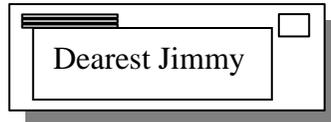


# "Would Jesus Gamble?"

*"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor." (Exodus 20:17 NASB)*

## ~Before we Get Serious~

Love letter lament:



Dearest Jimmy,

No words could ever express the unhappiness I've felt since breaking our engagement. Please say you'll take me back. No one could ever take your place in my heart, so please forgive me. I love you, I love you, I love you!

Yours forever, Marie

P.S. And congratulations on winning the state lottery.

## Recent Headlines:

- ◆ "Man has \$150,000 winning lotto ticket."



The News Herald, December 11, 2007.

- ◆ "Valdese man wins \$149,571 playing Carolina Cash 5."

The News Herald, September 15, 2008.

## Then we see these Headlines:

- ◆ "Idaho school turns down lottery check."

The Associated Press, Oct. 13, 2004.

- ◆ "Was it a gift from God or a test? Lighthouse Mission's pastor turned the money down citing the mission's stance against gambling."

NBC News, September 16, 2008.

## ~Gambling? Right or Wrong? ~

Is gambling right or wrong? Where do we go to find out if Jesus gambled or would be gambling today if He was walking the earth? If we are to be imitators of Jesus, what should we do about gambling; such as buying that lottery ticket or buying a charity ticket to help the local church missions? After

all, they need the money to finance God's work here on earth; don't they? How innocent is that ticket we buy for that drawing of 50 gallons of gas or a prize of \$500? How innocent is that interoffice betting or that football pool?

~**From the Dictionary**~



I guess the first thing we do when we hear or see the word "Gamble" is to look in the dictionary to see what the world's definition is of gambling. According to the American Heritage

Dictionary it is:

1. **a.** To bet on an uncertain outcome, as of a contest.  
**b.** *Games.* To play a game of chance for stakes.
2. To take a risk in the hope of gaining an advantage or a benefit. <sup>1</sup>

~**From the Bible**~

No where in the Bible does it say; "Do not gamble." Or if it does I can't find it. Neither does it say; "Thou shall not use cocaine," or "Thou shall not have an abortion," and many other things that we don't do because we know



they are morally wrong and Jesus would not want us to participate in them. But if you take the Bible as a whole and read it from cover to cover you will see that most of these sins that do not say, "Thou shall not," are covered in the character and attributes of God. We can look at the life of Jesus and what he did and what he said even while here on earth and have an example for our behavior. Paul in I Corinthians gives us some guidance on the subject; *Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.*

[\(1 Corinthians 11:1 NASB\)](#)

~**The Word Gamble**~

The word "gamble, gambling, gambler" is related to the word "game." They come from an old English word gammon; it's the idea of a game. I noted

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that the modern term now-a-days for gambling is “gaming.” Sounds better doesn’t it? Not as sinful sounding. We all know what gambling is, but maybe not “gaming.” The commission that oversees the gambling industry is “The Gaming Commission.” I think it’s just a play on words. Gambling is a game. It is not a game based on skill. It is not a game based on reason. And it is not a game based on anything controllable. It is a game based on sheer chance. Gambling is an appeal to sheer chance, random luck without skill or one’s personal involvement. It is an appeal to sheer chance without any control.

It provides wealth for a handful of people at the expense of the masses, mostly the poor.

### **~History of Early Christian Beginnings in America on Gambling~**

Gambling is nothing new for this nation. In fact gambling played a very prominent role in early American history. When Columbus came to the New



America his boats were filled with sailors who gambled much of the time while crossing the Atlantic by playing dice and cards. They in turn brought their gambling

interest to this new nation of ours.

In 1612 the British government ran a lottery to assist the new settlement at Jamestown, Virginia.

George Washington, the father of our country declared; “Gambling is the child of avarice, or greed, the brother of iniquity and the father of mischief.” He quoted this even though it is reported that George himself gambled and/or purchased lottery tickets. Of course George Washington is better known for his honesty of admitting to cutting down the cherry tree. True or not, I don’t know.



In 1776 the first Continental Congress of the United States sold lottery tickets to finance the American Revolution. Lottery tickets were used to build the new capital called Federal City, now known as Washington, D. C. Our nation was founded on the lottery, the Revolution was financed by a lottery

and our capital city was financed by a lottery. So the lottery or gambling is nothing new to this nation.

