Kayla is faced with a challenge that appears to be clear cut at first but more complicated as she considers all of the ramifications. She has come to you because, as her best friend, she hopes you can give her sound advice on how to proceed. She is in her first year as a salesperson within an international religious book publishing company. The issue centers around the question of whether Christians should have an absolute no-tolerance of alcohol consumption, or focus their judgment on the circumstances of each situation. Given her family background and early church teachings, the answer should not be difficult. However, in the “real world,” things have become more complicated.

A major component of Kayla’s position is travelling with a sales team to meetings of national, regional, and state groups that are involved with Christian education. Her company is a well-established firm with a strong reputation in developing books and magazines that provide study guides, covering a range of issues related to the role of Christianity in modern society. As one of the largest publishers in this market, particularly two senior sales representatives in Kayla’s group are well-known and recognized within the industry. The remainder of the group consists of seven individuals ranging in age from early twenties to mid-fourties. Kayla is 29, having been with the firm about three years, the last year as part of this group.

She really enjoys the challenge of her current work and feels that a career in this field is maximizing the application of her talents and interests. As such, she considers it a tremendous opportunity to be working under such accomplished professionals in the field. Not only can they teach her how to succeed in this field, but also their personal contacts can help or hinder her advancement in the organization.

This predicament has arisen due to a common practice among a majority of the group to go out for a “few drinks” after putting long hours in manning the display booth and negotiating with potential authors and bookstore management teams. Having drinks has been so common prior to Kayla joining the group that no one appears to think much about it. Kayla recognizes that the drinking experience within this group was distinctly different than those she was exposed to in college. Drinking in college was definitely associated with parties. In contrast, the typical after-work drinking in the sales group is generally a quiet time prior to all going out to dinner together.

The leader of the sales group actually drinks the most even though Kayla never feels she is excessive. The leader’s level of drinking encourages others to do the same. Recognizing that much of “business” is discussed during those times, Kayla feels she has to be there. No pressure is placed on Kayla to drink alcohol during these times; she is comfortable with drinking a variety
of soft drinks. However, she considers drinking alcoholic beverages hypocritical of the representatives of a religious organization with a Christian focus. This still bothers her.

Her dilemma is whether she should risk alienating members of the group who could be pivotal to her career advancement by commenting on the drinking practice. Alternatively, she feels that because she is not consuming alcohol herself may be a sufficient stand to illustrate her opinion.

Kayla sent you a text message outlining her worrisome situation about a week ago. She ended her message by pleading, “You are my best friend. What should I do? Am I doing enough by not drinking myself?”

At that time, you had replied to her that the roommate you remembered in college would never have compromised her position on Christianity and ask such a question. Her response was quickly, “But you don’t understand; this job is what I have always wanted. Given the stature of my co-workers, they could make or break my future.”

Kayla is the person who introduced you to the Christian faith while in college. You know she is a strong believer and that this issue is emotionally tearing her apart. Beyond this, you know that your advice to Kayla could also set the scriptural groundwork for her dealing with other quandaries she may face in the future as her career develops. There is considerable Biblical insight that might apply. You decide that what is needed are selected scripture that could guide her (and yourself) as she handles this situation and later navigates her career.

ASSIGNMENT

Present Kayla with the necessary Biblical basis for this challenge between her faith and her career goals.
My Scriptural Research:

Group Scriptural Research:

Decisions / Recommendations:

Primary Scriptural References: