

Trends

Twenty abortion facts you need to know, here are the third five:

- ☞ Abortion is more dangerous than childbirth (every abortion results in at least one death).
- ☞ By eight weeks a fetus is capable of feeling pain.
- ☞ Prior to legalization, 90% of abortions were done by physicians.
- ☞ Abortion is just as condemnable as slavery and genocide.
- ☞ Abortion is not a "women's only" issue; it affects men too.

—Abortionfacts.com

Psalm 139:14: "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;"

Sentence Sermons

"The right to control your body does not include the right to destroy somebody else's." —Unknown

Proverbs 6:16-17: "These six things the LORD hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood,"

2 Kings 24:3-4: "Surely at the commandment of the LORD this came upon Judah, to remove them from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the LORD would not pardon."

News & Notes

Pray for the Filipino and African brethren. They are suffering due natural and manmade disasters. Please consider donating if you're able! 1 Jn. 3:17

Pray for sister Wilma Cardwell. She's a great encouragement to all!

Please pray for Lana May. She is really suffering due to her health issues.

Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to give them words of encouragement!

Pray for the all our young people. They too face many trials and temptations.

There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help?!

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Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

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

John 6:68



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Gambling vs. 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.

“To Humble and Test You”

SWORD TIPS #2123 (NOVEMBER 20, 2020)

Joe R. Price

² And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. ³ So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. (Deuteronomy 8:2-3, NKJV)

Israel’s wilderness wanderings tested their faith in the LORD God. Would they obey Him? Or would they rebel in disobedience when faced with hardships, setbacks, and uncertainties? God disciplined their hearts through the trial of hunger and by the blessing of daily manna (and other provisions, Deut. 8:4-6). God meant for their trials and blessings to humble them and turn their hearts to Him. God taught Israel by trials and blessings to live by “every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.” God also lovingly teaches and corrects us by trials and blessings, like parents who love their children, Heb. 12:4-11). Life is more than bread. Life is more than comfort. Like Israel, life with God that lasts forever comes from God when we obey Him. Jesus knew this when the devil tempted Him to sin (Matt. 4:3-4). Let us accept God’s training during times of trial and blessing that we may humbly obey the LORD God and live with Him now and forever.

Jesus and the Divisive Life

Larry Hafley

“And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, ‘He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people’. . . So there was a division among the people because of him” (Jn. 7:12, 43).

Let no one who splits churches and splinters brethren point to Jesus as a model for his disruptive, divisive, devilish deportment. This article is not written to justify those whose intemperate, ungodly, meddling meanness leads to strife, alienation, and division among brethren. God hates those who sow dissension and “discord among brethren” (Prov. 6:16-19).

However, truth divides between itself and error. Light dispels darkness. Love drowns and dismisses hatred. Life terminates death. Righteousness removes unrighteousness. Truth, light, love, life, and righteousness cannot co-exist at the same time and in the same place as error, darkness, hatred, death, and unrighteousness.

Jesus, the Son of God, is truth, light, love, life, and righteousness (Jn. 14:6; 8:12; 1 Jn. 4:8; 1 Cor. 1:30). Hence, while he was on earth, error, darkness, hatred, and unrighteousness

fled from Him (Jn. 1:5, 11; 3:19-21; 6:66). His abiding presence through the word of faith continues to divide and separate (2 Cor. 2:15-17). “What fellowship

hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?...Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the LORD Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:14-17).

Be assured that such a life is divisive. By its very nature, it separates and alienates. Worldly people will “think it strange that ye run not with them,” and some will resent you. “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world...the world hateth you” (Jn. 15:19).

Do not try to be a social freak or a religious nut. Do not go out of your way to flaunt and taunt others with a “holier than thou” disposition. No, rather, “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men” (Rom. 14:18). Neither, however, should you be intimidated by those who shun and scorn you for adhering to truth and righteousness.

If we live as Jesus did, if we teach what He taught, if we stand as He stood, refusing to compromise with evil and error, you may expect that people shall murmur against us and that “division among the people” shall arise “because” of us. It happened to Jesus. It will happen to us. “The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you” (Jn. 15:20). “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12). Expect it. Be not dismayed, neither be thou afraid.

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’”

—John 14:6