

# Fulton County Gospel News

Good News About Christ And His Church For All Of The World

"...Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body." - Ephesians 5:23

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## "IF YOU WILL GIVE ME \$5.00, I'LL GIVE YOU BACK \$1.00!"

by Ted J. Clarke

### Introduction

Please think about the title of this article. If you will send me \$5.00, I will send you \$1.00 back. Why should you give me five dollars just to get one back? That is a good question. No one who does that can stay financially healthy for very long, but that is what most states who legalize gambling are doing. Studies have shown that **for every \$1.00 of revenue a state receives from legalized gambling, the state pays out \$3.00 to \$5.00 to care for the problems gambling brings!** Does that sound like a good bet? It doesn't to me, and I do not believe anyone who seriously thinks about what gambling does will favor it with his/her vote.

I confess that I do not want you to send me personally any of your money. I do not want to take advantage of you in that way. Those backing the gambling interests will do whatever they can to get your money, especially in keeping from you the truth about the high costs of gambling in your state and community.

There are two major areas of concern; social and moral issues. In reality the moral issues are also involved with social concerns, and there are religious issues which also touch both social and moral matters. However, for those who think these are "merely" problems concocted by a religious few, we will note some social issues before we consider the spiritual aspects of gambling.

### If You Bet You'll Win, You'll Lose!

The odds that you will ever win any substantial jackpot in any gambling venture are in the tens of millions against your one chance. Do you want better odds? Well, the odds are greater that you will become an addictive gambler than you will win the jackpot. An example is our neighboring state of Louisiana. A 1995 study in that state showed some 182,000 problem gamblers; 57,000 of them are compulsive gamblers. Since most crime

is committed for money, crime always increases where there is hope of obtaining money, whatever one must do to get it. Robbery, burglary, embezzlement, political corruption and bribes are just a few of the crimes that follow the money. Drunkenness, drug addiction, and suicide increase as those who lose their money try to find ways to deal with the crisis. Poverty and neglect of children are close by when gambling is made easily accessible, as are spousal abuse and divorce. The money it takes to deal with these and dozens more of such problems quickly absorbs the so-called "revenue windfall" of states which approve gambling. No wonder **it costs the citizens of states who legalize gambling \$3.00 to \$5.00 for every \$1.00 gained from gambling schemes!**

Numerous studies have also shown that local communities lose business to the various types of gambling establishments. People are going to spend their money on gambling rather than other needs. Casinos offer cheap banquet type food and lodging, breaking local restaurants and hotels/motels. The state lottery caused a loss of 430 million in retail sales in southeast Virginia in the three years after it was introduced. Deadwood, South Dakota lost 49 non-gambling businesses from 1989-91 after gambling was legalized in that area. Additionally, no state which has legalized gambling has lowered taxes, and the promises being made about assisting education by large amounts for school systems and scholarships are shallow and hollow. There may be rare exceptions, but most states who have legalized gambling have actually reduced funding for education in their overall budgets. To deal with the problems associated with gambling, states which legalize it have to raise taxes, not lower them. Each state sees the pot of gold, but not the trap beneath it. We all lose.

All of this shows gambling to be a bad

bet! Of course, not everyone becomes a problem gambler or commits crime to get back money lost. However, when one looks at the total picture, the minor benefits to a few are vastly overshadowed by the negative impact of gambling on the many. The big picture is that we all lose when gambling is legalized, even if we do not gamble. Knowing the problems and misery which gambling creates, could you really be satisfied if, for example, your school built a new gym constructed with the money and misery of those who lost at gambling?

These are not just made up charges against the gambling establishments. They can be documented from Robert Goodman's book, *The Luck Business*; from the article "Lotto Fever - Even the Winners Lose," by Peter Keating (Reader's Digest, October 1996); and from the tract "Gambling and Arkansas," distributed by Families First of Paragould, AR.

