ON THE HOME FRONT

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We continue to appreciate those who use their talents in serving the Lord regularly. This is the case with most of the members meeting at Getwell and Dunn. We commend them for their interest and concern for the work of the Lord! These seem, unlike some, to never be “too busy” when a need arises to show themselves faithful. They can be counted on to show their obedience and good example by being present for all the classes and worship services.

One unknown author wrote the following about the lazy and idle when work needs to be done: He correctly said that God always chose from those who were already busy! “Moses was busy with his flock at Horeb. Gideon was busy threshing wheat by the winepress. Saul was busy searching for his father’s lost donkeys. David was busy caring for his father’s sheep. Elisha was busy plowing. Nehemiah was busy serving the king. Amos was busy tending his flock. James and John were busy mending their nets. Matthew was busy collecting taxes.” When Jesus comes to call us into account, will we answer, “Sorry Lord, but I have just been too busy?”
Webster's Dictionary gives the common usage of words in the English language. To define "gamble," the dictionary says, "to play for money; to risk especially by financial speculation; V.t. to lose or squander in speculative ventures; n. a risky undertaking; a reckless speculation" (P. 158). Every truthful gambler will admit that this definition is correct. Those who have lost their business, family, and self-respect due to gambling will also admit the correctness of gambling being risky and reckless. Many refuse to see the dangers to our community and state that will accompany gambling when accepted. Some are so "money mad" that their interest in gaining "something for nothing" (which is always a false statement) blinds them to the proven difficulties found in communities where gambling casinos have been built. These seem to overlook the hard facts that with gambling comes also the criminal elements destroying young people and old. Vices of all kinds open their shops when gambling arrives on the scene. The horrible addition of gambling, which to many is stronger than drugs, often overtakes the unsuspecting and brings downfall and ruin. The end for many, after betting their money and perhaps even houses and cars, is poverty and a need to have public sustenance in food stamps for these homeless people. To be considered also is the additional police, needed to hold down the problems brought on by gambling, as well as the extra expense of maintaining public streets and furnishing more jail space for the lawbreakers. The communities where gambling has been accepted testify to all of these problems. Gambling is condemned by the Bible for the protection of man's best interest. We cannot overlook in gambling the greed or covetousness severely condemned in the Old and New Testaments (Ex. 19:17; Dt. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5). Nor can we ignore the selfishness that brings profit to the industry as it plunders and despoils people out of their money, needed to support their families (II Pet. 2:9-10). Gambling is carried on by those who are insensitive to the needs of others who loose while others take their earnings (Mt. 7:12). The gambling industry knows how addictive this practice becomes, when it takes hold of the weaknesses in man. It causes otherwise good and healthy people to cease to make their living in an honest way (Gen. 3:19; Eph. 4:28; II Th. 3:10). Surely, we can see that gambling did not build our nation, but it certainty will remove its foundations.
There is a coordinated effort stirring to legalize marijuana in every state within our nation. Numerous states have already legalized the drug and are realizing the magnitude of their actions. One source avers,

Thirty states and the District of Columbia currently have laws broadly legalizing marijuana in some form ... Eight states and the District of Columbia have adopted the most expansive laws legalizing marijuana for recreational use. Most recently, sales of recreational-use marijuana in California kicked off on January 1. In Massachusetts, retail sales of cannabis are expected to start later this year in July. Voters in Maine similarly approved a ballot measure legalizing marijuana in 2016.1

Just because something is legalized does not mean it is good or even positive for our society and morals. The same is true in regards to Christian morality. Isaiah 5:20 says, “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”

A glaring example of the aforementioned principle would be the legalization of alcohol. When one considers all of the evils associated with alcohol consumption, it becomes easy to see how detrimental legalization of that substance has been. Broken lives, destroyed marriages, and wrecked families characterize people who have succumbed to the idol of alcoholism.

A recent article in The Denver Post supports the conclusion that many argued before the legalization of marijuana. That is, legalization of marijuana will create social, legal, and moral problems. The article cites the following facts:

- The number of marijuana-related automobile fatalities in Colorado, as measured by the drug’s chief psychoactive ingredient, hit 77 in 2016, the latest in a series of sharp increases in recent years. Fifty-one of those drivers had levels of that substance, called Delta 9 THC, above the threshold for cannabis impairment under Colorado law.”2

The state of Washington had similar results after marijuana was legalized. Consider the following quote:

The Washington Traffic Safety Commission released an analysis of blood tests from drivers involved in fatal accidents. Before the legalization of marijuana, about half of such blood samples had active THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana. The new study found 85 percent of blood samples had THC.3

In addition to creating problems on our highways, marijuana has other negative effects on the human body. People using marijuana typically have a short attention span and lack the ability to perform tasks that require multiple steps. Moreover, marijuana cigarettes have significantly more particulates (tar) than tobacco. “[M]arijuana smoke is usually inhaled longer and more deeply than cigarette smoke, delivering up to four times more tar to the lungs.”4 Consider the following facts:

- Marijuana causes short term memory loss.
- It inflames the lungs and may contribute to lung cancer.
- It can create an acute panic reaction in stronger doses.
- It creates anxiety in its users.
- It can trigger schizophrenia in certain individuals.
- It is a drug that creates dependency for its users.
- It causes impairment in decision-making situations.
- Withdrawal symptoms include irritability, restlessness, decreased appetite, sleep disturbance, sweating, tremors, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.
- It causes an increased heart rate that can cause heart attack.
- It causes a reddening of the eyes.
- It causes blurred vision and headaches.
- It causes decreased fertility in women.
- It also causes decreased sexual drive in men.5

Suffice it to say, God wants Christians to monitor the substances that they put into their bodies. First Corinthians 6:19-20 says, “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

ENDNOTES


--via Seek the Old Paths, July 2018