
What about the Lottery

Radio Message by Dwight Porter, D.D.

Did you hear about the Baptist laymen who heard a message in his church against the lottery and gambling? He won over a million dollars and declared he would give ten percent of the winnings to his church. I wonder if that church accepted his gambling money? I wonder if my church would?

In just ten weeks the citizens of my state (Florida) invested four hundred million dollars in the gate lottery. This amount is almost double what state forecasters had expected. I tell you in Florida we do things in a great way. Some say much will be earmarked for education to sell it to the people. I do not believe this for one second. Already, the educational field is screaming about not receiving their fair share. Money always contaminates and makes crooks out of many people. Look at the deterioration of the judicial and police system because of drug money. The Bible is correct whether we see a demonstration of its truth or not. But we have no question about the one verse that states the love of money is the ROOT OF ALL EVIL. (I Timothy 6:10)

WHAT ABOUT GAMBLING?

In a court of law it involved three things: (1) Money is invested for the right to participate (2) A game is used in which the outcome depends upon chance (3) A prize is some sort of value is paid to the winner. William J. Petersen's definition is, "Gambling, according to one definition is taking an artificial risk for hope of excessive gain far beyond what the investment of time, money, or skill would justify. A gamble is a transaction whereby your gain is someone else's loss or visa versa." Gambling has now become the largest illegitimate business in the United States. A recent poi by the American Institute of Public Opinion has declared that forty-five percent of our nation's adult population will confess to participating in some form of gambling. The gambler soon notices subtle changes in his character. He is leaning away from earning his own way. He loses his faith in hard work. He lives in a world of fantasy, the realm of the long-shot dream. Gambling subjects his character to deteriorating influences.

THE BENEFITS

Duane Burke of the Public Gambling Research Institute give us some startling facts. "The chief source of funds in organized crime has always been gambling. Drugs are not even close to their take from gambling. (Don't miss this next statement!) **GAMBLING IS MORE IMPORTANT TO THE NFL THAN TELEVISION.** "Thirty-three percent of the people who gamble are below the poverty level. Three to five percent of lottery players will become compulsive gamblers. This will mean thousands in Florida. H. Kaplin of Florida Institute of Technology has spent about eighteen years studying lotteries. He states, "A lottery is an inefficient and ineffective source of revenue." It raises up to three percent of a state's total source of revenue. Too many politicians and organized crime leaders get their fingers in the till.

IS IT LUCK?

Such expression is not found in the Bible. The dictionary states that luck is a force that brings good fortune or adversity. The Bible plainly teaches that God controls all events and that His sovereignty, not luck, is the guiding principle of all happenings. "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Proverbs 16:33) God controls our prosperity, giving us our expertise. Intellectual ability and physical strength He has provided. **SIX DAYS SHALL THOU LABOR AND DO ALL THY WORK.** Gambling is really idolatry. The gambler states that chance, not God, is the determination of our lives. To gamble is to deny God and His control. It is the worship of fate.

Lotteries are based on a philosophy that is contrary to Biblical teachings. "Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished, but he that gathereth by greedy of gain troubleth his own house, but he that hateth bribes shall live." (Proverbs 15:27)

Legalized gambling has brought our nation nothing but poverty, crime, corruption of leaders, deterioration of moral and ethical standards, and ultimately a lower living standard and misery for all people.

In gambling many must lose their money. How dare you take theirs through the lottery? We are to have a concern of the welfare of others. "That ye may be the sons of your Father, who is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them who love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the tax collectors the same? And if ye greet your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the heathen so?" (Matthew 5:45-47)

God classified all gambling as wrong. How dare Christians become involved in legal gambling, so classified by our government. There is no sure way of winning. There is no short cut for gaining money, except at the possibility of stealing from others who lack proper respect for the correct work ethic. "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." (II Thess. 3:10) The Biblical view of work affords no room for the practice of gambling. "And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give; for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house." (Luke 10:7)

All of our expenditures should be governed by Matthew 6:19-21. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

One single controlling virtue and motive is clearly declared in the Bible. "Whether, therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (I Cor. 10:31) The Bible is very clear in the central moral imperative in our relationship with other people. "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment. And the second is this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:30, 31) Love does not allow us the luxury of self-interest at the exclusion of the other person's needs and interests. Love refuses to engage in action that mistreats or exploits another. When our personal pleasure is profit gained through another's pain and loss, it is not a demonstration of love.

God's judgment is pronounced against people who steal from others. The lottery winner takes advantage of the weakness and the sin of those hoping for luck. He is receiving money lost by all the other gamblers. "Woe unto them who decree unrighteous decrees, and who write grievousness which they have prescribed. To turn aside the needy from justice, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!" (Isaiah 10:1, 2)

Have the politicians ever changed their tune? Years ago when Mayor O'Dwyer of New York

City promoted the cause of gambling in the state, Governor Dewey made the following response. He was right!

"it would be indecent for a government to finance itself so largely out of the weaknesses of people which it had encouraged.. The entire history of legalized gambling in this country and abroad shows that it has brought nothing but poverty, crime, and corruption, demoralization of moral and ethical standards of living, and misery for all of the people."

We have been informed that gambling is as addictive as alcohol and drugs. Many of our professional leaders say its grip is more severe than any chemical dependence.

The principles of God's Word are definitely opposed to all forms of chance in order to take advantage of our fellow man. Men call this practice luck. God calls it sin. What is your classification? Will you stand alongside God's Word?

Remember, that the Lord Jesus Christ was sent from the Father to take away our sins. Has He delivered and cleansed you of personal sin? "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him is no sin. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

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