

## HEARTBEATS Staying Connected 3/13/2023

Dear Friends in CHRIST,

***ONE AT ONE*** – *Every day this week beginning on Tuesday, March 14 you are encouraged to pray for one minute at one o'clock. This week, pray for those who struggle because of the severe weather that is happening in our country and around the world. Pray for those who risk their lives to rescue those who are trapped or threatened. Ask GOD to bring favorable weather.*

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I heard that World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) is talking with state regulators about legalizing betting on wrestling matches. That may not seem strange as many people bet on all kinds of things. But WWE wrestling matches are scripted and are not legitimate sports competitions to see who is the better athlete. Some have argued that you can't bet on entertainment, but people still do. (Did you win your bet on which film would win best picture at the Academy Awards?)

So, why do I bring this up? It's because the WWE is doing this to raise revenue. They're trying to broaden their sources of income. And it led me to consider if this is something we might do in the church. Congregations struggle to receive the income needed to not just operate, but to expand their ministries and their outreach to others. So, could we use gambling as a way to get the funds that would allow us exist more comfortably and without the stress of trying to make budget? Consider the possibilities:

- Will Eve eat the fruit?
- David vs. Goliath – what are the odds?
- Will David kill Mephibosheth?
- What's the over/under on Peter denying JESUS? And how many times?
- Will the pastor come out for or against sin this week?
- How many times will the Israelites have to march around Jericho before the walls fall?
- What are the odds that JESUS gets away from the crowd that wants to throw HIM off a cliff?
- How much would you bet on Ezekiel defeating 450 priests in a contest to call down fire from their gods?
- Will Satan's forces triumph over GOD'S in the end?

Of course, I'm being facetious about gambling to raise money. (Well, bingo maybe?) But it's not really gambling if you already know the outcome. And with GOD we do. We know that, though we are given free will and that we will often choose against GOD'S plan for us, GOD will ultimately have the outcome GOD wants. Even if it's done with the most unlikely people. Or in the least possible way. Or even if the odds are against it happening. GOD will be victorious. GOD has already shown that in the resurrection of JESUS. We can always put our trust in GOD. And that's a sure bet!

In CHRIST'S love,  
Pastor Jeffrey