

# The Old-Time Evangelistic News

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The Kind of Preachers We Need and  
The Kind of Preacher I Want To Be (Part 7)  
Luke 1:13-17

Last month we concluded by mentioning sins that were uncovered in some Fundamental, Independent Baptist churches. I wish that was all that I could mention, but sadly it is not. While preparing this message, I came across an article that was very interesting. I do not recall exactly how this article came to my attention. I did a search on the internet just to see if what I thought to be true about the acceptance of sin was true or not. I wish that I could say that I am an alarmist and things are not as bad I think that they are. Some would say that I am exaggerating the case when I mention what I have mentioned. But after seeing this article, it only adds more evidence to what I already thought to be true.

This information comes from a poll that was done by the Barna Group. (This is not a blanket endorsement of everything that this organization does. I am simply using this one poll). The poll was conducted on November 3, 2003. I will list all of the information, and then comment on it.

## “Morality Continues to Decay”

83% of Americans say that they are concerned about the moral condition of America

84% of Americans consider themselves Christians

Of these same people...

61% say that gambling is morally acceptable

60% say that cohabitation (unmarried living together) is morally acceptable

59% say that sexual fantasies are morally acceptable

45% say that abortion is morally acceptable

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42% say that having a sexual relationship with someone of the opposite sex that is not your spouse is morally acceptable

38% say that pornography is morally acceptable

36% say that profanity is morally acceptable

35% say that drunkenness is morally acceptable

30 % say that homosexual sex is morally acceptable

17% say that non-prescription drug use is morally acceptable

According to the poll, 84% of Americans say that they are Christian. That is highly disputable, but if you carry on a conversation with just about anyone, they will say that they are a Christian. If you knock on the door at the home of most Americans and ask, “Are you a Christian?,” most would reply, “Yes.” This, of course, will be based upon their understanding of what a “Christian” is, or it will be based upon what their church teaches that a “Christian” is. But it is not based upon what the Bible teaches. I will not go into any more of a discussion about this than to say that the majority of Americans are not saved. I dare say that only about 20% of Americans are truly converted and that may be stretching the numbers.

But just going by what most people say, you can look at the rest of the poll and see that we are in a great mess. 61% say that gambling is morally acceptable. Is gambling wrong? The word gambling is not found in the Bible, so there is no command, “Thou shalt not gamble.” But sins associated with gambling are condemned in the Bible. Gambling promotes covetousness and laziness. The very idea of gambling is to obtain enough money so one will not have to work. Is that wrong? God told Adam in Genesis 3:19, “*In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground.*” This is not popular and will upset many, but God expects man to work all of his life. He is not to wish “for the big one,” so he can sit around and do nothing. God expects man to work, and work hard—sweating in the process. To wish for lots of money, so one can do nothing, is contrary to God’s Word.

Gambling also promotes coveting. Coveting means “to desire or

wish for, with eagerness” (Webster, 1828). Gambling promotes that desire to have what one does not have. It is the epitome of coveting. Here is the scenario—one does not have money. He gambles with a few for a small amount, or he plays the lottery, desiring for the immense amount of money that he might win. That desire for more money is the coveting which God forbids!

60% say that cohabitation is morally acceptable. Years ago this sin was denounced by preachers and society. Many would refer to it as “shacking up.” God forbids a man and a woman from having sex before marriage. The word fornication covers several things, but one meaning of the word means “to play the harlot.” It is the idea of having marital relations with one to whom you are not married. Acts 15:29 commands believers to “*abstain from...fornication.*” I Corinthians 6:18a says, “*Flee fornication.*” Ephesians 5:3 says, “*But fornication...let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints.*” Many other verses could be mentioned, but the Bible is clear—God forbids fornication—sex before marriage. Therefore, God forbids an unmarried couple to live together.

59% say that sexual fantasies are morally acceptable. The minds of Americans have become polluted with filth. With the onslaught of billboards, magazines, music, television, movies, and the internet, our minds are bombarded with wickedness. Is it all right to think about these things? God says, “NO!” Our minds are to be filled with things that are pleasing to God. Philippians 4:8 says, “*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*” Man may say that he can think impure thoughts, but God says that one’s thoughts are to be pure.

45% say that abortion is morally acceptable. How anyone, especially a confessing Christian, could say that the killing of a baby in the womb is morally acceptable, is beyond my reasoning. My wife and I have four children. The times that my wife carried those four

children were special times. I cannot see how anyone could stop a pregnancy. Yet many will say it is a choice and is a private matter. Does God care about the unborn baby? God told Jeremiah in Jeremiah 1:5, “*Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee.*” God is so great that He knows everything about us even before conception. That boggles my mind, but it shows how glorious God is. But notice that God said, “*I formed thee in the belly.*” God is the author of life, not man. To kill a baby in the womb is no less wrong than to kill one outside the womb. God made the baby. It is wrong to kill the baby.

42% say that having a sexual relationship with someone of the opposite sex that is not your spouse is morally acceptable. This is a wordy way to say that fornication is acceptable. The only difference with the second category is that this group is not “living together.” However, the Scriptural condemnations against fornication still apply. Fornication is still sin! Those who commit fornication are sinning against God!

38% say that pornography is morally acceptable. Many would like to say that actual adultery is wrong, but one can look at the pictures and that is all right. But what did Jesus say? Matthew 5:28 says, “*But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*” Jesus is saying that the mind should be as controlled as the body. Jesus is saying that it is just as wrong to lust after a woman as it is to actually commit the act of adultery! Man say thoughts are all right. Jesus says it is sin!

36% say that profanity is morally acceptable. God say, “*Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain*” (Exodus 20:7). Jesus said, “*But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment*” (Matthew 12:36). So you think that your speech does not matter, and you can say anything that you want to say? It matters to God.

35% say that drunkenness is morally acceptable. God condemns the drinking of alcohol in Proverbs 20:1 and 23:29-32. He forbids drunkenness in Ephesians 5:18. I would like to take those who say that drunkenness is all right into the home where a drunkard has beaten his wife. Ask her if drunkenness is morally acceptable. Then I would take them into the home where the children have nothing to eat because the drunkard spends all of the money on liquor instead of food. Drunkenness is a terrible sin that ruins lives and families.

30% say that homosexual sex is morally acceptable. God says it is sin in Leviticus 18:22-30 and Romans 1:24-32. It is not acceptable! It is sin!

Only 17% of Christians approve of non-prescription drug use (marijuana, etc.), but I cannot believe any Christian would approve of it. It shows how degraded our society has become. Anything that destroys the body or controls the mind is sin (I Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 5:18). Sin is acceptable to many, but it is still wrong in the sight of God. We must still preach against sin!