

The Holiday, Alcohol and Life

by Phillip W. Weiss

I went to Woodlawn Cemetery where I visited the graves of Frankie Frische, Tex Rickard and Dan Topping. The weather was clear, sunny and frigid. I was out and about for about ninety minutes. The grounds were covered with ice which made trying to find the graves more difficult. I also made friends with the receptionist in Woodlawn's main office. She served me hot chocolate and candy. That was one of those unexpected and unsolicited acts of kindness that occur from time to time, and which renews my dubious faith in humanity.

People come and go. Proof of that can be found in the cemeteries that contain the monuments of those who are gone forever. Those people were once alive. Now they are gone. There is nothing that can change or stop it. Monuments are but markers. I have visited some of those markers. I wonder if anyone else will show me an unsolicited act of kindness. I won't hold my breath waiting to find out.

Tomorrow is Christmas. It is another of those public holidays that create all kinds of havoc as people scramble to make plans for the holiday. My plans are set which is to have no plans. No one is buying me any presents or inviting me to join them, nor am I doing the same with anyone. It was enough to mail them cards. No, it was MORE than enough. Maybe it was too much.

Alcohol is the most toxic depressant ever invented. Alcohol is a poison. It is part of the petrol-chemical family of substances. Alcohol is the byproduct of a fermentation process. Alcohol literally corrodes human organs. It ignites the body cells. It is a catalyst for chemical reactions that destroy cells. the Bible makes numerous references to alcohol. Jesus and his disciples consumed alcohol. Alcohol serves as a metaphor for the blood of Jesus. That does not make alcohol any less of a poison.

Alcohol lubricates the soul. It reduces inhibitions and brings life to even the dullest of parties. One needs only to introduce alcohol to liven up a party. People love to act out, to loosen up, to discard, even for a moment, the restrictions that force us to suppress our urges.

Alcohol will transform the most sedate and unoffensive person into a devil, the prissiest lady into a screaming whore, and the most responsible man into a lecherous fool. Hence, people love and crave alcohol. They will pay anything to imbibe. Except when seriously ill, people will always choose alcohol over food. Food fills your stomach, but alcohol gets you high. It is achieving that high feeling that makes alcohol so popular. And one thing about alcohol – it never fails to deliver what it promises.

All anyone needs to do is have one or two drinks and it is party time, even if there is no party. Of course, being a poison, alcohol is lethal. It kills. It burns your liver and rots your brain. It makes you puke and stagger. It burns a hole in your wallet and leaves you feeling wiped out. Yet people drink. Such is life.