

The Christians Relationship to Morals THE LOTTERY/GAMBLING

S. R. 2Cor 6:14-18

INTRODUCTION:

- A. US News & World Report, March 14, 1994 article "America's Gambling Craze". "Not that long ago, Americans held gambling in nearly the same esteem as heroin dealing and applauded when ax-wielding police paid a visit to the corner dice room. But moral outrage has become as outmoded as a penny slot machine. "It took six decades for gambling to become America's Pastime, from the legalization of Nevada casinos in 1931 to April Fool's Day 1991, when Davenport Iowa, launched the Diamond Lady, the nation's first legal riverboat casino. The gradual creation of 37 state lotteries broke down the public's mistrust, conveying a clear message that the government sanctioned gambling; indeed, is even coming to depend on it as a tax-revenue source. . . . Casinos now operate or are authorized in 23 states, (Update: now 28 states - National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling) and 95 percent of all Americans are expected to live within a three or four-hour drive of one by the year 2000
- B. "Gambling has become mainstream in American culture in the past 35 years – legalized gambling has transformed from a limited and a relatively rare phenomenon into an activity that is common and growing. Furthermore, the fastest growing industry in the world, is Indian Gaming, which is a several billion dollar per year industry.
- C. A record \$119.4 million was wagered on the 2014 Super Bowl game in Nevada alone, according to RJ Bell of pgame.com, over \$20 million more than the previous record. But across the country experts report that over \$10 billion was wagered
- D. Most of our civil leaders seem to think the lottery is a good means of raising funds for the state. William Safire (writing about state supported lotteries) said: "Immoral means have never led to moral ends and we are putting the full force of government into the promotion of moral corruption"
- E. The pulpit is no place for politics in regard to legalities. Yet, I consider this to be immorality and I will not shrink back from teaching against it
- F "Today, 48 states (I think now 49 jlh) have some form of legalized gambling taking place." (National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling)
- G. Legalized gambling is part of our civilization and is expanding. So what should be the Christian's attitude. Is it just another form of recreation in which a Christian can participate, regulated by good judgment?
- H. As a Christian we have put on Christ Gal 3:27
 1. Christ lives in us; our life is hid with Christ in God Gal 2:20; Col 3:1-3
 2. Thayer: "To become so possessed of the mind of Christ as in thought, feeling and action to resemble Him and, as it were, reproduce the life He Lived."

DISCUSSION:

I. SO, WHAT IS GAMBLING?

- A. Webster - "To play a game for money or other stake; hence to stake money or any other thing of value upon the uncertain event; to hazard, to wager."

- B. Usage of word "gamble" from Thesaurus in my computer with some scripture added to illustrate Bible usage of some synonymous terms
 1. A possibility of danger or harm = chance Eccl 9:11; risk; hazard Acts 15:26
 2. A venture depending on chance = bet; speculation; wager
 3. To make a bet on = put; play; lay; bet;; lay down; post; stake; game; wager
 4. To put up as a stake or speculation in a game 1Ki 22:34; stake; wager
 5. To take a risk in hope of gaining advantage = speculate; venture
- C. Two essential elements involved in gambling
 1. A stake involved whereby one stands to gain at the loss of others depending upon outcome of some selected element of chance
 2. The element of chance is arbitrarily determined by ones involved
 3. "Gambling and the Bible" (by Ronald A. Reno) "Love of neighbor-Jesus commanded, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mk 12:31). Gambling, meanwhile, is predicated on the losses, pain, and suffering of others. For one to win at gambling, others must lose."
- D. Don't confuse with risks of farming, driving, playing sports, investing in stocks, etc. In farming, etc. gain is not sought at loss of another; these would be happy if no risk were involved.
- E. There are many different types of gambling: check pools, raffles, punch boards, bingo for money, cards for money, lottery, betting on sporting events, online betting and gambling, etc.
- F. There is no doubt that playing the lottery is gambling and is one of the major forms of such
- G. What about "casting lots" as used in the Bible? similar to drawing a name out of a hat In such as this there is no wagering of material goods, but merely a method of choosing
 1. Casting lots = choosing Lev 16:7-10
 2. Determining who got Jesus coat Jhn 19:23-26
 3. Determining God's will Acts 1:26, (24)