From 1790 to 1860, twenty-four of the thirty-six states sponsored government-run lotteries. And many schools, colleges and even churches conducted their own lotteries to finance their cause.

The voice of the church was somewhat uncertain during these early days and was apparently very liberal in their thinking on gambling. They may have been liberal since it gave them the money to finance and build the buildings they needed. Even today the Catholic Church has an interest in gambling and lotteries to finance its operations.



Finally, some of the Christian church denominations started preaching against gambling as the denial of the providential control of God. These were mainly the Puritans, Quakers, Baptists and Methodists. Yet the professor of ethics of all subjects at Harvard College, William Ames, defended gambling. In fact, Harvard financed the erection of its building by a lottery and the University of Pennsylvania raised its operational budget through gambling.

There was a protest by the author of our national anthem, Francis Scott Key. He was one the great laymen of the church in his day. He was a member of the American Episcopal Church. He introduced a resolution to the general convention of 1817 calling on the body to condemn gambling as inconsistent with Christian sobriety, dangerous to the morals of the members of the church and peculiarly unbecoming to the character of Christians.

The church struggled a bit in dealing with gambling because they couldn't point to a verse that said, "Thou shalt not gamble." But they denounced it as socially harmful and inconsistent with the biblical view of God and the Christian understanding of good stewardship. They began to attack government-sponsored gambling.



Under this attack and because of the increasing corruption of the gambling, by 1894 it had disappeared from America. By 1894 there was no more government-sponsored gambling. Public gambling at all levels was stopped cold at that time because John Wannamaker who was a noble Christian Postmaster General of the United States barred, and I quote, “All  letters, parcels, postcards, circulars, lists of drawings, tickets and other materials referring to lotteries from the mail.” This halted all legalized gambling and some illegalized gambling. Between the years of 1894 and 1964 there was no government-sponsored gambling in America.

In 1964 gambling was reintroduced by the state of New Hampshire which became the first state to offer a lottery. And now most states offer a government-sponsored lottery. At the present time, there may seven states of the fifty that does not have a lottery of some kind.

### **~Gambling is Big Business~**

Gambling is big business. Every slot machine and other form of gambling  are in favor of the house. There are more losers than winners. There is big profits for the owners and they don't care who they hurt to make their money.

A neon sign blinked in front of a gambling house with these words, “We Never Close.” But the “C” in the word “Close” was burned out, and the sign read, “We Never Lose.” The sign was closer to the truth than the owners would have wanted to admit.

I know people that will spend their hard-earned money on gambling and they seem to be proud of it. They will brag that they gambled and lost maybe \$300 or more in one night. I even know people that fly to Las Vegas or other gambling areas several trips a year to play the slot machines; all the time knowing that they will probably not win anything and if they do win they will continue gambling and lose their winnings before they quit. Gambling has a sinful lure to it; people are attracted to the game of chance and luck.

## ~The Gambling Industry's Bright Future~



The future is very bright for the gambling industry because they are now adding to their casinos theme parks, with the singular goal of attracting children, so they can turn them into gamblers at the earliest possible age. Ninety percent of teen-agers have gambled. College students are eight times more likely to develop gambling addiction than their parents because they have been susceptible to this tremendous escalation in state-run lotteries. It seems you can get that lottery ticket on just about every corner.



And gambling, of course, now can be done on video games. You can gamble on the internet with you credit card. There is now a lottery channel in Rhode Island and that is expected to soon spread across the country. “Just give me you credit card information.” And you can have TV gambling, telephone gambling, cyber-space casinos are coming as well as virtual gambling. Yes, the gambling industry has a bright looking future in the world.

By the time all the gamblers buy their cigarettes, beer, wine, alcohol, and don't forget their lottery tickets, there may not be much money left for their families and for the creator God.

Gambling is the creator of much pain and broken heartiness and unhappiness.

## ~Gambling is now acceptable~

Gambling has lost its shock value, and it's fast becoming accepted as a part of modern day life. So many of the secular people, as well as the Church people, buy lottery tickets in North Carolina! Since we now have the legalized and so-called “state-sponsored educational lottery.” What a way to teach our kids and grandchildren moral values. “Just buy them a lottery ticket.”



