

# GAMBLING

## GAMBLING IS COVETING

Casinos, horse racing, bingo, betting, cards, raffles, lotto, chances, pitching pennies, and carnival booths are all forms of gambling. What is gambling? It is to “risk money on an event”. All but four states have legalized gambling in some form. Where is gambling mentioned in the Scriptures? While the word “gamble” is not mentioned, its equivalent is - coveting. “Covet” means “to reach after that which is not ours”. The love of money and things it buys has caused many sorrows. It has been the cause of slavery, murder, robbery, bitterness over the dividing of an estate, abortion, drugs, cigarettes, liquor, and pornography. I Tim. 6:10 says: *“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”* Coveting was mentioned in the Ten Commandments: Ex. 20:17 says: *“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s.”* Achan coveted and it cost him his life and his family’s lives. Josh. 7:21 says: *“When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.”* Prov. 28:16 says: *“The prince that wanteth understanding is also a great oppressor: but he that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days.”* People live longer if they are not covetous!

Jesus warned against being covetous. Luke 12:15 says: *“And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”* Jesus never asked for anything except some water at the Sychar well, and on the cross. The only thing we know He ever owned was a robe, which was gambled for by the soldiers. (See Matt. 27:35)

The four associations Jesus had with money was:

1. When He drove the money changers from the temple (these were people taking advantage of Jews who had no sacrifice to offer and charged them outrageous prices for their oxen, sheep, and doves).
2. When He watched how the people gave in the offering (the widow with two mites).
3. When He told Peter to catch a fish and remove a coin from its mouth to pay their taxes, and
4. When He was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.

The give-for-show Pharisees were covetous. Luke 16:14 says: *“And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.”* Paul was never

covetous. Acts 20:33 says: *“I have coveted no man’s silver, or gold, or apparel.”* Covetousness is idol worship!! Eph. 5:5 says: *“For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”*

One of the qualifications for a Pastor is that he be not covetous. I Tim. 3:3 says: *“Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;”* A characteristic that false teachers possess, along with radio and TV, is covetousness. II Pet. 2:3 says: *“And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.”* Try asking a TV or radio “pastor” for an itemized expense and receipt account for the previous year! Your mailbox will be empty for a long time!!

Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, was covetous. Elisha had healed Naaman, and he desired to give gifts to the Prophet. Elisha refused them. After Naaman departed, Gehazi chased him down and asked for the gifts. II Kings 5:20-24 says: *“But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but, as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him. So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well? And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments. And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him. And when he came to the tower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed.”* As a result of Gehazi’s deceit, God struck him with leprosy!

## **CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE GOOD STEWARDS**

A steward is a manager over another’s goods. God requires every Christian be a good steward over all the possessions God has entrusted to them.

## **HARD WORK**

Diligence in hard work precedes many spiritual and physical blessings. Eph. 4:28 says: *“Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the things which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”* God is not for get-rich-quick schemes, easy money, or chance. Lazy people are always looking for an “easier” way to get rich. That is why lazy and covetous people are the target for swindlers and con artists.

God has three plans for our use of money:

1. **Receiving** - through hard work  
- through prayer
2. **Giving** - Tithes & offerings

3. **Managing**
- to others
  - living on the rest
  - paying bills promptly
  - not borrowing
  - building sales resistance
  - staying out of debt

Prov. 22:7 says: *“The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.”* Rom. 13:8 says: *“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.”* One of the leading causes of divorce is financial problems. A high percentage of people who win lotteries divorce within one year. God’s plan is always best. Gambling does not fit into God’s plan.

Jesus said people can serve God.  
Jesus said people can serve mammon (money).  
Jesus said no man can serve God and mammon!

Ps. 37:4 says: *“Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”* Matt. 6:33 says: *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”*

God wants to be first in our lives!

## **IMPATIENCE**

“But I need it now!” “Gambling could get me over the financial hump!” No, it is never right to break a Bible principle. God wants us to work, pray, and wait. Patience is more important than money. Impatience is a sign of immaturity. Instead of saving and waiting, people go into debt by gambling. Compulsive gambling is a serious thing. It becomes addicting. Have you ever tried to “win” a stuffed animal at a carnival? How much did it end up costing you? Did it get “in your blood”? Could your money have purchased it cheaper at a toy store? Ever toss a 10¢ ring to win a car? Coveting means reaching after something this is not yours!

## **RICHES**

“But I know someone who did ‘hit it rich’ gambling,” you say. Yes, but their “riches” came from sorrows. God’s true riches and finances received God’s way do not have the sorrows attached.

“But the state gains money for education through the Lottery,” says another. Let the state live by a budget and they will not need outside income!

Gambling - have you been hooked? If so, claim the victory and start becoming a better steward of what you do have.

## **RECOMMENDED READING**

**Gambling: A Deadly Game, but Larry Braidfoot (Broadman Press)**

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**REVIEW GAMBLING - STEP 38**

1. Gambling is \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name five types of gambling:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Define gambling: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Define coveting: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Name two activities the love of money has helped promote:  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What reference in the Ten Commandments refers to coveting?  
Exodus \_\_\_\_\_
7. Whose coveting cost his family's life? \_\_\_\_\_
8. People live \_\_\_\_\_ if they are not covetous.
9. What is the only thing Jesus asked for? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What was Jesus' only possession? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Name the four associations Jesus had with money:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_