

"Gambling - The Odds Are Against You"

We have seen, in the latter part of this century, a dramatic increase in the availability of gambling-whether it be in Las Vegas or a small town such as Cripple Creek, Colorado - rapidly changing from a mining town to a gambling spa.

Many Christians contend that since the Bible does not explicitly address the issue of Gambling and Scripture offers no guidance in this regard. On the contrary, there are many principles found in the Word of God that show that if you enter into the activity of gambling the odds are against you. In fact, gambling affects our view of God, others and ourselves.

I. Gambling Affects Our View of God

A. Gambling indicates a lack of trust in God's ability to provide (Matthew 6:25-34).

- God who clothed the lilies of the field and who feeds the birds will provide for our physical needs as well (*cf* Luke 12:15; Hebrews 13:5; 1 Timothy 6:6-9).

B. Gambling denies God's law of order and His care for our lives (Matthew 10:30).

- There is no place for the concept of luck in a Christian's life in which God is so intimately involved in that "even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (*cf* Proverbs 3:5-6).

C. Gambling violates the 10th Commandment (Exodus 20: 17).

- The activity of gambling is an act of coveting-an attempt to gain the resources of others without providing anything in return.
- Gambling has also been described as a form of voluntary theft.

II. Gambling Affects Our View of Others

A. Gambling distorts our love for our neighbor (Philippians 2:3-4).

- Scripture commands us to be concerned about the welfare of others. Gambling, on the other hand, leaves a trail of human misery in its wake.

B. Gambling exploits the most vulnerable members of society (Zechariah 7:9-10).

- We are instructed to look out for the needs of the poor, the widow, the orphan and the oppressed of our society. Gambling preys mercilessly on these groups.

C. Gambling presents a poor witness to others (1 Corinthians 10:31-33).

- Scripture commands us to conduct ourselves in such a manner so that our actions direct nonbelievers to the Lord rather than causing them to stumble.

III. Gambling Affects Our View of Ourselves

A. Gambling distorts our view of stewardship (Matthew 25: 14-30).

- Jesus tells us that we are going to be called to give an account for how we invest our treasures. (*See attached documentation and examples.*)

B. Gambling undermines our work ethic (Genesis 2: 15; Exodus 20:9).

- Work is an essential ingredient of the divinely created order. Gambling mocks the need for work by selling the illusion of gaining something for nothing. (*cf 2 Thessalonians 3: 10; Proverbs 31; Ephesians 4:28*)

C. Gambling centers around greed (1 Timothy 6:10).

- The love of money is the root of all evil and the love of money is at the very heart of gambling.
- Gambling proponents often claim that gambling is simply another form of entertainment. (*cf Matthew 6:31*)

IV. Conclusion

God calls all of His children to a life that is above reproach in both our personal and public life:

- Ephesians 5:3-Greed should not be named among the saints.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:22-Avoid appearances of evil.
- 2 Corinthians 5:7-We walk by faith and not by sight.
- Matthew 7:7-15 – Does this produce good or bad fruit?

Gambling is to be avoided at all costs at all times for all people.

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More Resources:

- Tri-fold, 11 x 14 gambling fact-sheet pamphlet, “What Payoff Can You Expect from Gambling?” online at:
http://www.citizenlink.org/pdfs/fosi/gambling/Gambling_Brochure_Updated.pdf