I remember in Morganton when we didn't have beer, ABC stores, wine and mixed drinks. We later added the ABC stores, or liquor stores, to help stop the illegal "white lighting" sales. Illegal by citizens of North Carolina, but legal when sponsored by the state! "Figure that one out." Then we later added the sell of beer to carry home and then later the sell of beer drinking in eating establishments. After that we dealt with the "Liquor by the Drink" that after several years of calling for an election the great citizens of Morganton voted in "liquor by the drink," we wanted to be like the towns that surrounds us. These joining counties were getting all the alcohol sales. Would you call this sinful greed? It's the same with the lottery; so many people in North Carolina were playing the lottery in other states. They were getting the revenues from North Carolina residents.

Now wine, beer, liquor, mixed drinks and lottery tickets are all acceptable as part of modern day society. We don't think anything about it; it has lost its shock value. About any grocery, convenience store or gas station sell these modern day major social evils. Folks, it's all about the money and the devil is working his plan as we continue to "numb" ourselves to what he is doing to society and families, "a little at a time."

### **~Facts and Figures on Gambling~**



The simple fact is that as gambling increases, so does crime, prostitution, addiction, divorce, and domestic abuse. You may be surprised at some of the figures and the problems that come with gambling.

- ♠ In 2004 Americans spent \$700 Billion dollars on legalized gambling. This does not figure in the other illegal gambling and the interoffice betting and bookies and office betting pools.
- ♠ Gambling is the fastest growing industry in America.
- ♠ More people gamble on-line than go to movies.
- ♠ Americans gamble more money than they spend on groceries.

- ♣ Evidence proves that problem or pathological gambling is directly linked to other social problems like divorce, child abuse, domestic violence, bankruptcy, crime and suicide.

### ~Las Vegas, Nevada~

Nevada has the longest history of legalized gambling, dating back to 1931. Nevada has the following distinctions among all of the fifty states.

- ♣ Highest level of gambling addictions.
  - ♣ Highest suicide rate.
  - ♣ Highest in high school dropouts.
- 
- ♣ Highest in divorces.
  - ♣ Highest in homicides against women.
  - ♣ Highest per capita consumption of alcohol.
  - ♣ Third highest in abortions.
  - ♣ Third highest in bankruptcies.
  - ♣ Fourth highest in alcohol related deaths.
  - ♣ Fourth highest in out of wedlock births.

Gambling has had a social impact on the state of Nevada. I don't think our state would want to be the highest of any of these statistics. This is the example of what will happen as states legalize gambling. You can't go against God's Word; we will all pay the price as we are now; just look around.

*"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."*

(2 Chronicles 7:14 KJV)

### ~Atlantic City~



They used to say that if we bring in gambling it will build up all the businesses and we can create a big casino world. The fact of the matter is, it doesn't do that at all. Since Atlantic City legalized gambling in 1976, its population has shrunk 20 percent.

Unemployment is higher. Crimes are up 380 percent. The police force has doubled. Half of the 2100 businesses have closed and four of the past six mayors have been indicted for corruption. Gambling doesn't alleviate social ills, it just generates them.

*"You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."*

(John 8:44 NASB)

~**Gambling is okay because! a – b – c - ~**



**a. Gambling is okay because it is only entertainment.**

**b. Gambling is okay because they "cast lots" in the Bible.**

**c. Gambling is okay because all of life is a gamble.**

Let us go over these three things that people think gambling is okay.

**a. Gambling is okay because it is only entertainment.**

I guess you have heard the argument; "What's the big deal? "It's only entertainment." What if I do blow \$50 or \$100 at the tables or the racetrack? It's my money and I'm not hurting anyone. But, are you hurting someone? One writer would ask them the question: What is there in you that make gambling an attractive form of entertainment?



And I would ask the question: If gambling is entertainment for you, take out the "chance" of winning other people's money and see if you would then gamble for entertainment. Is it entertainment when you throw away \$100 or so, knowing you will not get "anything" in return? It's entertainment to people because they want to gamble for the chance of winning and they want to justify their gambling habits. Or should we say, they want to justify their "sins."

## **b. Gambling is okay because they “cast lots” in the Bible.**

Some people want to justify gambling as a modern counterpart to “casting lots,” and they say that “casting lots” was done Biblically, and therefore the Bible affirms the role of gambling. Well, I want to answer that, and it’s worthy of careful thought.

I have read where “lots” were made of a sheep’s knuckle bones and functioned very much like dice. In the ancient world, sometime these bones were used in gambling as we do today, but other times they could be used in non-gambling games, like children and adult use them today to play their favorite games.



The question is; “Is casting lots” an example of Biblical gambling, and did God condone the use of “lots” for us to gamble? Let us look at some scriptures for a minute to see if we can shed some light on the subject of “lots.”

