

Gambling With Your Life

Pastor Timothy Nutt

There is many casinos' in our area. Those who support gambling say it is good because it helps fund education, it's an innocent pastime, and give provides job in the community. There are many Christian who know it is wrong to gamble, but they explain why. It is true that the Bible does not say, "Thou shalt not gamble." And even though the Bible does not name gambling specifically, there are many principals and commandments we can use to find out what the Bible teaches on gambling. The definition of gambling is in three basic elements. The uncertain arbitrary event, the wager (something of value) that is deliberately chanced on a particular outcome. There is a winner and a looser. The winner wins at the direct loss of the other gamblers. **There are seven reasons why gambling is wrong.**

I. Gambling causes covetousness.

What motivates people to gamble? How about greed and covetousness. The Ten Commandments in Exodus 20: 17 say, "*Thou shalt not covet.*" The definition of covetousness is to lust or desire something that is another person. The Bible warns us against becoming covetousness in Luke 12:15 it says, "*Take heed and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*" Gambling is wrong because it motivates people to become covetous.

II. Gambling preys on the weakness of others.

Gamblers hurt others by winning. This is the exact opposite of the Christian principals found in the Bible. In Galatians 6:10 it says, "*As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*" Here we see that we are to help others, not hurt them. I have read that the busiest day in the casinos is the day after the welfare checks are passed out. Those people who are on welfare and can't afford to lose money are gambling away their money hoping to make it big. Gambling is a tax on the poor. Studies have shown that the poor bet three times amount that the middle class and rich do. In a 2007 study showed that in the state of Connecticut and Massachusetts that gambling was equivalent to a state sales tax of over 60% on the lower income group. Gambling preys on the weakest part of our society and profit off those who can't afford to lose the money and the kids go without food and clothes. That is exactly opposite of Christianity.

III. Gambling doesn't past the fruit test.

In Matthew 7:16-19 says, "*ye shall know them by their fruits. Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them.*" This was written about false teachers, but it applies to different things in life. Jesus laid down a principal which applies to gambling. What kind of fruit does gambling produce? Does it raise the moral standard of the community? Does it lesson the hard ships of the families in the community or

does the exact opposite. The commercials show people winning thousands but it never shows the many people that lose everything. I have gone soul winning and met many people who have lost it all at the casino. Eight months after the casino's opened up in Gulfport Mississippi the murder rate went up 75%, rape went up 200%, robbery went up 311%, assaults went up 64%, burglary went up 102%, and car thefts went up 160%. Three years after the casino's open in Atlantic City, they went from 50th to 1st in per-capital crime. Every city where casinos have opened it has hurt the city by fringing more crime in that city. Las Vegas is number one in suicide, divorce, dropouts, homicides against women; they are third in bankruptcy and abortion; fourth in gambling addictions, rape, out of wedlock birth, and alcoholic related deaths; fifth in crime; and sixth in prisoner locked up. The world says that is not just because of gambling. There is prostitution, drinking, and organized crime, but isn't strange how all of it goes together.

IV. Gambling is not biblical.

Bible preaches against Gambling. In Proverbs 13:11 says, "wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labor shall increase." Here we see the Bible is giving a promise that if you gamble you will lose your wealth. And millions lose their money in the lottery, casino or some other form of gambling. And how else will these institutions get their money except from the gamblers that lose. The only money they have is yours. They take it from the losers to give it to the winner and they make a profit on the way.

V. Gambling is addictive.

Greed and Covetousness takes control of the gambler so much that it takes over their lives. They want to win back what they have loss and only go more into debt. A couple of years ago the Nevada Observer wrote an article teaching the gambling is recession proof. Another words people keep gambling even in the recession because they are addicted. On the back of lottery tickets and at casino's they have a hot line for those who have become addicted. The Observer went on to say that 43% are compulsive gamblers, meaning that they spend more money than they can afford. I read of a pawn shop owner wrote how gamblers will steal from their parents, gold teeth from dead people, artificial limbs, and other things to get money for gambling. Paul writes in I Corinthians 6:12, "all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." Addiction is slavery and anything that takes you out of control will bring you under the control of another power. And this is why gambling, drinking, smoking or any other addiction is wrong. Paul is saying that he won't be brought under control of anything and the Christian who is controlled by something cannot do all that he wants to for God.

VI. Gambling is poor stewardship.

In Matthew 25:14-30 there is a story of a King giving talents to three people and when He came back He called them. There were two that the King was pleased with, but one was a poor steward and the King was displeased in him. In this story is a principal that we are stewards of everything God gives us and we will have to give an account someday to the Lord. God expects us to be good stewards of our time, talents and money. For the believer God owns everything. I saw a Lottery where the odds of the Lottery were 18 million to one. There are better odds to be hit by lightning, be killed by fleshing eating bacteria, or killed by a snake bit. Recently the odds of winning the Power Ball lottery was 75 million to one,

basically the odds is essential zero. If you had a financial manager sinking your money into an investment that had 75 million to one would be fired. Gambling is sinful because is poor stewardship. Steve Jobs the founder of Apple once said, “The lottery is a tax on people who can’t do math.” What Steve was saying that only people who don’t understand there odds play the lottery.”

VII. **Gambling causes you to lose your Influence.**

In James 1:27 it says, “*the Christian keep himself unspotted from the world.*” The Christian and the world both look at gambling as a vice and it hurts your influence when they see you gambling. You can’t witness to a person or tell them that you are a Christian when you have taken their money. In I Corinthians 8:13 tells us, “*if meat make my brother to offend I will eat no flesh, lest I make my brother to offend.*” Here Paul is teaching that we should not in any way be a stumbling block to cause any person to fall into sin. And this is what you are doing when you gamble. There is a saying, “in a bet there is a fool and a thief,” both of which hurts your testimony as a Christian.

So Gambling is Wrong Because;

1. Gambling causes covetousness.
2. Gambling preys on the weakness of others.
3. Gambling doesn’t past the fruit test.
4. Gambling is not biblical.
5. Gambling is addictive.
6. Gambling is poor stewardship.
7. Gambling causes you to lose your influence.