

Trends

According to Gallup polling over the years Americans are more "pro-life" than 20 years ago. Note the following poll results to the question: "With respect to the abortion issue, would you consider yourself to be pro-choice or pro-life?"

Sep 1995:	56% pro-choice	33% pro-life
May 2006:	51% pro-choice	41% pro-life
May 2016:	47% pro-choice	46% pro-life

-via Gallup

Psalm 139:13-16: "For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. 14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them."

Sentence Sermons

"Let's not pretend that abortion isn't about the mass slaughter of innocents." —Michael Aston

News & Notes

Please pray for those mentioned in the announcements after services and others listed on the bulletin board in the foyer of the church building.

Pray that much fruit will come from the seed planted during our gospel meeting with Jesse Flowers. If you would like to contact Jesse his e-mail address is: jafopie@hotmail.com.

Please pray for Susan Ferrell and her family as she continues to recover from a brain tumor. Her chemo treatment is completed and so far everything is clear! Please continue pray for her and her family.

Please pray for Alan Jones. He underwent deep brain stimulation to hopefully relieve severe facial pain. Alan held a gospel meeting for us in October 2014. He's been unable to preach for several months due to his affliction. Pray for him and his family.

Please keep sisters Virginia Brown and Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. Their faithfulness sets such a good example and gives encouragement to all! Ditto for Al (our Barnabas!).

Pray for Larry Hafley; his heart valve replacement surgery was a success!

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many temptations in today's school environment.

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Times of Service: Bible Study, Sunday 9:30 AM and Wednesday 7:00 PM; Worship, Sunday 10:30 AM and 5:00 PM

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Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

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"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



Gambling Versus Love of God and Man

Ron Halbrook

Though gambling has become socially acceptable and legal, it is not right according to what God teaches us in the Bible. God teaches us to love Him with all the heart, mind, and soul, and to love our fellow man as we love ourselves (Matt. 22:37-40). Everything else God teaches us depends on these two principles (vs. 40). "Love" in this sense comes from a Greek term, *agape*, referring to the highest kind of love: a love based on principles of truth and right, and a love seeking the best interests of its object rather than mere self-gratification.

Since love of God and of fellow man must be the motives for all our conduct, how do these two principles relate to gambling? God teaches us that we may receive gain in ways which demonstrate love to all parties to any transaction. We may receive gain in the following ways: 1) the process of labor (Eph.4:28); 2) exchange of goods and services (Matt. 13:45-46); 3) gifts (Matt. 6:1-4). Each of these methods of receiving gain is honest, showing respect for principles of truth and right and for the welfare of all parties involved.

Gambling is a wager on some chance event, with the result that the "winner" takes gain from others without respect for principles of truth and right and without seeking the welfare of all parties involved. Therefore, gambling is a means of taking dishonest gain. The fact that the other participants agreed to take part does not mitigate the dishonesty involved, any more than "kickbacks" in a business deal are mitigated from dishonesty by the agreement of the parties involved. Gambling is an exercise in covetousness, seeking mere self-gratification without regard for truth and right or the best interests of everyone involved.

Gambling is sinful, an offense against God and a curse to our fellow man. Because all of us have sinned from time to time, whether through gambling or other deeds, God sent His Son into the world to die for our sins (Rom. 3:23; Jn. 3:16). The death of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary demonstrates both the justice and the mercy of God: Sin was punished (justice), but punished in a way which extends forgiveness to sinners (mercy). Thus, God proves Himself to be "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). Since God does not force anyone to receive this gift of His grace, we may choose to receive it or to reject it. We receive it by faith in Christ when we repent of our sins (a change of

heart resolving to turn away from sin), confess our faith in Christ as God's Son, and submit to immersion in water (Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 8:35-38; 22:16; Rom. 10:8-10; 6:3-4).

As a fellow-traveler from time to eternity, I urge you to turn away from gambling and to do everything in your power to convince others to turn away from it. Such a course is based on our love for God and our fellow man because we recognize that gambling is a curse to the human heart, to the home, to the church, and to the nation. Our lawmakers act contrary to love of God and fellow man by legalizing gambling. Churches debase God's standard of morality by promoting it. All who participate in it act to the detriment of themselves and others.