The use of “lots” was used many times especially in the Old Testament and at least twice in the New Testament. As used in the Bible, it was a way for a sovereign God to reveal His will. Proverbs 18:18 gives us a little light; “*The lot settles disputes, And separates between the mighty.*” ([Proverbs 18:18 The Scriptures 1998+](#)) Sometimes it wasn’t clear to God’s people what was to be His decision. Casting lots was their way of knowing God’s will.

Maybe the best known story in the Old Testament was recorded in Jonah in Chapter one. The ship mates were trying to determine who it was that was to blame for the storm and when they cast lots it pointed toward Jonah. Of course you know the story, Jonah was throw over board into the sea and the storm calmed.



In the New Testament, lots were cast to select Matthias to replace Judas, and that is recorded in Acts 1:21-26. And the only other place in the New Testament where lots were used is at the foot of the cross,

where the soldiers used “casting of lots” to see who would get what part of Jesus’ clothing.

So we are simply affirming the fact that “lots” were used to determine certain things. At no time, mark this down, in the using of those “lots” was anyone ever putting something to risk. The uses of “lots” were not costing anyone anything, so it was not a gambling use of lots.

We see in Proverbs 16:33 the key verse that define all of this. Proverbs says, *“The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision is from the LORD.”* (Proverbs 16:33 NASB) “The lot is cast into the lap;” they would put the “lot” into the garment and shake it around in the garment, but every decision is from the Lord. Lots were simply a way, by which a sovereign God revealed His will to his people. When a decision needed to be made and there was difficulty in understanding the mind of God about it; God intervened to control how those lots fell, in such a fashion as to reveal His will. It is our sovereign God that determines the lay of the lot. Not the sheer chance of luck. God knows it all and He is in control of it all.

American Puritan, Cotton Mather, said, “Lots being mentioned in the sacred oracles of Scripture are used only in weighty cases and as an



acknowledgement of God sitting in judgment, and cannot be made the tools and parts of our common sports without at least such an appearance of evil as is forbidden in the Word of God.”

Another writer wrote; “there is no fate, there is no chance, there is no luck anywhere in using Biblical lots. It was simply a means that God used to reveal His will. And after Pentecost, the casting of lots was never again used as a means of determining God’s will. Their God had sent the Holy Spirit. He has given us His written Word as a source of His moral will. The practice of “casting lots” is no longer needed.”

Still that same writer goes on to say; “One thing, however, is very clear; casting lots was not gambling, nor can the practice of gambling be justified

in any way from the Biblical use of lots. The soldiers, for example, who were casting lots for Christ's robe at the foot of the cross, were not gambling, because none of them had paid to play. No soldier was taking any risk, nor was he getting an advantage at someone else's loss who was in the game. No one was going to win at another's expense, they were simply trying to determine who got the robe."

Even though the word "lottery" comes from the word "lot," casting lots and contemporary lotteries are different activities, the former is based on the working of God's sovereign purpose through His providence, and the latter on an imagined luck and chance.

**c. Gambling is okay because all of life is a gamble.**



There are those who try and justify gambling by saying that all of life is a gamble. They say that the farmer who plants his crop is gambling, business people who operate a business is said to be a gamble. I guess these people would say to those that work, that driving to your work place is a gamble. There is a difference, no other people has to suffer loss for you to gain. The farmer, business person, etc. works for an obtained goal of making a profit.

Gambling is a kind of secularized divination based on non-existent chance. It is superstitious witchcraft. Life is not a gamble, there is no such thing as luck. There is no such thing as chance. Throw away those rabbit feet. Start honoring and obeying God in all your ways. Whatever you have is not by chance-whatever you have is from God. Whatever you don't have-God didn't give it to you. He gives and withholds according to His purpose.



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*I have gotten information for this article from a number of different sources; From God, internet, Bibles, dictionaries, and study materials from several different authors, etc. I do not take full credit for these writings since there are many. I did not in some cases keep up with this information in order to give proper credit. My comments, writings and rewriting of the sources are in this article. I therefore cannot take full credit for this writing. The full credit would have to go to Jesus Christ, the creator of all things. This article as well as many other messages can be found at [www.deweyfox.com](http://www.deweyfox.com) and click on Christianity.*

September 27, 2008

*Dewey E. (Obed) Fox, Bond Servant of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*

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**To be completed in Part Two**