



**FAMILY
COUNCIL**

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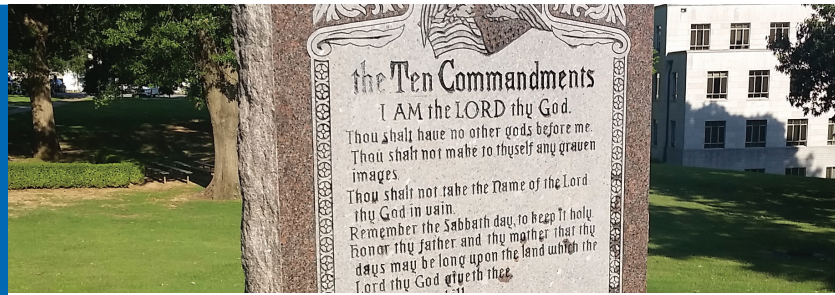
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**OCTOBER 2019
UPDATE LETTER**

DEAR FRIENDS,

In August of 1894 a young man named Joseph Stalin from the eastern European country of Georgia left home to study for ministry at a seminary. Although he initially excelled in seminary, Stalin eventually abandoned his faith and became an atheist. He began attending secret Communist meetings, and in April of 1899 he left the seminary permanently. Stalin joined with other revolutionaries, and helped organize a number of anti-government activities. He endorsed Vladimir Lenin's 1917 coup and was a leader during Russia's civil war.

As a military commander, Stalin was ruthless. He took control of the Soviet Union in 1924, and by the 1930s he was one of the world's most fearsome dictators. His regime's death toll generally is thought to be higher than Adolf Hitler's, and second only to Mao Zedong's in Communist China. Millions of Stalin's political enemies were killed, and millions more were sentenced to forced labor in the Gulag.

Among them was a young writer named Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn imprisoned because he criticized Stalin in private letters to a friend and was accused of forming anti-Communist organizations. Solzhenitsyn was forced to work in the Gulag, but eventually was exiled to live in the west. He wrote several books about his experiences as a prisoner and political dissident, and in 1983 his work earned him the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion. Eighty-nine years after Joseph Stalin entered seminary to become a priest, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn delivered these words in his acceptance speech for the Templeton Prize:

"More than half a century ago, while I was still a child, I recall hearing a number of older people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia: 'Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened.' Since then I have spent well-nigh 50 years working on the history of our Revolution; in the process I have read hundreds of books, collected hundreds of personal testimonies, and have already contributed eight volumes of my own toward the effort of clearing away the rubble left by that upheaval. But if I were asked today to formulate as concisely as possible the main cause of the ruinous Revolution that swallowed up some 60 million of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat: 'Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened.'"

Solzhenitsyn's words and Joseph Stalin's life both show us what happens when people forget God. Stalin quit believing in God and became one of the world's most wicked villains. Solzhenitsyn experienced that wickedness, and he tried to teach our country not to go down the same road.

For the past 60 years the ACLU and others have insisted that they want a secular society where God is not part of public life. Well, we've got it. We also have opioids, heroin, alcohol, gambling, mass murder, divorce, suicide, fatherless children, and the most divisive political culture since the Civil War. Is it any wonder that as religion and morality have faded from public life, these problems have gotten worse?

The news isn't all gloom and doom. There's plenty of good that's worth fighting for, and we should not give up. But I want you to understand that speaking God's truth in this culture is a serious matter. The stakes are very high.

And now let me tell you a little more about how we are speaking truth and opposing evil in our culture—and about how you can be part of that fight.

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Family Council
President Jerry Cox

MY THOUGHTS: ALCOHOL, GAMBLING, AND MARIJUANA ARE NOT THE KEYS TO PROSPERITY

You can't drink, gamble, and smoke your way to riches.

The past few years we've heard one person after another claim that the State of Arkansas can get rich quick off drinking, smoking, gambling, and marijuana. In 2008 Lt. Governor Bill Halter said a state-run lottery could "generate" \$100 million per year for college scholarships. In 2009 Governor Mike Beebe said increasing Arkansas' tobacco tax could fund a statewide trauma system. In 2016 marijuana companies promised that "medical marijuana" would not cost the state a dime. In 2018 casino corporations from out of state promised Arkansas would get tax money hand-over-fist through legalized gambling. And in 2019 lobbyists for the alcohol industry promised lawmakers that legalizing public drinking would rejuvenate Main Streets and town squares all over Arkansas.