### You Bet Your Life - The Ultimate Gamble

One can readily see that there are moral considerations involved in gambling, even in the social sense of personal lives ruined and families broken. Christians believe that there is a larger gamble; the risk of losing one's soul. No jackpot, regardless of how large, is worth that gamble. Jesus asked, **"For what is man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"** (Matthew 16:26). Jesus knew of man's tendency toward materialism, the desire to get more and more of this world's physical goods. He spoke more on the dangers of materialism (the love of money and things) than He did on any other topic. Putting first things first, Jesus concluded a long section on warning of the dangers of materialism, saying, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things (the necessities of life He had just mentioned) shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:19-33).

The apostle Paul said that covetousness is idolatry, meaning that we can think more about desiring and possessing money and things than we think of loving

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and serving God (Colossians 3:5). The same apostle warned the young evangelist Timothy that, "they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. **For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil;** which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Timothy 6:9-10) ASV.

The two great commandments speak against gambling rather strongly. To love God with all of one's heart, soul, mind and strength does not allow for one to spend one's time in materialistic obsessions such as gambling. Because people who gamble lose more often than they win, one cannot be a consistent contributor to the work of God. It matters not to God how little one has. What matters is how one uses what God blesses one with. The poor widow gave little, but in reality gave more than all others because she gave all that she had (Mark 12:41-44). Do you suppose Jesus would have commended her in the New Testament if she had bought a lottery ticket as a last effort to get rich quick? Our love for our fellowman is to be as our love for our own selves (Mark 12:28-31). Do we treat others with such love when we benefit from their misfortune of losing at gambling. Second Corinthians, chapters 8 & 9, deals with these princi-

ples extensively. How many gamblers do you know that are devout, sacrificial people, who devote their time to the betterment of mankind and service to God? The gambler has a different mindset than Christ (Philippian 2:4-8).

Paul showed the importance of true riches when he said, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might be rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). In Matthew 6:19-20 the Lord showed that it is the wealth and treasures of heaven for which we should strive, showing that earthly treasures are temporary and risky. Money can lose its value, as anyone who went through the depression can tell you. You can lose your money in many ways, from financial disaster to someone stealing it. However, you cannot lose your treasures deposited in heaven and you do not risk anything in acquiring them.

Christians believe in the Sovereignty and Providence of God. We believe in the Lord, not luck. The Christians' blessings come from the Lord's providence, not the luck of the draw (cf. Genesis 22:14; Psalm 103; Matthew 6:19-33). God is the giver of every perfect gift (James 1:17). Gambling is another step away from the God who provides His own. Brethren, let us unite to keep Arkansas (or your home state) one step closer to God. **REGISTER TO VOTE! VOTE "NO" AGAINST ALL GAMBLING PROPOSALS ON NOVEMBER 5th!** Do not gamble on the outcome! **YOUR VOTE IS NEEDED!**

**"Thank God For Godly Women"**

by Ted J. Clarke

**Introduction**

The decades of the 1980s and 90s have seen serious questions raised regarding the role of women both in leadership and public worship of the Lord's church. In some areas strife and division have occurred when change in the traditional role of women has been implemented over objections of those who see no need for such changes.

Are there changes which need to be made in the roles women have traditionally carried out in the church? If such changes are needed are they major or minor in nature? Does the culture of our present day demand that the church make such modifications, and, if so, can we justify these new roles by the authority of the Scriptures?

Some of our FCGN readers have requested articles dealing with these issues out of concern for the direction in which their local congregations seem to be headed. One elderly brother who has preached and taught in Christian educational institutions for fifty years has said that he feels that the issue of the roles of women in the church will be one of the most divisive issues the church will ever face. Are those who are holding to the traditional roles for women afraid of change? Are they chauvinist men who are afraid of losing their power over women? Have those who are pushing for these changes carefully thought out the consequences of pushing these matters to the division of the body of Christ? Do those demanding change truly respect the authority of the Scriptures, or have they had to redefine Bible words to fit their present agenda, as well as put forth a new hermeneutic (way of interpreting the Scriptures)? These are some of the questions we will attempt to answer in the coming months, as we present a series of articles on this issue. If you have specific questions you want to see answered, write to us and express yourselves. We will attempt to deal honestly with each aspect of these matters. Believing the Bible to be God's fully inspired message to mankind regarding His will for us (2 Timothy 3:16-17), I pledge to respect the authority of the Scriptures on every matter to which it speaks, explicitly and implicitly. If you expect otherwise you will be greatly disappointed and you need to reexamine your outlook on how you view the Bible.