There are no winners in gambling, whether it be in casinos, at the races, in bingo parlors, or in lotteries and raffles. No such activities meet the tests of true love for God and our fellow man.

Diary of An Unborn Child

October 5: Today my life began. My parents do not know it yet, I am as small as a seed of an apple, but it is I already. And I am to be a girl. I shall have blond hair and blue eyes. Just about everything is settled though, even the fact that I shall love flowers.

October 19: Some say that I am not a real person yet, that only my mother exists. But I am a real person, just as a small crumb of bread is yet truly bread. My mother is. And I am.

October 23: My mouth is just beginning to open now. Just think, in a year or so I shall be laughing and later talking. I know what my first word will be: MAMA.

October 25: My heart began to beat today all by itself. From now on it shall gently beat for the rest of my life without ever stopping to rest! And after many years it will tire. It will stop, and then I shall die.

November 2: I am growing a bit every day. My arms and legs are beginning to take shape. But I have to wait a long time yet before those little legs will raise me to my mother's arms, before these little arms will be able to gather flowers and embrace my father.

November 12: Tiny fingers are beginning to form on my hands. Funny how small they are! I'll be able to stroke my mother's hair with them.

November 20: It wasn't until today that the doctor told mom that I am living here under her heart. Oh, how happy she must be! Are you happy, Mom?

November 25: My mom and dad are probably thinking about a name for me. But they don't even know that I am a little girl. I want to be called Kathy. I am getting so big already.

December 10: My hair is growing. It is smooth and bright and shiny. I wonder what kind of hair mom has.

December 13: I am just about able to see. It is dark around me. When mom brings me into the world it will be full of sunshine and flowers. But what I want more than anything is to see my mom. How do you look, Mom?

December 24: I wonder if mom hears the whispering of my heart? Some children come into the world a little sick. But my heart is strong and healthy. It beats so evenly tup-tup tup-tup. You'll have a healthy little daughter, Mom!

December 28: Today my mother killed me.

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is His reward (Psalm 127:3).

Tragic End to Pastor's Attempt to Walk on Water

Joe R. Price

"A PASTOR attempting to demonstrate God's power by walking on water has been eaten by crocodiles." Reportedly, "Jonathan Mthethwa was killed by three crocodiles as he carried out a religious demonstration in Zimbabwe." "Shocked witnesses said the clergyman had 'prayed the whole week' before the stunt went tragically wrong." "He had also fasted in the lead-up to the attempted miracle, which was inspired by a Biblical tale of Jesus walking on water during a storm." "Horried members of the Saint of the Last Days Church said the pastor was completely devoured in a 'couple of minutes'" ("Pastor attempting to walk on water like Jesus is eaten by crocodiles," Joey Millar, express.co.uk).

This is a stark reminder that present-day miracles do not occur. The word miracle "is used of works of a supernatural origin and character, such as could not be produced by natural agents and means..." (Vine). A miracle is the direct, supernatural intervention of divine power into the natural world (Jno. 6:19; 11:39, 43-44). Jesus walked on water, gave Peter that same power, and stopped a raging storm as signs that He is the Son of God (Matt. 14:25-33). Clearly, Mr.

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world."

1 John 4:1

Mthethwa was given no such power.

"Deacon Nkosi said: 'The pastor taught us about faith on Sunday last week. 'He promised he would

demonstrate his faith to us today, but he unfortunately ended up drowning and getting eaten by three large crocodiles in front of us.'" (Ibid)

Bible miracles confirmed (validated) the gospel message (Mk. 16:20). They were not worked to demonstrate personal faith (although that was a by-product, Acts 3:16). The gospel is complete, and needs no more miraculous validation (Heb. 2:3-4; 1

Cor. 13:8-10; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Bible miracles help produce and strengthen faith (Jno. 20:30-31).

This man had no power to work miracles; his was not an act of faith. God.

"when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him."

Deuteronomy 18:22

May this sad event lead some to true faith in the word of