



November 8, 2009

## *The Persistence Of Evil*

This past Tuesday Ohio voters agreed to give way to casino gambling opening the door for construction of three such facilities in the state. I figured that the issue would pass this time as there appeared to be a lot of force driving it considering the current economic climate. I commented that evening that it would be interesting to see how long it would be before issues began to surface. Within twenty-four hours state lawmakers were interviewed and stated that they were pushing for changes in the language of the amendment because it was “unfair” to taxpayers. One lawmaker even stated that if the amendment could not be modified it would go back to the voters. Let the games and chaos begin. It was also noted that the issue has been on ballots in the state since 1990. For nineteen years the element that wanted this passed did not stop. This article is not about gambling or the issues that surround it. Gambling is evil. Period. The issue here exposes the deeper side of darkness and how it works. First of all I knew that it would pass this time because of the state of the economy. People are losing jobs. With the loss of work comes a loss of independence and a feeling of increased powerlessness. There is fear involved when there is no apparent promise on the horizon and folks will grasp at what is there. This time it was the illusion of 34,000 jobs for the state. That is a significant number, but, realistically, how many folks want to be casino workers. How many would consider moving or commuting for long distances to work at such a place? But that doesn't matter. There was a promise and the imagination can fill in the rest. This is the same thing that happened to Eve in the Garden of Eden (**Gen 3**). Satan presented an idea that something was available. Eve took it from there and Adam followed. Today there are people who hope that casinos will spur business and trade. It will, but not the business and trade we want in the neighborhood. Satan preys on us at the weakest moment of our lives. Death, disease, hunger and lack of work create enough instability for the devil to work on our heads. The second thing we can learn about this is that evil is persistent. In spite of the massive cost of advertising and en-

dorsements, the supporters of this issue kept coming back for more after every defeat. They never stopped or gave up. Christians on the other hand too often turn away or give up in despair when things don't work the first time. Casinos passed the vote because the proponents behind it were not willing to accept defeat. We should be that way working for good. Satan, Peter tells us, walks about as a roaring lion seeking whom he might devour (**1 Pet 5.8**). He is constantly hungry and willing to grab any who venture too close to danger. Third, evil is willing to use every available means to present things many times making them look as if they are wholesome and good. Hey look! Casinos. Ignore the drugs, alcohol, prostitution, addiction to gambling itself, broken homes and debt. Step right up, get on the bus and take a trip to Hell via the scenic route. Satan has always made attractive offers. He wanted to give Christ the world. He wanted to lure Eve into thinking the forbidden fruit was really good for you and would make one wiser than God. Hot air and fluff. Lies that steal the soul filling lives with regret and tarnished reputations. Those who oppose such things are ridiculed as out of touch to the blind followers of such corruption. Someone is out of touch. The adoption of these ideas and attitudes is also a sign of desperation. When people no longer feel as though they control their own lives they will turn to something else to fill the gap. Interestingly, things that some think will remedy the problem at hand not only makes matters worse but gains control over individuals as well. Folks are coerced into changing their attitudes and accepting a small bit of evil. They desire to see it as good and decide to support it. As these things grow, the image and idea of God gets pushed farther in the background until He is forgotten and that's just the way the Devil likes it.

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