Of course, gambling doesn't "generate" money. Any tax revenue the state makes from gambling comes out of the pockets of everyday Arkansans who lost money on the lottery or slot machines. And for every dollar the state makes taxing alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco it has to spend up to \$10 trying to repair the damage that addiction to those products causes.

Plenty of people have gone to bankruptcy and divorce court because they spent all their money on gambling, alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Nobody ever got rich or had a happy marriage that way. If we want to make Arkansas a better state, drinking, smoking, gambling, and marijuana simply are not the way to go. That's why Family Council remains committed to opposing expansions of gambling, alcohol, and marijuana in Arkansas.

Amendment Would Legalize Casino-Style Games in Gas Stations, Convenience Stores

In August the group Arcade Arkansas filed a petition with the Secretary of State to legalize "coin-operated amusement machines" under Arkansas' state lottery. These machines look and operate a lot like video slot machines, and they would let players win points that could be redeemed for prizes.

To put it bluntly, this amendment would bring casino-type gambling machines into convenience stores and eating places all over Arkansas. It would turn the corner convenience store into a casino and create hangouts where people could gamble 24 hours a day. The amendment budgets absolutely no money for scholarships or veterans. Instead, it turns all the money over to Arkansas' failing lottery. It allows up to 15,000 gambling machines with little or no oversight to prevent fraud. The State of Georgia has spent years trying to dig itself out of the crime these machines and their owners brought to their state.

Take Action: Don't sign any petition to write "coin-operated amusement machines" into the Arkansas Constitution.

Arkansas Lottery Scholarship Funding Nears Five-Year Low in July

Earlier this summer the Arkansas Lottery published financial reports showing July was the third worst month for lottery scholarship funding in the past five years. The report shows the Arkansas Lottery took in \$41.2 million, but gave college students a paltry \$4.5 million. Out of the past five years, the only months we can find that were worse than last July are February of 2016 and September of 2014.

U.S. Surgeon General Warns Americans About Marijuana

In August U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams surprised many of us by issuing the first Surgeon General's advisory on marijuana since the 1980s. The advisory gave facts about marijuana and cited concrete scientific research to back up its findings.

The Surgeon General made three really important points in his advisory:

- There is absolutely no scientific evidence that marijuana is safe for pregnant women and children.
- Today's marijuana is three times stronger than it was in 1995.
- Marijuana use is linked to psychosis and psychiatric disorders like schizophrenia.



Up until now, all we've heard from proponents of marijuana is, "Marijuana is harmless." After the Surgeon General's advisory came out, a lot of those same people issued statements saying, "Well of course children and pregnant women shouldn't use marijuana. That's true of any drug." That may not seem like much, but it's the first time we've heard some marijuana supporters admit that marijuana carries any risks.

The advisory also offered solid, scientific evidence that marijuana is harmful. Family Council has written time and again that marijuana use is tied to permanent loss in IQ and psychotic disorders like schizophrenia. It was good to hear the U.S. Surgeon General reaffirm these concerns using scientific research.



Assistant Executive Director
David Cox

POLICY POINTS: MARIJUANA DEBATE’S TRAJECTORY SIMILAR TO TOBACCO DEBATE’S

By David Cox

When researchers first wrote about the dangers of tobacco around the 1950s, tobacco companies generally dismissed the warnings and found doctors who argued tobacco was harmless. By 1966 the U.S. began requiring warning labels on cigarette

packages, but most people did not consider tobacco a serious health threat. It took about two to three more decades of research and major lawsuits against the tobacco industry before society accepted that tobacco is hazardous. Along the way, Americans learned that tobacco companies had cultivated varieties of tobacco that contained more nicotine than previous tobacco plants. This made tobacco more potent, more addictive, and more deadly.

Today, cigarettes aren’t in vogue, advertising for tobacco is strongly regulated, and most places are smoke-free. Tobacco still is big business, but it’s far from its high water mark 30–50 years ago. The marijuana industry seems to be following a similar trajectory.

Right now we have about 20 years of research showing that marijuana is harmful, and the U.S. Surgeon General is taking a stronger stand against marijuana. We know the marijuana industry has cultivated marijuana that is much stronger today than it was a few decades ago—just like the tobacco industry did. In some ways this puts the marijuana debate in roughly the same position as the tobacco debate in the late 1960s or early 1970s. If marijuana follows the same trajectory tobacco has followed, over the next twenty years we probably will continue to see more research that shows marijuana is deadly. We also may see a few states like California finally reverse course and begin regulating marijuana.

