

gambling

Can a Follower of Jesus Gamble?

The Bible does not specifically forbid gambling, but there are several biblical principles that should make Christians hesitate to participate:

1. God presents work as the normal way to get the money we need (Eph 4:28; II Thess. 3:12; Prov. 31). When a person cannot work, the second choice is prayer (Phil. 4:6, 19).
2. All my income belongs to God, not me (Psa. 24:1), and I am not free to use it as I wish. I am a steward, who should use it for God's purposes. Christians are called on to meet the needs of their family (I Tim. 5:8), and share with others, particularly Christians who have needs (2 Cor 8-9; Gal. 6:6-10; 3 John).

Ask: Does God want me to use His money to buy a lottery ticket?

3. God uses money to accomplish important purposes in my life:
 - a. Meet basic needs (Matt. 6:11; I Tim. 6:8).
 - b. Build character (Phil 4:10-13)
 - c. Give direction, by providing or withholding resources.
 - d. Helping others through me.
 - e. Show His power by providing miraculously.

Ask: Does gambling accomplish these results? Am I looking to God or to the playing cards for my needs?

4. Greed and covetousness are sin (Ex. 20:18; I Tim. 6:9; Heb 13:5), and these are motives in most gambling.
5. Proverbs warns of disaster for people who want to get rich quickly (28:20,22).
6. Wealth that comes easily goes just as easily (Prov. 13:11).
7. Wealth gained the wrong way breaks up families (Prov. 15:27).
8. Gambling can be addictive, and even if you don't fall prey to it as a compulsive habit, your example may cause others to be enslaved by it (I Cor. 8:9, 13).

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