

Gambling

Introduction:

A. Text: Colossians 3:5-6

B. Is it right to gamble?

I. What is gambling?

A. definition: the act or practice of betting: the act of playing a game and consciously risking money or other stakes on its outcome (**Webster's Third New International Dictionary** [unabridged] 932).

B. not to be confused with risks in business

1. legitimate business: when one profits, others profit.
2. gambling: one profits by the loss of others

II. Is gambling a legitimate way to gain wealth?

A. How shall we determine the right ways to gain wealth?

1. If unlimited, we may gain it in any manner: stealing, fraud, etc.
2. If limited, Scriptures set the limits. - Colossians 3:17

B. The Scriptures authorize four means of gaining wealth.

1. work - Ephesians 4:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12
2. fair exchange - Acts 5:3-4
3. investment - Matthew 25:14-30
4. love - Acts 20:35; Ephesians 4:28

C. There is a pattern: All authorized means of gaining wealth help others. Conversely stated, no one gains at the loss of others. The principle of love, the highest moral principle, is always followed. - 1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 John 4:8

D. Gambling fits none of these and violates at least three.

1. wealth without work
2. something for nothing
3. taking what others do not want to give

III. Gambling is condemned in principle.

A. The New Testament often condemns in principle what it does not specifically forbid. - e.g., "lewdness"; Galatians 5:19-21

B. What New Testament principles does gambling violate?

1. unselfish love
 - a. We must love all people. - Matthew 5:43-48
 - b. Love is manifested by concerned giving. - 1 John 3:16-18
 - c. We must not be selfish, but seek what is best for others. - Matthew 7:12; Philippians 2:4
2. desire to earn what we receive - 2 Thessalonians 3:8
3. basis of gambling: "covetousness," the "greedy desire to have more" (Thayer. 516) - Colossians 3:5-6; 1 Timothy 6:6-10

IV. What about gambling for a worthy cause? - Romans 3:8

Conclusion:

A. No, it is not right to gamble; it is a sin. - Colossians 3:5-6

B. We must carefully abstain from it and oppose it in all its forms. - Ephesians 5:11