

What's The Big Deal About Gambling?

by Michael Stover

1 Timothy 6:9-11

Definition of Gambling: Desiring the possession of another (the prize) the gambler creates a risk (losing his own) in an attempt, through, chance, to gain the other person's possession with nothing to give in exchange.

To justify gambling, many people say things like "Life is a gamble... A farmer planting a crop each year is a gamble... Driving a car is a gamble." Leaving home in a car is a risk ... making a wager on that risk is gambling! When gambling thrives, someone else suffers. Lost in the glitter of the multimillion-dollar winner are all the millions of losers. The winner won at the expense of the loser.

What does the Bible say about gambling?

Three Honorable Ways of Exchanging Money:

1. Law of Labor. Earning money for labor expended. (Ephesians 4:28)
2. Law of Exchange. A commodity is exchanged for its value in money or something equivalent. (Proverbs 31:16)
3. Law of Love. Money or gifts are given in love without expectation of something in return. (Luke 14:12-14)

We Are Warned Against:

I. **An Inordinate Desire** (vs. 9) "To be Rich"

A. Covetousness

1. Gambling is 'Stealing by Consent'
2. The willingness to participate in an activity does not determine whether it is wrong or right.
3. An affair is adultery by consent.

B. Contrary to Stewardship

1. As stewards we will give an account of how we handled the resources God has provided
2. Gambling produces a poor return on our resources
3. Luke 16:11 (NKJV), "Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"

C. Contradicts the Work Ethic

1. Work is honorable for Christians (Ephesians 4:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:10)
2. The gambler does not want to earn his living, he wants to win it.
3. Laziness

That Produces:

II. **An Injurious Development** (vs. 10)

'Root' – source, life, foundation, beginning

A. New Master

1. They have ‘strayed from the faith’ (vs. 10b)
2. Something besides God is given first priority
3. Matthew 6:24 (NKJV), “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

B. New Focus

1. They strayed ‘in their greediness’
2. Focus was on getting more
3. Colossians 3:2 (NKJV), “Set your mind (affection, desire) on things above, not on things on the earth.”

Instead We Should Focus On:

III. Intentional Discipleship

‘Man of God’ – a Christian; a disciple of Jesus

A. Avoid Sin

1. Flee’ these things’
2. The love of riches that produces all kinds of evil
3. 2 Timothy 2:22 (NKJV), “Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace, with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

B. Pursue the Son

1. Follow righteousness
2. Fruits of the Spirit