

they are likely to win, because their abilities gain them an advantage. This pastor spent five years financing his ministry for Jesus Christ by playing blackjack in casinos. A documentary was made about him and his fellow team of Christian card counters, as a result of which he was led to publicly repent of his sin of gambling. Here are the three things this "card counting pastor" learned about gambling that have led to his repentance (<http://mscottfoster.com/2012/04/10/confessions-of-a-christian-blackjack-player>).

First, even though he was able to gamble without engaging in most of its related sins, his example was encouraging others to gamble with devastating results in their lives. He was making money, but many others were losing all of theirs. He writes: "I know what I did encouraged people to be unwise and sinful with their money. It encouraged others to gamble." As a whole, gambling is a ruinous influence in our society, and Christians who love their neighbors should be careful not to act in a way that encourages others to sin.

Second, he confesses that his gambling "has given scoffers and malcontents occasion to mock Christianity." This especially was true of the documentary made of this Christian gambling team, which has prompted charges of hypocrisy as it has been spread by the media. "Christians ought not send mixed signals," he writes, "let alone a pastor who is supposed to be above reproach (1 Tim. 3:2)." We have to be careful in this matter, because there is sometimes a tendency for Christians to become overly focused on appearances – especially the appearance of other Christians who seem different to us. It has often been in the name of "appearances" that the tyranny of non-biblical and Pharisaical laws have been imposed on Christ's people. Yet, when it comes to activities clearly and directly related to biblical definitions of sin, then it is absolutely true that such things "must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints" (Eph. 5:3).

Third, this pastor confessed that his gambling led him into deception and muted his Christian witness. He was understandably reluctant to tell people he was a Christian while seated at the blackjack table. When people asked what he did for a living, he was reluctant to admit he was a pastor. He writes: "A Christian should never put themselves in a position where they can't be straightforward about their allegiance to Christ. There are no double-lives allowed in the church."

In conclusion, I praise the Lord for fellow Christians like Dr. Smith and the Palmetto Family Council, who are representing biblical truth and values in the legislatures. But the example I cited of the repentant pastor reminds us that the most important witness to Christian truth and values is the one that we give from holy, joyful, loving, and pure lives. May God give us grace and wisdom to stand for Christ with power in our increasingly dark generation.

In Christ' Love,
Pastor Rick Phillips

*The Second Presbyterian Church is pleased to invite you to join in celebrating the conferring of a
Doctor of Divinity Degree
upon our senior minister*

*The Reverend Mr. Richard Davis Phillips
by Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary*

Friday, May 18, 2012

*Drop In for Greetings and hors d'oeuvres
4:30pm - 6:30pm * Church Fellowship Hall*

*Awarding of Degree at Graduation Program
7:00pm at the Seminary*

200 East Main Street, Taylors, South Carolina

Church Phone: (864) 232-7621, Ext. 10

Email: info@secondpea.org

Upcoming Events

April 29	Called Session Meeting
April 29	Hymn Sing in the gym after evening service
May 2	WIC Council
May 2	Blood Drive
May 3	National Day of Prayer
May 6	New Members' Luncheon
May 6	Elder Renewal of Vows at evening service
May 7	Diaconate Meeting
May 8	WIC Circles
May 9	Pastoral Care Committee Meeting
May 9	Graduation Banquet
May 11	Mother/Daughter Fun Night
May 13	Mother's Day
May 13	Worship & Music Committee Meeting
May 14	Session Meeting
May 16	Missions' Committee Meeting
May 16	CAT Kids Program
May 18-19	Men's Whitewater Rafting Trip, Nantahala River
May 20	The Lord's Supper at the morning services
May 21	Young At Heart
May 23	CE Committee Meeting
May 23	Musical CAT Kids Begins
May 23	WIC Circle 6
May 25	Jr. High Get Together
May 25	Sr. High Get Together
May 27	Evangelism/Church Growth Committee Meeting
May 28	Church Office Closed for Memorial Day

BLOOD DRIVE WEDNESDAY, MAY 2ND * WATCH FOR SIGN-UP SHEETS

Last Appeal for 225 South Academy Street Pledges

The Church Trustees will close in the next few days on the purchase of the Academy Street property. If you have pledged but not contributed to the appeal or are desirous of making a donation would you consider doing that in the next week, so that the project can be completed. Thanks to all who have contributed so generously.

Graduation Banquet

Wednesday, May 9, 2012 * 5:45 pm in the gymnasium

Don't miss this time of fellowship as we honor our 2012 graduates.