**The Importance Of Women  
In The Lord's Church**

Without women in the Lord's church we would be in big trouble! Although men are supposed to be the spiritual leaders in the family (Genesis 18:19; Ephesians 5:23-24; 6:4), in our present day so many men are either not spiritually minded, or they have surrendered their responsibilities in this area and wives and mothers have had to provide what is lacking. While we do have godly and responsible men in the Lord's body, no one can successfully argue against the claim that we need more men (all men) to take up their spiritual responsibilities both in the home and the church. Many places cannot get the men in their churches to take seriously the need to be qualified and to serve as elders and deacons. If asked, they commonly refuse to serve in those capacities. When these roles are

specifically designated for men (1 Timothy 3:1-15; Titus 1:5-11), where do we find biblical authority to place women in such roles?

A woman who is the spiritual leader in her home, because her husband refuses to be one, does not become the "man of the house" or the head. She may be providing what the man will not, but she does not become her own "head." First Peter 3:1-6 recognizes situations where the husband is not spiritually minded, but still requires the women to "be in subjection to your own husbands." Likewise, a woman might provide some type of leadership in a congregation where all of the men refuse to do so, but she can never be an elder because that role was never given to women. The situations where such a default of all the men in a congregation toward their responsibilities would be few, but none would justify a woman assuming the role of an elder.

Most congregations have more women in them than they have men. This is not just because women outlive men. Even among the younger aged groups, there are more women than men. A great deal of the work done in most congregations is done by the women of the church. This is not to say that men do nothing, for there are many hard-working men in the church. **However, we wish to recognize the fact that women are involved in much of the work that is done in local churches!** Women teach Bible classes of children and also teenage girls and young women, as well as ladies' classes (Titus 2:3-4). Women teach in home Bible studies to the lost (Matthew 28:18-20). Ladies are engaged in the tremendous work of benevolence in helping care for the needy, the sick, the bereaved; doing house cleaning, food preparation and a variety of other chores. There are a myriad of duties women perform alone, with other women, or alongside men doing the same type of work. A congregation without its women would be impoverished indeed! Much work now being done would not be done without our women. Men, when is the last time you prayed and thanked God for all of the godly women in your local congregation who work so diligently? Have you ever done so? We need to give honor to whom honor is due (Romans 13:7). Our women are worthy of great honor for all they do!

**The Present Crisis**

What are the reasons for the present crisis? Part of the problem may be that

men and the church in general have not given proper recognition of the tremendous contributions which women have made in the Lord's church. The restlessness in some women may be just a desire for some deserved recognition. We men can be awfully dense (or just plain stupid) at times and fail to recognize such needs in our women, whether at home or in the church. This is not to say that all of the issues being raised by women are shallow and can be resolved by a pat on the head and a few kind words, but women appreciate being appreciated, perhaps more than men feel such expressions are necessary. While proper respect and thankfulness for our women is all that many of them desire, the problems some women express run much deeper.

Surely no one will deny that the present cultural climate in our society has contributed greatly to the demand for changes in the roles of women in the church from both men and women. The stir on the so-called Equal Rights Amendment in the 1970s; the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion in 1973, giving a woman the right to destroy the life of the baby because it is "her" body; the Feminist Movement of the 1980s; the gay rights for Lesbians of the 1990s - all of these have empowered women in ways they never experienced in American society before. It seems logical that this growing movement of women's rights would reach out to any area in which women felt restrictions which were not placed upon men. The church is one such target.

