

Is it OK for Christians to Gamble?

Never in a million years could I have imagined that I would be needing to address the issue that I am about to discuss - but it has hit our family right square in the face and we were not prepared to deal with it. Is it possible for us to know whether something is right or wrong, if it is not specifically mentioned in the Bible? I believe it is possible. It comes from knowing what the mind and Will of God for His creation is. And, contrary to what others teach, it IS possible to know what the mind and Will of God is and then apply those things into our lives and communities today.

One of the reasons we do not understand the nature / character of God is because many people have been led to believe that there is nothing of value in what we call, "the Old Testament books of the Bible," for the modern Christian. But this is grave error. "The Old Testament books" reveal most, if not all, of the character, the attributes, and the Will of God for His people. The truth is, it is completely impossible to understand the New Covenant Kingdom Age of Christ, without a full understanding of the Old Covenant Age.

In the "books of the Old Testament," more is revealed about the way God interacts with His people than what is written in the books of the Gospels, the epistles and the Revelation (which are ALL "books of the Old Testament.")

Is it possible to know more about God, than what is actually written on the pages of the Bible? Is it possible to know and understand the Will of God without actually reading it in the Bible? For this study, we know the word "gambling" is not in the Bible - but could it be sin - transgression of the Law of God - even though the word is not in the Bible? I believe so. And please allow me to explain.

In Romans 12, the follower of Christ is commanded - not requested or suggested - but commanded to prove what is good, to prove what is acceptable, and to prove the perfect Will of God.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

How are we to do this? Above I stated that it is possible to know more about God and the Will of God than what is actually written on the pages of the Bible - but now I am going to tell you that it is impossible to know about God and the Will of God WITHOUT knowing what is actually written on the pages of the Bible. I'm not contradicting myself - I'm simply stating that once we know and understand what is written - then the Holy Spirit of God can lead us on into further - possibly deeper understanding of what is written because we have a good basis of understanding based on what we have read about how God has personally dealt with His people throughout history. It's like wisdom that a Godly judge should acquire from the constant study of the Law of God which will help him apply the Laws of God to everyday circumstances.

It is difficult to comprehend why God's people need to be shown that gambling is SIN. But, today, we must because the reality is - Americans have allowed mere men to redefine what God has called "good and evil" and to make their own definitions of "good and evil" - which is the foremost act of rebellion to God that a man can do - and sadly - most people don't even know it.

Friends, not only is gambling SIN - but it is the sin of rebellion - which as we know - is as the sin of witchcraft (I Samuel 15:23). Yes, I am equating gambling with witchcraft - with the worship of evil.

The so-called "christian" advocates of gambling - and the numbers are rising - are quick to point out that gambling is not mentioned in the Bible. Hence, it must be okay.

The response to this is that not only IS gambling mentioned in the Bible - but it's prohibition to those who call themselves children of God - is one of the most basic understandings that any follower of Christ should know. Whether the word "gambling" is found in the Bible or not (it isn't) the principle is so glaringly clear - anyone who promotes or advocates it - or says that God is mute on the subject - is at the best misguided - and at the worst - a lying deceiver purposely masquerading as an angel of light pulling people away from Seeking First the Kingdom of God.

So why is gambling against the nature and Will of God for His people? And why should we believe God considers it rebellion?

The economy of God - in other words - how He directed the children of Israel to interact

with each other financially - is that a man would work for his food. Every single example - without exception - of God's people earning their substance - was either by farming, fishing, building, preaching (prophecy or maintaining the temple) or by another trade or skill.

Just weights and measures are the Lord's delight. False balances are an abomination to God. Proverbs 11:1

Recently, I tried to explain to my children what was wrong with gambling. Rather, I gave an example of the way God would have His people "earn their living."

We have an elderly lady down the road from us who from time to time asks our boys to come and work for her. They would work for free - if she would have it - but she won't - so she "pays" them for their labor. She has a need for their labor. They work for her. She pays them for the work. There is perfect equity in the transaction. BOTH parties profit equally from the labor. She gets done what she needs to get done - and she pays the boys for their labor. BOTH parties WIN. BOTH parties experience "just weights and measures." "Substance is traded for substance - value for value." It is - and should be - a "win win" situation for both parties involved in the (trans)action.

It is not the boys' goal to take "money" or "substance" from their neighbor without their neighbor receiving something in return. It is not the neighbor's goal to take labor from the boys without giving them something of - at least - equal value in exchange for their labor.

But in a scenario of gambling - the goal is totally selfish. He would take the elderly lady's "money" or "substance" and leave her with absolutely NOTHING.

The gambler either TAKES or LOSES. There is no equity. There is no just weight or just measure. There is no trade - it's either LOSS for one and GAIN for the other. This is the way satan(s) would operate. This is the way the powers of darkness operate. This is not the Will or nature of God. And it is not how He wants people to interact with each other.

