

I'm really excited to debut a new writer today. Brian McPeck is a lifelong Clevelander, an incredibly knowledgeable sports fan, and a helluva writer. Brian's another one of those guys with a journalism degree that ended up in another industry. We love guys like that here at TCF, and I really feel we've assembled a group of guys that write just as well as some of the print mediums and are much more in touch with the fans of this town. Brian's first column is a little off topic, but excellent.



***&quot;If God could help me, I knew I could win. I had a funny feeling inside that I could do it. I thank the Lord. The glory goes to him. Thanks to the heavenly Father, I am here today and victorious. With this money, I can do a lot of good for people out there who need the help.&quot;***

### ***- 2007 WSOP Main Event Champion, Jerry Yang***

You know what Jerry Yang's 2007 World Series of Poker Main Event victory means, right? Well, actually it has a number of meanings.

First, God apparently really dislikes Tuan Lam, Raymond Rahme, Alex Kravchenko and everyone else who sat down this past Tuesday at the WSOP Main Event final table. HE obviously favors Jerry Yang who outlasted the eight other players who reached that final table.

Yang rivered a 6 to make a straight against Lam on the final hand when all the chips were in the middle. And any poker player will tell you that rivering an inside straight to win the Main Event is a miracle and a true sign that God loves you.

Second, it means things are good everywhere and that the liberal media is again feeding us nothing but negativity and bullshit. Would God sweat Jerry Yang's cards in Las Vegas if he had other pressing issues to address?

No. He would not.

So calm down about Iraq and Africa and polar ice caps melting. If HE can take time out to hang at the Amazon Room at the Rio All Suites Hotel & Casino in fabulous Las Vegas on behalf of Jerry Yang, things are well in hand.

Unless God has given up completely on us all and figures Vegas is as good a place as any to get a front row seat and watch our steady descent into the abyss. I mean the city is a testament to pretty much every sin under the sun. And God knows people drink to excess, eat to excess, and some cheat on their spouse to excess in Vegas. The excesses are excessive in Las Vegas.

Is it possible that God just threw up his hands after looking at what we've become, headed to Vegas, walked into the ESPN poker arena set up in the Rio, hung out in the Poker Lounge with the Milwaukee's Best Light chicks for a couple hours, blessed Jerry Yang from the start of the night to the finish of the night (to the tune of \$8.25million bones) and then headed out for hookers and blow with Mike Matusow and Layne Flack? It would definitely be the craziest thing I've ever seen in Vegas. *But not by that much.*

No. I refuse to believe God was there to tie one on. God was there to do good and HE was there at the bequest of Jerry Yang. I'm not going to be negative about this.

I'm going to say God bless Jerry Yang.

If he believes his prayers at the table and his prayers on the dinner break and his prayers in the restroom won him the WSOP, good for him. The fact that the guy was yammering on religiously all night is all right by me. I see it no different than the knob who **religiously** wears the Hawaiian shirt to the table or the guy who **religiously**

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Coors Light bottle down with the label pointing toward Bakersfield after each sip but before each new deal.

There are players out there who refuse to shower, change clothes or brush their teeth when they're running well. I've played next to those guys. And I also sat and watched and listened to Jerry Yang on Pay-Per-View for the better part of 9 hours. And you know what? I'll take sitting next to Jerry Yang and his talking in tongues all night rather than try and deal with the guy with the horrific B.O wearing the same sweat -stained shirt he had on 2 days ago. I can crank up the Ipod and tune out Yang and his preaching. But I'd look ridiculous jamming the ear buds in my nose to try and stave off Stinky from Buffalo next to me who's now leaning over to share his thoughts on how to effectively play Q 10 offsuit from early position.

I was initially disappointed that Yang took it down. There were bigger names and better players than him. But then I realized that the guy seems to be a decent human being who pledged 10% of his winnings to three charities. And that's all right. It'll be nice reading about a WSOP champion who isn't either broke, jailed or in a lawsuit over the proceeds of the tournament 6 months from now. It also doesn't suck that Yang will make a pretty good ambassador of poker at a time when some big decisions about the right to play the game on-line are likely coming down.

Maybe if the congressmen who make the rules aren't soliciting underage male pages on-line when Yang speaks his message tying God and gambling neatly together, they'll hear something positive about the great game of poker.

They'll also hear a lot about how God helped him win the Main Event. And how can a game that interests God enough to get involved in all those big hands possibly be illegal or immoral?