

Sports and Games:

Satan's Time Eaters, and Character Demolishers

A Temcat Study on the effects of Checkers, Chess, and Card-playing.

Great Evil: Surely it is true that any practice, attitude or behavior that would cause one to lose out on Eternal Life, is certainly to be considered a great evil. This whole question has many facets to it and I will try and mention a few briefly and leave you to consider them at greater depth in your own studies.

Just as a quick glance at the subject I see aspects in these games that:

1. Waste valuable time; after all, what do people commonly call them? They call them 'pass-times'. Do Christians have time to waste—or 'pass' in something that accomplishes nothing? Definitely not! Surely idling time away is a grievous error for a Christian.
2. Develop an attitude of competition, which again is something that is not acceptable in a Christian character. Cooperation is the spirit of heaven; competition is the spirit of that old dragon, Satan. The spirit of this fallen world is aggression, pride, win, get, take, conquer—the spirit of Heaven is give, love, care, humility, share and help. You will find the entire world of games and sports stands arrayed at the bar of God as guilty on this one item alone!
3. There is absolutely nothing of any eternal value accomplished by the time spent in learning, practicing, and playing these games. It is impossible to sit down to a checker or chess game and have one's mind dwelling on heavenly themes and keeping in an attitude of prayer as we are told—Pray without ceasing.
4. Competitive games lead also to a spirit of gambling—once one gets 'good' at any of them, he then begins to want more competition and easily takes Satan's bait to get into gambling games. Competitive games create angry feelings in the losers and pride in the winners—neither of these character traits will be found in Heaven.

Another angle is that the time element is more urgent now, than ever in the history of this dying planet, as the investigative judgment is going on; the cases of all are being decided for eternal life or eternal death. This judgment is right now looking at the cases of professed Christians. When the King comes in to look upon the wedding guests to see if they are reflecting the Righteousness of Christ, and He sees you at the checker board trying to win a silly game by moving pieces of wood or plastic around, will He not cast you out as He did the man without a wedding garment?

The final crisis is very close and when it hits, there is no time to change our characters then. So it is now that we must be making the choices to develop that character that can stand firm though the heavens fall; that character that has no spot or wrinkle or any guile in it. Guile is deceit, lying, there are many card games that can't really be played without deceit.

I want to introduce you to a very interesting Hebrew word that is found in the Bible, 'Gadal'. That word describes the spirit of the world, it is what is in the heart of all who are not fully converted. It is a combination of Pride, Aggression, Self-exaltation, Self-seeking and Selfishness. It is the spirit of Paganism, and the dragon. It is the spirit of the Beast, the spirit of rule or ruin, and all who receive it will receive the Mark of the Beast. It is what evil really is made of. Evil is

not doing some horrible crime, evil is Gadal! It is natural to fallen man as it is the very character of his master, Satan.

Only the blood of Jesus and the mighty indwelling power of the Holy Spirit in the converted person can lead to the removal of Gadal from our characters. All these games are designed by Satan to develop that spirit of Gadal to a high pitch.

I am not just telling you something I read in a book, I came from a background of first checkers, then into card playing and chess and from that to a desire for gambling. The character traits it helped me to develop would destroy me unless washed completely away in the Blood of the Lamb. The aggressive attitude I would have as I played, and the resentment of losing, and the pride of winning, are not at all the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus.

The history of these games is interesting; they are all full of the symbols of worldly pride and pagan worship. The alternating black and white or red board is a symbol of the god of this world, the god of good and evil, Satan. The chess game is something developed by the ancient aggressive war lords as they trained their minds to find ways to trick and destroy an opponent. It is war acted out. The symbols on playing cards are all occult.

Christianity here at the end of the world in this final generation is a serious business indeed; if heaven isn't worth everything to us, we are not going to get there. If you be honest with yourself and really think about it, could you ever think of Jesus wasting His time playing some aggressive and competitive game that Satan invented? If you are honest with yourself, could you not make far better use of the hour or more spent on such activities? You could study, spend time with God, or do some worthwhile work, or go for healthy exercise on a nature walk; or you could find someone who needs help and help them; there are countless better things the Christian would want to use his time for.

Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. In fact, to be honest, any person who can't see the great evil in these things is spiritually blind and needs to seek for eyesight by prayer and Bible study and for a true conversion. I know that I once would criticize those counsels from the Lord's messenger, and I thought at that time I was a converted Christian? I was certainly no such thing! Now I see it clearly. The most terrible thing that can happen to anyone is to think you are fine with the Lord, when you are actually in love with the devil's devices and do not even know the Lord. The life that would find time or desire for checkers, chess and card-playing, is a life that is not surrendered to the re-creative power of Jesus; it is a life that will lead to a character that will receive the Mark of the Beast and not the Seal of God in the forehead.

Please take a good look at spiritual values; think about the value of eternal life; think about the horror of losing all in the game of life, and make wise choices with what time you have given you by God to prepare for heaven.

The Judgment is set, the books have been opened;
How will you fare on that great day?
When every thought and word and motive
Christ the righteous judge will weigh?

Idolatry Today:

A Bible Study shared by a reader.

What is our duty at this time as God's people?

"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

Why must we point out the sins of God's professed people?

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand;" Joel 2:1

What must we do to be ready for the coming of the Lord?

"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet." Joel 2:12-16

What is our duty to the youth at this time?

"Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." Titus 2:6-15.

The sins of these last days will be a repeat of the sins of the children of Israel just before they entered the land of Canaan.

"And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play." Exodus 32:6.

Strong's Concordance: Play: *tsâchaq* = *tsaw-khak'* A primitive root; to *laugh* outright (in merriment or scorn); by implication to *sport*: - laugh, mock, play, make sport.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary Def. = 1. That which diverts and makes merry; play; game; diversion; also, mirth. The word signifies both the cause and the effect; that which produces mirth, and the mirth or merriment produced.

The Children of Israel had just been released from bondage from Egypt when the above quote happened. As we look at the play, or sports of the Egyptians, painted on the stones of their

houses and pottery of that time, we find that they engaged in Boxing, Fencing, Pole Vaulting, Basketball, Racing with stick and Sun discs, (round tires); Horse Racing, Chariot Racing, Greyhound Racing, Rolling of Dice- Gambling, Gymnastics, Dancing, Table games, and Football; to name just a few.

It has been written that they spent their time in these while their slaves did all their work for them. Which we know from scripture were the children of Israel.

The word of God says: "Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen." Jeremiah 10:2.

What does God equate sports of the heathen with?

"Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 1 Corinthians 10:7.

"I will do these things unto thee, because thou hast gone a whoring after the heathen, and because thou art polluted with their idols." Ezekiel 23:30.

The playing of sports is a form of idolatry for sports is built on a competitive attitude of someone winning, someone loosing; someone being the BEST. This spirit Christ had to contend with among His disciples and such a spirit being in them took away from them the ability to serve God effectively.

"And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest.

"And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me." Mark 9:33-37.

Luke 9:46-48 "Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great."

God is no respecter of persons. "For there is no respect of persons with God." Romans 2:11.

How many does God wish to save? "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9.

Of what number are we when we play sports? "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." 2 Corinthians 10:12.

Why do we dare not make ourselves part of that number by playing with them? "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Proverbs 13:20.

What is Christ's command for His people? "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." 1 John 2:15-17.

What happened to the people of God that rose up to play 'sports' in Moses' day? "And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: "Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them... and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." Exodus 32:9, 10 & 28.

What is the final end of this class? "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Revelation 21:8.

What is our Only hope? "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Ezekiel 18:30-31.

"Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

"Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth.

"When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it. Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live." Ezekiel 33:11-16. When must we seek God with All of our hearts?

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Corinthians 6:2.

What should our minds be dwelling on instead of the latest game and who won?

Philippians 4:8 "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."

Philippians 2:5-7 "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:"

What should we do with our time?

2 Timothy 2:15 "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

"but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Matthew 20:26-28.

I hear you say 'But I am not cut out to serve others! That just isn't me? Is this command really for me?' Yes! Or ye are none of His!

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:" (desiring to be the winner of the game)

"For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

"And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Colossians 3:1-17.

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13.

Will you pledge to stand with me against this evil idolatrous practice that is a waste of precious God given time? "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." Joshua 24:15.