The Bible verse, "The love of money is the root of all evil" is nearly universally heard of - by "believers" and unbelievers. But the verse AND the principle does not simply stop

there. The passage goes on to warn people "not to trust in uncertain riches."

Of course, sometimes there is an uncertainty that one may perform some labor for someone and that person holds back the payment for that labor. But any reasonable person, would not ever consider performing labor and expecting payment for that labor to be "uncertain riches." Does every single word need to be spelled out before we understand the principle and nature of God?

I don't think so. If God's people are truly led by the Spirit, then those areas that some may call "gray areas" come clearly into focus when we understand the nature of God and Will for His people. When we learn the nature and Will of God - which can be understood by a deep study of what we call "the books of the Old Testament" then we can be led by the Spirit into all truth. We are not meant to be here blindly walking through life hoping that we get a few things right along the way. God, His ways - other than the system He created involving sacrifices - has not changed. He did not establish clear boundaries that He and He alone has the power and authority to define right or wrong - only to someday abrogate that power and turn it over to mere men. But that is what most of us have been taught in "church." The command for just weights and measures did not end at the cross. It did not end when the temple was destroyed in Jerusalem in AD 70. Just weights and measures are a command for every generation and people who did not institute and maintain a system of just weights and measures among themselves are living in a state of constant sin - and the sad reality is - it is a state of constant rebellion.

But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. Isaiah 59:2

Want to know what's wrong with America today? Our sins and iniquities have caused Him to hide His face from us - and we don't even know what our sins and iniquities are! Poker playing, slot machines, the lottery is not apples and apples when compared to work and HONEST living. Anyone who believes so is deceived.

The deception is certainly fitting - as a "gambler" is known for his ability to bluff - LIE, DECEIVE, TRICK, CON, etc. EVERYONE knows that someone who is good at poker - IS A GOOD LIAR. Where did we get the phrase "poker face?" Is this a good thing? Is this something a true child of God should have as a characteristic?

"Yes, I play poker. I'm a very good deceiver. I have a real good poker face when I'm

lying. But I always ask Jesus to help me before every game. I always ask Him to help me take as much money away from someone else as I possibly can. And I will do it for the glory of God and give some of my winnings to my favorite "church."

I've had gamblers recently tell me that Jesus and His disciples gambled and so it makes it right. This particular individual was referring to the "casting of lots." This argument is ridiculous. The "casting of lots" is equal to asking your children to pick a number between 1 and 10 to see who goes first in line, or who gets the first piece of cake. It is not gambling in any sense of the word.

We are talking about individuals who believe that it is ok to have a "profession" of gambling. This, they claim is their "work." It is the way they "make their living."

Well - it may be a "way to make a living" - but it is NOT an honest living. It is rebellion to the God of Heaven and to His ways and it is against His nature. No true child of God could ever be involved in this type of life - and remain in it - because

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Hebrews 12:6-8

After all those wonderful casino ads on TV, you usually see a phone number offered to help the "person with the gambling problem" get help. Isn't that's odd?

No one will EVER convince me that it is ok to look at my neighbor and desire to separate him from his "money" or "substance" without giving something in return. No one will EVER convince me that anything other than work - trading "substance for substance" is what God established for His people to make their living. Coveting your neighbors' possessions, taking them away through deceit - or taking them away without trading "substance for substance" is EVIL. It was EVIL 5,000 years ago, 2,000 years ago - and NOW.

"Gambling" may be "legal" as far as man's "laws" go - but it is NOT LAWFUL - as far as God's Laws go.

The issue of gambling is a sample of our civilization. Since "man" accepts it - and it isn't "illegal" - then it's ok. When will we ever realize that MAN DOES NOT HAVE IT

RIGHT?!

Finally, why would I say that gambling is equal to rebellion?

The reason is because the entire economy of God is based on work - on labor. God LOVES LABOR and He wants men to profit from LABOR. Ecclesiastes 3:9-12 teaches us an everlasting, generational aspect of the nature and Will of God - and it is in full effect today!

What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?

I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.

He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life.

And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.

Deuteronomy 25:4

Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the worn.

I Corinthians 9:8-10

Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

I Timothy 5:18

For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

The Bible is filled with passages that bear this out. God is just. He wants His people to deal justly with each other. He wants "substance for substance." The enemies of God have always known this and have always assaulted it. They always offer a counter plan to God's plan and it is usually colorful, glittery and full of empty promises.

The "quick buck," the "con," the "thief," the "get rich quick schemer," the "gambler," (I'll save this for last - "the stock market investor") these are all devices that are set up to oppose the Will of God for His people and to draw them away from Seeking First the Kingdom of God.

Don't be bluffed!