Carly Atwood	Clemson University
Storie Dalton	Pickens High School
Jordan Ecarma	North Greenville University
Andrew Evans	Davidson University
Matthew Evans	Clemson University
Scott Farley	Bob Jones Academy
Elaine Hammett	Home School
Nathanael Hammett	Home School
Benjamin Howard	North Greenville University
Peter Howard	Howard Home School
Timothy Johnson	Clemson University
Lauren Mahon	Eastside High School
Ben Rainey	Clemson University
Reed Rogers, Jr.	Wren High School
Seth Russell	Eastman School of Music
Leah Shreve	Lifelong Learning
Sarah Upton	Home School
Tyler Upton	Western Carolina University
Laura Whigham	Home School
Deanna Worley	Home School/Fine Arts Center

If you are graduating in May or December, 2012, and your name is not on the list above, please call the church office this week. (232-7621, ext. 10)



THE SCOTTISH SLEUTHS AND THE CASE OF THE PUZZLING PARABLES

Vacation Bible School
June 25-29, 2012

If you would like to minister to the children during VBS this year, please contact **Fran Turek** at **299-6034** or franturek@bellsouth.net.

Men's Whitewater Rafting Trip

Nantahala River
May 18-19, 2012

\$49.00 per person

(includes lodging, meals and guide-assisted rafting)
Contact Bill Hedgpeth for details and to sign-up

Second Presbyterian Marriage Retreat

Bonclarken Conference Center, Flat Rock, NC
August 17-18, 2012

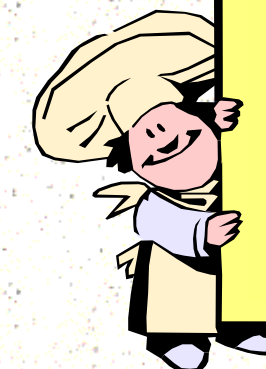
Guest Speaker: **Dr. Derek Thomas**

Minister of Preaching and Teaching, First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, SC
\$189.00 per couple

(includes lodging, Friday evening dinner and Saturday morning breakfast)

Limited availability

Please contact Bill Hedgpeth for details and to reserve your room.



New Members' Luncheon

All members and visitors are cordially invited to a luncheon honoring our new members,
Sunday, May 6, 2012

Immediately following the 11:00 morning worship service in the church gymnasium.

Meat and drinks will be provided by the church.

Church members are asked to bring generous portions of side dishes (vegetables, salads, breads) and desserts.



Hymn Sing

Sunday, April 29th

Immediately following the evening worship service in the church gymnasium.



Mother-Daughter Fun Night

Don't miss the WIC Mother-Daughter Fun Night

What kind of cupcake are you?

For **ALL** Women and Girls

Friday, May 11 * 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Fellowship Hall

Supper will be provided (donations will be accepted).

Watch for upcoming sign-up sheets. *(See Jenny Spears with questions).*



From the Church Historian

"The second of the series of displays concerning the pastors of Second Church is available for viewing in the history room. Dr. S. R. Preston was minister beginning in 1895 and concluded his service in May of 1899. The history room is currently open between Sunday School and the beginning of the 11:00 service."

Church Calendar

Sunday, April 29

8:30 AM **MORNING WORSHIP**
 9:50 AM Children's Chapel
 10:00 AM **SUNDAY SCHOOL**
 11:00 AM **MORNING WORSHIP**
 3:00 PM Called Session Meeting
 4:45 PM Adult Choir Rehearsal
 5:30 PM Season of Prayer in the Chapel
 6:00 PM **EVENING WORSHIP**
 6:00 PM Wee Worship Choir
 7:15 PM Hymn Sing in the Church Gym

Tuesday, May 1

10:00 AM WIC Bible Study
 6:00 PM Boy Scout Troop 828
 6:00 PM Evangelism Explosion Training and Visitation

Wednesday, May 2

6:30 AM Men's Bible Study
 5:00 PM BLOOD DRIVE
 5:00 PM WIC Council
 5:45 PM **FAMILY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP SUPPER**
 6:15 PM Covenant Choir
 6:45 PM CAT Kids and Covenant Kids
 6:45 PM Youth Bible Study
 6:45 PM **PRAYER MEETING AND BIBLE STUDY**

Friday, May 4

12:00 PM Men's Fellowship Lunch and Bible Study

Thank You

Praise God for His family at 2nd Pres. Thank you for your loving concern and prayers for me during my recent illness. The calls, cards, notes, and many acts of kindness are much appreciated. God bless you all. —Pat Tyner

The family of Mrs. Harrison R. (Jean) King would like to thank everyone for your prayers and the cards sent during her illness and following her death.

