

## **THE PROBLEM OF GAMBLING** **(Matthew 7:12)**

### **I. The definition.**

- A. The word “gamble” means: 1. to play at any game of chance for money or other stakes. 2. to stake or risk money, or anything of value, on the outcome of something involving chance. 3. to lose or squander by betting (usually followed by away): 4. to wager or risk (money or something else of value): 5. to take a chance on; venture; risk: 6. any matter or thing involving risk or hazardous uncertainty. 7. a venture in a game of chance for stakes, especially for high stakes.
- B. “Gambling” is defined as: 1. the activity or practice of playing at a game of chance for money or other stakes. 2. the act or practice of risking the loss of something important by taking a chance or acting recklessly.
- C. In essence, gambling is attempting to get something for nothing.
  - 1. However, to get that something for nothing, you have to risk the loss of what you have.
  - 2. When no goods are produced, no service is rendered but a risk is created, you are gambling.
- D. If you go to some event and are handed a ticket at the door, and your number is later called and you receive a prize, you aren’t gambling.
  - 1. Someone has provided a gift to be given at random.
  - 2. More than likely, an advertiser has done this or the event producer has done it to get people to come to the event.
- E. But, this is not the same as buying a chance.
  - 1. When you do that you are gambling.
  - 2. You are betting the amount you paid for the chance that your ticket will be drawn.
  - 3. It doesn’t matter if it is \$1 or \$100 or more, it is gambling.
  - 4. This based on the very definition of the words gamble or gambling.
- F. In reality, gambling is stealing by consent, but stealing none the less.
  - 1. It is wrong to forcefully or otherwise take someone’s goods or money from them.
  - 2. In principle, there is no difference in doing it physically or by skill, talent, training or trick.

### **II. What is the deal with gambling?**

- A. Many Americans, I’ve seen as high as 85%, believe that there is no harm for them or for those who want to gamble to be able to do so.
- B. Is there a problem with gambling that would cause Christians to not be involved with it?
- C. The whole motivation behind gambling is money.
  - 1. Those who gamble are seeking someone else’s money.
  - 2. Those who own the casinos are seeking someone else’s money.

- D. People rationalize it in different ways.
  1. Some say that it isn't about the money, it's about having fun.
  2. Or, it is about helping the economy or supporting the government.
  3. If such is the case, why don't the casinos give the money back that their patrons lose?
  4. Wouldn't it be easier to help the government by making a direct donation to it?
  5. Wouldn't it be easier and more cost efficient to help the economy by simply giving that money to a poor person?
  6. It is about the money.
- E. Since it is about the money, this makes it covetousness.
  1. The word translated "covetousness" in the KJV means "a greedy desire to have more" according to Strong's.
  2. When one goes to gamble, whether at a casino, bingo hall, friend's house, online, or buying a chance, that person is doing it to get more.
  3. Romans 13:9 tells us not to covet.
  4. Notice Ephesians 5:3.
  5. Paul listed it as one of the sins of the Gentile world that caused God to give them up to their own devices (Romans 1:29).
  6. Notice the condemnation of this attitude in the Old Testament (Jeremiah 22:13).
  7. Someone might say, "Well, that is in the Old Testament."
  8. Find me something that was immoral in the Old Testament that was made moral in the New Testament.
- F. The deal with gambling is that it is simply a form of coveting and we know that is simply idolatry (Colossians 3:5).

### III. The dilemmas gambling causes.

- A. Which age group is most affected by gambling?
  1. The highest percentage of gamblers in Las Vegas are the over 65 crowd.
  2. The highest percentage of lottery ticket buyers is the group that is on welfare.
- B. In other words, the ones that can least afford to gamble are those that do it the most.
- C. Not only that, it is estimated that those who are addicted to gambling and those who are considered problem gamblers cost the American taxpayer over \$5 billion a year in losses and costs.
- D. Studies have shown that where gambling is, theft, divorce, bankruptcy, violent crime, and spousal and child abuse rates are much higher.
- E. You and I, and everyone else, are to take care of the poor and elderly, not take advantage of them.
- F. One can't be a faithful steward of that with which God has blessed him if

- he squanders it away gambling (1 Corinthians 4:2).
- G. Gambling breeds laziness and destroys the incentive to work (Ephesians 4:28).