

## Preacher offers unexpected advice to man with cantankerous wife



### America's Heartland

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You may have heard about the fellow who confided to the local preacher: "I'm absolutely convinced that my wife is going to poison me."

The preacher was skeptical.

"I'm telling you, I'm certain she's going to poison me. What should I do?"

"Let me talk to her," the preacher said. "I'll see what I can find out, and I'll let you know."

The next day, the preacher called the man and said, "I met with your wife, talked to her for three hours. You want my advice?"

"Yes," the man said. "Take the poison," the preacher replied.

The Bible warns that people should choose wisely who they marry, because a disagreeable spouse can make life miserable.

"Better to live on the corner of a roof than to share a house with a brawling woman" (Proverbs 21:9).

We have too much strife in this world. We need more kindness, not just between husbands and wives, but also between siblings, friends, neighbors, co-workers, everyone.

I heard a story the other day about a woman who always enjoyed going to the post office because the employees were so kind. She walked in to purchase stamps during the Christmas season and found a really long line. Someone told her she wouldn't need to wait in line because there was a stamp machine in the lobby.

"I know," she said, "but the machine won't ask me about my arthritis."

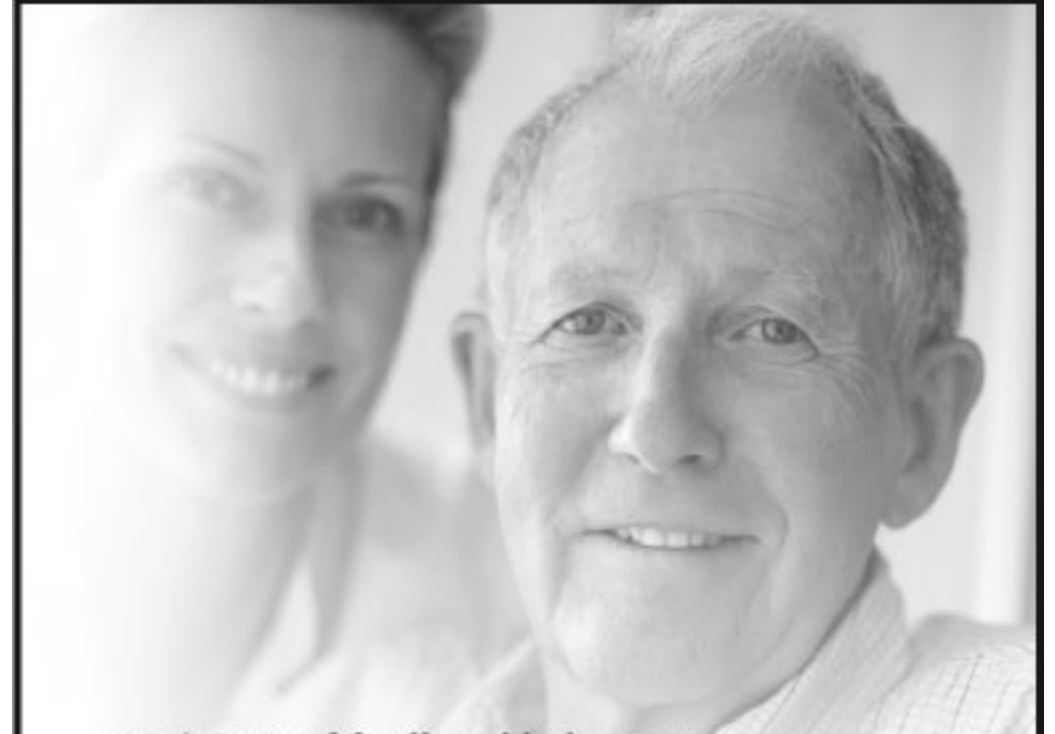
How heartwarming is that? Kindness truly matters.

An old sermon illustration tells about a sad little boy who was walking through a busy city carrying a bag of fruit home to his family. A man bumped into him, causing the apples to scatter all directions. That man stopped only long enough to scold the boy for being in his way. Another man saw what had happened, wiped away the little fellow's tears, gathered up his spilled fruit, put them back in the bag, and gave him a warm hug and \$50.

