

## Speaking Truth In Love

What does God's word say about gambling? Actually, the word "gambling" doesn't appear in the Bible. But does that mean God is noncommittal on this most desirable (to many) form of recreation? Notice the following principles:

**Gambling is Covetousness:** Covetousness is that "greedy desire to have more." It is a sin likened to idolatry. It is "improper" conduct, and those who practice it, in any form, have no "inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God" (Eph 5:3-5 in NIV). Covetousness provides the appeal to gambling.

**Gambling is Not a Legitimate Means of Gain:** The word of God reveals three ways to legitimately obtain material things. 1) **Honest labor** (Eph 4:28). 2) **Fair exchange** (Acts 4:34). 3) **Gift or Inheritance** (Acts 20:35; Lk 15:31). Gambling is none of the above.

**Gambling Violates the "Golden Rule":** The Son of God says, "whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matt 7:12). Gambling is in essence a form of legalized stealing. You gain possessions when others lose possessions.

**Gambling is Addictive:** God commands self-control (2 Pet 1:6). Paul refused to be "brought under the power" of anything, even lawful things (1 Cor 6:12). Many find the "rush" of gambling beyond their power to control. Some lottery tickets provide information as to where gambling addicts may find help. That's another very good indication that one should abstain from every form of gambling.

The Bible doesn't have to mention a practice by its modern name in order for it to be sinful. When a practice violates a principle revealed in Scripture, that practice is sin (cf. 1 Jn 3:4). In that sense, gambling is like abortion and drug abuse. Planning a trip to Vegas this summer? Remember, "What happens in Vegas" does NOT stay in Vegas!

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Sunday: 9:30; 10:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.