You Are Invited....

Installation Service for
Gabriel Fluhrer
 as Organizing Pastor of Shiloh Presbyterian Church
 at St. David's School Chapel in Raleigh, North Carolina
 Friday, May 11 at 7:00 PM
 Speakers: Dr. Lane Tipton, Rev. Richard D. Phillips, Rev. R. Carlton Wynne

Seminary Book Sale

Saturday, April 28th from 9:00 am until noon
 Thousands of books and videos on a large variety of subjects will be available.

Remembering One Another

Remember in prayer this week the following member.
 Also, send her a note of encouragement and/or give her a call.
 Kathleen Cleveland
 109 Blakely Road
 Piedmont, SC 29673
 277-5572

The Second Presbyterian Church

105 River Street
 Greenville, South Carolina 29601-2537

Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.
 U. S. Postage
 PAID
 Greenville, SC
 Permit No. 559

WORSHIP AT SECOND THE LORD'S DAY APRIL 29, 2012

MORNING WORSHIP
 8:30 & 11:00 AM

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT

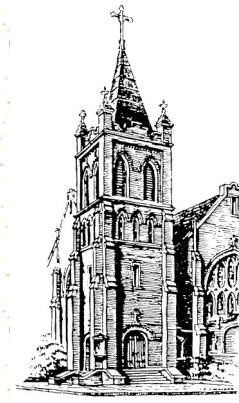
2 Thessalonians 1:5-8
 Anthem:
 Amazing Grace
 Hymns: 66, 65, 311
 Rev. Richard D. Phillips preaching

EVENING WORSHIP
 6:00 PM

DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN

2 Samuel 23:8-39
 Hymns: 266, 275, 441
 Psalter: Psalm 130
 Rev. Richard D. Phillips preaching

«Title» «First Name» «Last Name»
 «Address Line 1»
 «Address Line 2»
 «City» «State» «ZIP Code»



The West End Herald

Vol. CXX, Edition 17

The Second Presbyterian Church
 Corner of River and Rhett Streets
 Greenville, South Carolina

April 23, 2012

Letter from the Senior Minister A Christian Response to Gambling

“But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints” (Eph. 5:3).

I recently had the privilege to attend a TeenPact conference with my son at the Statehouse in Columbia. One of the highlights was a presentation by Dr. Oran P. Smith, President and CEO of the Palmetto Family Council. This is a Christian advocacy group for family causes in the South Carolina legislature. I greatly appreciated everything that Dr. Smith said to the young people, but I was particularly intrigued by his answer to one question. When asked what is presently the greatest challenge to families in South Carolina, Dr. Smith answered that in his view it is organized gambling. One reason for this answer is that South Carolina is comparatively free from organized gambling (casinos and such) and is therefore being targeted by pro-gambling forces who desire to expand into our state. Another reason is the reality that gambling is a destructive vice that brings ruin to all who are associated with it.

I thought to bring this up to our congregation because I have found that many Christians are unsure about how to think about gambling. I have had believers ask me, “Can you show me a verse in the Bible that prohibits gambling?” The answer is that I cannot find a verse in the Bible that declares, “Thou shalt not gamble.” As a result, some believers conclude, “Well, it must be alright for me to do, since it is not forbidden in Scripture.” There are some major problems with this approach, however. The first is that greed and covetousness are explicitly forbidden in the Bible, in places like the 8th and 10th commandments (Ex. 20:15, 17) and Ephesians 5:3, where Paul says that “covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.” However much one may try to separate gambling from greed and covetousness, the fact is that they are integrally related. I realize that families may compete to produce the winning basketball bracket during the college national tournament without entering into greed. But when it comes to casinos, poker, blackjack, betting on sports games, etc., it is not reasonably possible to disassociate gambling from greed, along with a host of other related sins. In my view, the biblical testimony to honesty, integrity, godly stewardship of money, charity, and selflessness so strongly argue against gambling that Christians should be resolute in refusing to gamble and in opposing organized gambling, whether operated by the government or business entities. One of the worst things that could happen to South Carolina is for organized gambling to spread, the result of which would be increased moral and societal ruin.

Along these lines, I was intrigued by a blog post I read by a former Christian professional gambler. This is not a gambler who became a Christian, but a Christian who gambled professionally. In fact, he was a church planter who was financing his ministry by employing his God-given gift of memory to count cards in casinos. “Card counters” are those who are especially gifted in keeping track of which cards have been played and thus tilt the odds in their favor, especially in the game of blackjack. For most people, the more they gamble the more certain they are to lose money. For card counters, the more they play the more