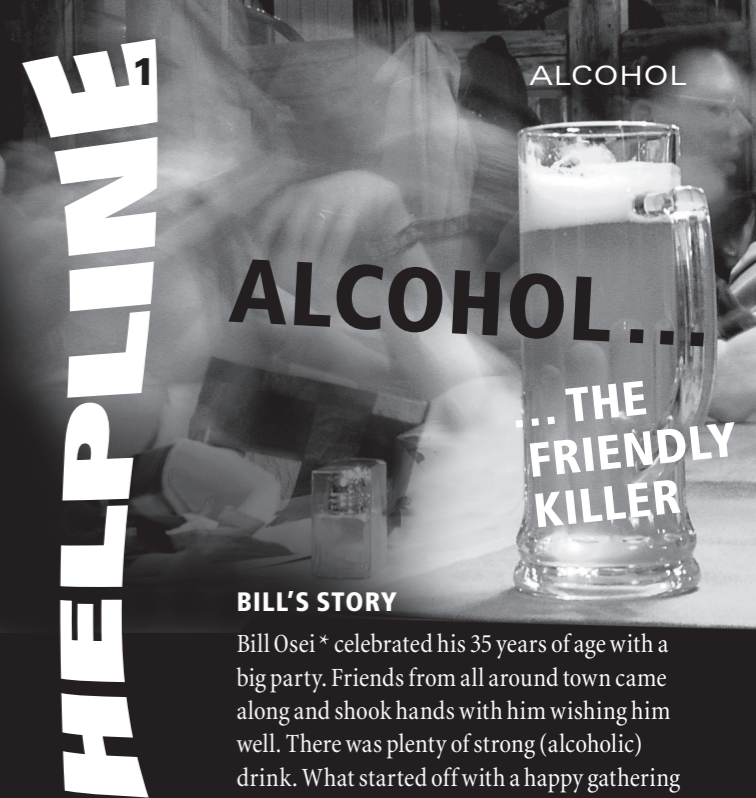
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BILL’S STORY

Bill Osei* celebrated his 35 years of age with a big party. Friends from all around town came along and shook hands with him wishing him well. There was plenty of strong (alcoholic) drink. What started off with a happy gathering slowly turned into a heated argument and ended in a heavy fight.

Next morning Bill woke up in hospital with a broken arm, unable to think or speak properly and aching all over his body ...

* name changed

He strongly felt what is written in the Bible, “*I must have been beaten up, but I don’t remember it! Why can’t I wake up? I need another drink!*” (see Prov. 23:31-35).

The doctor put his arm in a cast. The nurse dressed his open sores. Then he went home. His family had already fled from his ongoing violence whenever he was drunk. Unaware of the big mess around the house, the broken windows, he dropped on to what was left of his bed and vomited again. Then he fell asleep.

Unable to work for the next few days Bill took the only functional chair left and sat down in the backyard. There he started to think and to talk to himself:

“Bill Osei, son of a good family, well educated, holding a good job, a lovely wife, and three beautiful children, look at yourself: a broken arm and a smashed-up face; your family is gone; a weakened body through excessive drinking, trembling hands, no money and a broken home.”

... THE FRIENDLY KILLER

The story of Bill is typical for the tremendous damage and hurt alcohol and excessive drinking does to millions of people all over the world.

Alcohol is present at many celebrations, feasts and parties of this world. It faces up to you as it were, with a friendly smile, a lovely bunch of flowers in the one hand, while holding a charged revolver behind its back with the other hand.

ALCOHOL AFFECTS YOUR HEALTH, YOUR EMOTIONS AND YOUR FAMILY

Every time a person gets drunk the consumed alcohol will kill about 10’000 of his brain cells. The heart and liver may be damaged; bad ulcers and sores may develop in the stomach.

IT IS A FACT: Excessive consumption of alcohol ruins your body and badly damages your brain.

Alcohol affects your emotions. It produces a strong desire, even a painful craving for alcoholic drinks which you are unable to resist. It pulls you to the next pub where you will waste your money on alcohol while your wife and children have nothing to eat.

Alcohol is often the sinister cause of tragedies in the family:

- A drunken father beating up his wife and children.
- The home being wrecked and the furniture being damaged because of fights.
- Children developing strong fear of their father, a fear that may turn to hatred in later years.
- Financial problems and difficulties because lots of money is spent on alcohol.

IT IS A FACT: Alcohol affects and ruins your health, your emotions and your family.

ALCOHOL AFFECTS YOUR WORK AND YOUR FRIENDS

You may be a good doctor, a teacher or a factory worker. But every time you get drunk, you’ll be unable to work properly. You will miss out on working hours and whole days because of the after-effects of

alcohol. You’ll lose your good reputation and you will miss out on promotions because of your drinking problem. You are in danger of losing your job altogether.

You think you are making lots of friends at your drinking parties. But you are losing your true friends. Your wife may get tired of all the trouble in the house and abandon you. Your children will find it hard to respect and love you.

ALCOHOL IS AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

Let’s look at some of the sayings of great men in the past on the subject of alcohol and excessive drinking:

- “Strong drink is more destructive than war, pestilence and famine.” *William Gladstone, (1809-1898) British Prime Minister*
- “Alcohol: A cancer in human society, eating out its vitals and threatening its destruction.” *Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) President of USA*
- “Alcohol is a poison men take into the mouth to steal their brain.” *William Shakespeare (1564-1616) English playwright and poet*

ALCOHOL IS A THREAT TO WHOLE NATIONS

Some of those great men like Lincoln and Shakespeare have spoken from observation and experience. And what they saw is equally true in our days. Alcohol is the cause of countless conflicts in villages, towns and cities. If the nations’ leaders take to excessive drinking, their meetings will be spoiled and they will fail in ruling their nations wisely. As a result they may lose the confidence of their people.

The younger generation may be stirred into unrest and trouble. Indeed, alcohol can hamper the progress of whole nations.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

It is always good to turn to the Word of God, the book which is the truth:

Proverbs 23:29-32, “Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaints? Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? Those who linger over wine, who go to sample bowls of mixed wine. Do not gaze at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly! In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper”.

1 Cor 6:9-10, “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God”.
Eph 5:18, “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit”.

IS THERE A WAY OF ESCAPE?

Is there a cure? Is there a deliverance from the bondage of excessive drinking? Yes, there is. If you have a drinking problem, the only way to escape and to freedom is through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Let me first tell you what happened to Bill Osei in his backyard thinking about his wretched life as an alcoholic: Bill said to himself, “Oh, how did I ever get into this mess? I think . . . I need another drink!”