II. GAMBLING IS A MENACE TO SOCIETY

- A. The gambling picture in the United States
 1. Americans legally wagered \$586.5 billion in 1996 (International Gaming & Wagering Business Magazine)
 - a. Population of U. S. almost 284,000,000 if not over by now.
 - b. \$586.5 billion averages out to about \$2070 a year for each man, woman & child in U. S.
 - c. \$586.5 billion can pay \$50,000 a year to 293,250 preachers for 40 years
 2. Fifty-one percent of American adults now find casino gambling "acceptable for anyone," and 35 percent describe it as "acceptable for others but not for me,"
 3. As I understand it there is now only one state with no legal gambling of any kind: Utah

4. Lotteries in 37 states as well as the District of Columbia
5. Gambling in churches, homes, schools, government, recreation.
- B. Gambling produces nothing of value and adds nothing to economy.
 1. "The distinguished Nobel Prize-winning economist, Paul Samuelson, warned us: 'There is a substantial economic case to be made against gambling. It involves simply sterile transfers of money or goods between individuals, creating no new money or goods.'" from: Congressional Record for the 104th Congress. Senator Paul Simon; Senate - July 31, 1995
 2. Odds with lottery: If Microsoft mogul Bill Gates put all of his \$30 billion fortune in a typical state lottery and then played off whatever winnings he had, his wealth would dwindle to \$27.94 in just thirty days. Updated November 17, 1999
- C. Not everyone is amused. "The country is flying blind," says William N. Thompson, a professor of public administration at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, who studies gambling policy. "State legislators think this is free money," says Thompson, "but it's not free. It's just taken from other parts of the local economy." Fortune (magazine) November 1, 1993
- D. It promotes crime and traffics in immorality and destroys citizens (Christians also)
 1. It causes men and women to kill, steal, mortgage homes, starve and half clothe their families; lose jobs and many other ills upon society
 2. From: Congressional Record for the 104th Congress. Senator Paul Simon; Senate - July 31, 1995 "A survey of compulsive gamblers found 22 percent divorced because of gambling, 40 percent had lost or quit a job due to gambling, 49 percent stole from work to pay gambling debts, 23 percent alcoholic, 26 percent compulsive overeaters, 63 percent had contemplated suicide and 79 percent said they wanted to die.

III. MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL GAMBLING VIOLATES DIVINE LAW

- A. Gambling is not mentioned specifically in the Bible. However, not all sinful acts are specifically mentioned
- B. General terms and principles cover specifics
 1. "Rape," "suicide," "abortion," etc. are not specifically mentioned
 2. However, one is able to "discern" their error Heb 5:14

IV. BIBLE PRINCIPLES WHICH GAMBLING VIOLATES

- A. Industry (work) - encourages laziness See Gen 2:15; 3:19
 1. Slothfulness and prosperity at the expense of others is not the will of God Prov 6:9-11; 1Tim 5:8; 2Thess 3:10
 2. Gambler profits at expense of another's labor - is non-productive and parasitic
- B. Economics - 3 legitimate means of transferring property
 1. Law of labor and capital - money or worth paid for physical or mental effort expended Eph 4:28; Lk 10:7; 1Cor 9:9,10
 2. Law of exchange - a commodity is exchanged for its value in money or goods Matt 25:27; Lk 22:36

3. Law of love - value given without expectation or desire for return Rom 13:10 as a gift or to relieve physical distress Eph 4:28; Acts 2:45; 11:29
4. Gambling violates all three of these
 - a. Gambling is essentially covetousness, because it seeks rewards for another's labor
 - b. Covet is to "long inordinately for something that is another's" and is condemned Col 3:5
- C. Gambling wields a bad influence on others Matt 5:16
- D. Gambling is a corrupt tree Matt 7:16-20 (All kind of corruption is associated with gambling)
- E. Gambling is not conducive to Godliness
 1. Can you picture Jesus financing his work with a lottery or having a raffle in view of 1Pet 2:21-23
 2. Gambling is not true, honest, just, pure, lovely, etc. as per Phil 4:8

CONCLUSION:

- A. Gambling does not involve gain by reason of labor, exchange or love and does not fit into God's scheme of things reflecting his nature
- B. "We must reject the fantasy that wagering is innocuous entertainment and deal earnestly with the destruction and pain that it causes to individuals, families and society." June 17, 1999 Summary Statement by Commissioner James C. Dobson, Ph.D. (National Gambling Impact Study Commission)
- C. For reasons both temporal and spiritual, gambling is wrong and as such Christians cannot participate in it.
- D. By the way, if it is a sin, then it is a sin regardless of the amount wagered
- E. The sincere child of God will keep himself from all appearance of evil 1Thess 5:22; keep himself unspotted from the world Jas 1:27; will not love the world 1Jhn 2:15-17