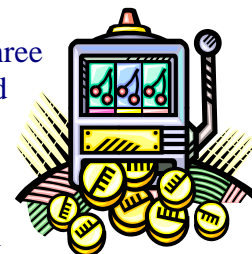


GAMBLING – SO WHAT’S THE BIG DEAL?

For over ten million Americans, gambling *is* a big deal! For three million, the addiction is as strong as drug addiction. Addicted gamblers are more likely to abuse alcohol and miss work. Tragically, there’s a strong association between suicide and addictive gambling.



Some say gambling is no worse than crossing the street or taking an air plane ride. After all, nothing is certain. But this is no game. . .

Americans spend as much as \$550 billion a year on legalized gambling.
On state lotteries, people spend about \$88 million PER DAY.
In 2000, internet gambling produced about \$2.2 billion in revenues worldwide.

Gambling on the internet is easy and anonymous; it’s no wonder internet gambling is booming. Should we oppose all forms of gambling - or tolerate it within restrictions?

Gambling is not innocent. The promise of mega bucks disproportionately affects the poor. But, because of the huge profits generated, we seldom hear about the damages.

Gambling operates on deceit. Not much emphasis is put on the minor chance of winning. There are no clocks or windows in casinos, so players lose track of time. And there’s more -

- ❖ **Gambling promises easy gain.** It’s not like it’s hard work. Scripture teaches us to spend our energies meeting our family’s needs.
- ❖ **Gambling exploits the poor.** It depends on the losses of many for the benefits of few.
- ❖ **Gambling wastes.** The Bible tells us we are stewards of God’s gifts. If we were to spend all those gambling dollars in helping the poor - just imagine!
- ❖ **Gambling depends on greed.** Paul wrote “People who want to get rich fall into temptation(s)... that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.” (I Tim. 6)
- ❖ **Gambling snubs God.** We’re driven to trust luck rather than the Creator of the universe.

Point out the dangers of gambling to others. Don’t support or encourage gamblers. Love those addicted and urge treatment like the proven group therapy, Gambler’s Anonymous.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” (Prov. 3)