

In All Its Forms

I've noticed on Facebook that several Christians have mentioned their participation in raffles, tournaments, etc. Gambling takes many forms: card games, dice, betting or pools, sweepstakes and lottery tickets, slot machines, bingo (for money or prizes), and raffle tickets. Also, tournaments where participants put money into a "pool," then play to try to win money or prizes is gambling. Gambling is a matter of kind, not degree. Whether it is for a good cause or not, if it violates God's principles, it is gambling.

One of the problems with gambling is that it violates God's three means of the transfer of money or property: 1) the law of labor (1 Timothy 5:8; 2 Thessalonians 3:10); 2) the law of exchange (Matthew 13:45-46; John 4:8); and, 3) the law of giving (Acts 20:35; Ephesians 4:28). One who gambles seeks to obtain what another has worked for at little cost to himself (cf. Romans 12:17). They view themselves as a victim of "hard luck," so "fortune" owes them something. The types of gambling are "legion," and in order to keep ourselves pure, we need to avoid them (Matthew 5:13-16; Romans 12:1-2).

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