"Hey, mister," the little boy said. "Are you Jesus?" "No," the man replied. "I'm just one of his followers."

If all of us were to behave like a follower of Jesus, this world would be a much friendlier place. Wives wouldn't be trying to poison their husbands. And husbands wouldn't be tempted to drink the poison.

**Roger Alford offers words of encouragement to residents of America's heartland. Reach him at rogeralford1@gmail.com.**



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### Draining The Swamp



The issue of money in politics is not a new one to our democracy. For most of our country's history, Republican and Democratic citizens alike have been rightfully suspicious of elections driven by millions of dollars from corporate fortunes. The corrosive influence of big money is slowly destroying the democracy our Founders intended. Big money drives lawmakers to cower to special interests, and mutes the conversations needed for public good. Just half of one percent — 0.5% — of Americans fund almost 70% of congressional campaigns.

Think about that for a second. That's staggering.

In 1907, when insurance companies were secretly funneling hundreds of thousands dollars (millions, in today's money) into federal elections, Congress banned political donations by corporations and banks. Since then, our government's done a lot to make common sense rules about how corporations and special interests can influence, what are supposed to be, democratic elections.

The 2010 *Citizens United* case was one of the worst Supreme Court decisions in modern history and undid many of those hard fought rules.

It allowed a tidal wave of unlimited and undisclosed donations by corporations under the guise of "free speech." The Court wrongly believed that a company's million-dollar campaign donation would not influence the policy decisions of elected officials.

This terrible decision allows an election to be bought. How? It allows corporations, wealthy individuals, and foreign entities like Russia to sink millions of dollars in the form of countless ads promoting or attacking a candidate to misguide voters.

I see this here our Congressional District. Andy Barr gets 97% of his campaign funds from special interests, corporations, and large donors, including a staggering \$796,171 from the Financial, Insurance, and Real Estate industries in the 2016 cycle alone — three of the largest interest groups. On top of that, only 3% of his donations, since he was elected to Congress in 2012, have come from individual donors giving less than \$200.

For a long time, most Americans — Democrats and Republicans alike — agreed that corporations should take a back seat to individual citizens in government.

A leading Republican newspaper in 1907 said, "A corporation is not a citizen with a right to vote or take a hand otherwise in politics... Its stockholders, no matter how wise or how rich, should be forced to exercise their political influence as individuals on an equality with other men. That is the basic principle of democracy." — New York Tribune, 1907. This holds true even today.

If the people here in Kentucky's 6th Congressional District send me to Washington, I will work with Republicans and Democrats who still agree that corporations shouldn't buy out the power of the people through:

- 1. Increasing Transparency.** I will fight for legislation that increases transparency through stricter campaign finance rules. As voters, we deserve to know whose money is influencing our candidates.
- 2. Regulating Lobbyists.** I will work to stop special interests from controlling our members of Congress by creating stronger lobbying regulations with increased penalties.

**3. Ending the Exploitation of Public Office For Personal Gain.** I will fight to end outsized health and death benefits for members of Congress and make sure that Congress doesn't hold itself above the law. Being an elected official shouldn't place you above the average American.

**4. Overturning Citizens United.** I will work to dismantle this harmful decision by supporting legislation that piece-by-piece overturns some of the harmful ramifications of the ruling so we can start to give the power back to the people.

It's time for change. I pledge to work for you, not for corporations, lobbyists, or other special interests. I pledge to run both a campaign and a congressional office that is transparent. And I pledge never to use my office for personal gain or to obtain special privileges not available to other Americans. But you shouldn't have to take my, or anyone else's, word for it. These standards should be the law of the land — and they're not.

It's time that Congress shows respect for the American people by holding its members to ethical standards worthy of their office.

It's time we remind Congress that they represent the people, not corporations.



Paid for by Amy McGrath for Congress.

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