By 2060 “recreational marijuana” may be labeled a public health crisis just like smoking was, and “medical marijuana” may be as laughable to Americans as the “medicated cigarettes” that were sold to treat asthma a century ago. Arkansas has an opportunity to be a national leader by refusing to legalize recreational marijuana. In the short run, it may look like the state is failing to change with the times, but in the long run I suspect more than a few states will regret being so quick to jump onboard the marijuana bandwagon.

New Study: There Is No “Gay Gene”

When former Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton completed Family Council’s very first voter’s guide survey in 1990, we asked him what he believed causes homosexuality. He responded, “I don’t know the cause of homosexuality. It is as old as society itself.” Of course, most liberal politicians

This new research seems to indicate the pro-LGBT laws and court rulings of the past 20 years were based on a lie. In light of that, is it really wise to keep going along with the radical LGBT activists?

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have argued that homosexuality is genetic, and that sexual-orientation is fixed from birth.

However, a study published in the journal *Science* in August reviewed DNA samples and questionnaire responses from approximately half a million people. Researchers looked for connections between peoples’ genetics and their sexual behavior. At the end of the day, scientists just could not find a strong link between the two—much less a “gay gene.” The results left a lot of researchers and journalists scratching their heads.

States have passed laws redefining marriage and giving homosexuals special legal protections because Americans were told that sexual-orientation is genetic, fixed from birth, and cannot be changed—just like a person’s race.

WE’RE PREPARING THOUSANDS OF VOTER’S GUIDES FOR THE MARCH 2020 PRIMARY



It will soon be 30 years since a candidate for governor named Bill Clinton completed our candidate survey for our very first voter’s guide back in 1990. Since then, we have been Arkansas’ leading source for non-partisan candidate information. Knowing where candidates stand on moral issues helps people cast a more informed vote. This year, the primary election is early, March 3. During the holiday season we will be surveying candidates, and we’ll publish our voters’ guide right after the first of the year. Let us know how many you need for your church.

We're Building a Pro-Life Culture

In August the City Council of Springdale, Arkansas, passed a resolution designating Springdale as Arkansas' first pro-life city. The measure comes as Planned Parenthood continues to look for a new abortion facility location in Northwest Arkansas. The ordinance cannot stop Planned Parenthood from opening a clinic in Springdale, but it sends a strong message that Springdale opposes abortion.

The same week Springdale passed its pro-life resolution, pollsters with the Public Research Institute released the results of a year-long survey that showed one in five Arkansans believes abortion ought to be completely illegal. Last October the University of Arkansas found 58% of Arkansans thought abortion ought to be legal only under certain circumstances. Taken together, the research makes it clear that Arkansans don't support abortion on demand. They believe abortion ought to be prohibited completely—or legal only in certain cases, like rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother. You and I are winning the fight to protect the unborn in Arkansas. We are building a culture where abortion is unthinkable. That's a major victory.

Family Council Providing Input on Abortion Facility Rules and Regulations

Arkansas has passed several good pro-life laws since 2015, but the Arkansas Department of Health has not written rules and regulations for these new laws. State rules are important, because they explain how the state will enforce its pro-life laws. Recently the Arkansas Department of Health rolled out rules and regulations for these new laws. These rules will help restrict abortion facilities, enforce our state's pro-life laws, and make sure women have real options besides abortion. Our staff has reviewed these proposed rules to make sure they track with the state's laws, and we are offering suggestions to make the rules better. The state's official pro-life rules should be finalized sometime this winter. This has been a long process, but we are glad to see the state will finally have solid rules to enforce all our pro-life laws. Family Council is proud to be a part of this process.



WE NEED YOUR HELP

As you can see, a lot is happening in Arkansas—and the next few months are going to be very busy for Family Council. That's why I hope you will support our work with a generous, tax-deductible donation, if you are able. We always do our best to stretch every gift we receive as far as it will possibly go. Your support will help us spread truth, oppose abortion, educate voters, promote traditional family values, and make Arkansas a better state to live, work, and raise a family. Enclosed with this letter is additional information about ways you can help us by donating appreciated assets and other non-monetary gifts.

Thank you for standing with us. **It is always so good to know we have friends like you backing us.** Please let me know if there is ever anything my staff or I can do for you.

Sincerely,

Jerry Cox, President

Thank you!!

P.S. We're gearing up to survey candidates for our Arkansas Voter's Guide this fall. We're continuing to oppose the expansion of gambling in Arkansas, and we're pushing back against the radical LGBT agenda. That's why I hope you will send a generous, tax-deductible donation to support our work, if you are able. Thank you for standing with us.

