

## The Gambling Problem

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by Wayne Goff

*The sinful foundation behind gambling can never be made right. If left alone, it will destroy you!*

### Think A Minute!

We could go to the Bible and prove that gambling is wrong from a biblical, moral perspective, Eph. 4:28. Simply put, gambling is *theft by consent*. Stealing is always wrong, even if the government authorizes it. Some may try to argue that gambling is not stealing because the participants do so *voluntarily*. But agreeing to participate in something wrong does not make the wrong “right”!

For example, there are some couples who participate in *“wife swapping.”* Just because four people agree to commit adultery does not make adultery right, now does it? It is the same with gambling. Those who participate agree to place *some money* in the “collection” for the privilege of hopefully **stealing** everyone else’s money! It is not a contribution that everyone is making out of the goodness of their heart. It is the *blind, gullible* hope that your “ticket” will be a winner while the majority goes without.

### The Sinful Foundation

So **who** participates in gambling? Those who want to get *something for nothing*. Gambling does not create a **product**. It does not provide a **service**, unless you consider legalized stealing a “service.” It does not give something useful in return.

Gambling attracts those who least need to be involved in the act: the **covetous** man. Covetousness is a sin! In the Old Testament, one of the Ten Commandments was “*Thou shalt not covet*” (Ex. 20:17). Jesus continues to condemn it as sinful in the New Testament today (Mark 7:22; Rom. 13:9). He says this sin emanates from the heart (Mark 7:20-21).

The **covetous man** will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:10). Judas Iscariot is a perfect example of a man who was consumed with covetousness. It led him to do what no ordinary man would do in his right mind -- betray the Son of God! Jesus said that it would have been better if he had not been born (Matt. 26:24). Dear friend, is that how you want to spend your life?

The man who aspires to become a spiritual leader in the Lord’s church some day cannot be guilty of coveting money (1 Tim. 3:3, 8; Titus 1:7; 1 Pet. 5:2). I like what the King James Version calls it - “*filthy lucre*” -- because money obtained by immoral means is just plain “*filthy*.”

But the gambling lobbyists in the various states of our nation have gotten gambling institutionalized by (1) deceit, and (2) lies. Do you remember in Missouri that the argument was put forth that a large amount of revenue from gambling would go toward *public education*? Perhaps it did, but even that is based upon *doing evil that good may come* (Rom. 3:8)! But I also remember that casinos were supposed to be *limited* to the “**boats**” which were **in** the rivers. Has anybody noticed lately that those “boats” now have made it to land?!

Furthermore, those who develop gambling “*addiction*” have been legally banned for life from further gambling in this state. Only now the gambling lobbyists have succeeded in convincing our legislators to reduce that lifetime ban to five years! This reduction will take place on March 31, 2012. Missouri has 16,148 self-reported compulsive gamblers. Keith Spare, chairman of the *Missouri Council on Problem Gambling Concerns*, said: “*It’s going to have a devastating impact for those who are addicted gamblers. Missouri has lots of examples of people who ruined their careers and families because of gambling problems.*” One citizen wrote the newspaper to complain: “*My brother is a self-exiled bettor who lost everything he had at the casinos,*” one letter writer states. Imagine that, dear readers!

**Covetousness is such an evil that it consumes the covetous man. He will give up everything he owns to possess what he should never lawfully have.** Spending a few dollars on a lottery ticket seems harmless, but for the covetous it is the gateway to ruin. **BEWARE!**