The question which Christians must squarely face is this: "What do the Scriptures have to say about these issues?" For those who accept the Bible as being God's word and also accept God's will for all women and men is fully revealed therein, the task will boil down to this. What do the Scriptures teach regarding the roles women are to have in leadership and public worship in the church for which Christ died? We will investigate these things fairly and as fully as space allows. While we will not be swayed to change our views based on how these articles are received, we are interested in your comments and criticisms, or your questions.

*Adversity comes to everybody sooner or later. It slows all men down for a while; it knocks many down, some get up, others stay down and get trampled. It's the man who gets up the most times after he is knocked down that wins.*

*Don't hold a grudge, or it will hold you.*

**Nuggets of Gold**

- Nothing can take the pleasure out of life more surely or quickly than putting too much pleasure into it.
- The devil doesn't mind that you are religious...as long as you are not religiously **right**.
- Juvenile delinquency is proving that many parents are not getting at the seat of the problem.
- The church is a workshop for wide-awake Christians, not a dormitory for sleeping beauties.

*Taking heart to meet adversity can be your ladder whereby you climb to greater heights.*

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**Would A Denominational Preacher Dare Give The Same Bible Answers?**

by Max Patterson

When we ask denominational preachers "What to do to be saved?" many different answers are always forthcoming. These answers seldom are the answers given in the Bible. Why?

I'm reminded of what J. W. McGarvey said in a debate with a denominational preacher. He said, "Engaged in a public debate, a few years since, with a Doctor of Divinity of a numerous and powerful party, I determined to apply to him a test which had been employed before by some of my brethren, and charged that he dare not, as he valued his ministerial position, and even his membership in the Church, give to mourners words which the apostles employed. He interrupted me, by asking if I intended to insinuate that he would not preach what he believed to be the truth. I replied, that I had no disposition to question his honesty, but that I was stating a startling fact, which ought to be made to ring in the ears of the people. I then told the audience I would put my statement to a test at once, and turning to the Doctor, I said: "Sir, if you had a number of mourners before you, as Peter had on Pentecost, pierced to the heart with a sense of guilt, and exclaiming, 'What shall we do?' Would you dare to say to them, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?' Or, if you were called into a private house, like Ananias, to see a man fasting and weeping and praying, would you dare to say to him, 'Why do you tarry? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord?' I pause for a reply." I stood waiting, and the immense audience held their breath, until the silence became painful; but the Doctor hung his head and answered *not one word.*"

My feeling is that very, very few denominational preachers today would do differently than in the above illustration. How sad.

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*To boast of blue blood indicates senile pride and snobbery; the possession of red blood means energy and action; the results of the blood of Christ is humility and self-forgetfulness.*

**SEND US YOUR CHANGES OF ADDRESS SOON OR STOP RECEIVING FCGN!**

We want everyone who desires to receive FCGN to keep on receiving it, but we have a problem. This paper comes to you free of charge, paid for by the sacrificial giving of the church of Christ in Mammoth Spring, AR and the generous contributors which we list in each month's issue. Mailing rates continue to increase. Higher rates for periodical mailing went into effect this month. In order to receive the cheapest possible rate so that we can continue to mail FCGN without cost to you, we have had to invest about \$4,000 in a new computer and mailing program which will process your nine digit zip code and place a barcode on your mailing label. By January of 1997 all of our mailing labels must carry your nine digit zip code plus the necessary barcode information. If we have your complete, up to date address, the computer program will automatically print the nine digit zip code and barcode information. If we do not have your CURRENT, FULL ADDRESS the computer rejects your name and we have no choice but to discontinue mailing you the Fulton County Gospel News. CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL! IF IT IS INCORRECT OR INCOMPLETE SEND US AN UPDATE!

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We want to keep you as readers, but we need your cooperation. Thank you.

- Ted J. Clarke, Editor

**GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION**

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (I Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

**THE CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; I Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2,3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 12:13).

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