



OKLAHOMA  
**FAMILY  
POLICY**  
COUNCIL

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# GAMBLING

**THE ODDS ARE AGAINST YOU**



**PASTORS:**

Help warn Oklahomans against  
the spread of gambling.



# GAMBLING: THE ODDS ARE AGAINST YOU



NOTE: Despite the fact that Oklahoma voters rejected a state lottery in 1994 and a casino-gambling proposal by 68.8 percent in 1998, a state lottery is again being proposed. While many excellent academic and philosophical reasons can be given to oppose a state lottery as against good public-policy, spiritual reasons are also a motivating factor that will resonate with many people. Oklahoma Family Policy Council, associated with Dr. James C. Dobson's Focus on the Family, provides this sermon outline to Oklahoma's faith-community leaders. It may be reproduced in its entirety and without change for non-commercial purposes only without prior permission from Focus on the Family or the Oklahoma Family Policy Council.

Over the past century, America has seen a dramatic increase in the availability of gambling—in Las Vegas, Atlantic City, via state lotteries, the Internet, on riverboats, on tribal lands and in small towns like Cripple Creek, Colo., which has changed from mining town to gambling spa.

Many Christians contend that since the Bible does not explicitly address the issue of gambling, Scripture offers no guidance in this regard. On the contrary, there are many principles found in the Word of God that show that if you enter into the activity of gambling the odds are against you. In fact, gambling materially affects our view of God, others and ourselves.

## I. Gambling Affects Our View of God

### A. Gambling indicates a lack of trust in God's ability to provide (Matthew 6:25-34).

God who clothed the lilies of the field and who feeds the birds will provide for our physical needs as well (cf. *Luke 12:15; Hebrews 13:5; 1 Timothy 6:6-9*)

### B. Gambling denies God's law of order and His care for our lives (Matthew 10:30).

There is no place for the concept of luck in a Christian's life in which God is so intimately involved in that "even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (cf. *Proverbs 3:5-6*)

### C. Gambling violated the 10th Commandment (Exodus 20:17).

The activity of gambling is an act of coveting — and attempt to gain the resources of others without providing anything in return.

Gambling has also been described as a form of voluntary theft.

## II. Gambling Affects Our View of Others

### A. Gambling distorts our love for our neighbor (Philippians 2:3-4).

Scripture commands us to be concerned about the welfare of others. Gambling, on the other hand, leaves a trail of human misery in its wake.

### B. Gambling exploits the most vulnerable members of society (Zechariah 7:9-10).

We are instructed to look out for the needs of the poor, the widow, the orphan and the oppressed of our society. Gambling preys mercilessly on these groups.

### C. Gambling presents a poor witness to others (1 Corinthians 10:31-33).

Scripture commands us to conduct ourselves in such a manner so that our actions direct nonbelievers to the Lord rather than causing them to stumble.

## III. Gambling Affects Our View of Ourselves

### A. Gambling distorts our view of stewardship (Matthew 25:14-30)

Jesus tells us that we are going to be called to give an account for how we invest our treasures. (See attached documentation and examples.)

### B. Gambling undermines our work ethic (Genesis 2:15; Exodus 20:9)

Work is an essential ingredient of the divinely created order. Gambling mocks the need for work by selling the illusion of gaining something for nothing. (cf. *2 Thessalonians 3:10; Proverbs 31; Ephesians 4:28*)

### C. Gambling centers around greed (1 Timothy 6:10)

The love of money is the root of all evil and the love of money is at the very heart of gambling. Gambling proponents often claim that gambling is simply another form of entertainment. (cf. *Matthew 6:31*)

## IV. Conclusion

God calls all of His children to a life that is above reproach in both our personal and public life:

Ephesians 5:3 — Greed should not be named among the saints.

1 Thessalonians 5:22 — Avoid appearances of evil.

2 Corinthians 5:7 — We walk by faith and not by sight.

**Gambling is to be avoided at all costs at all times for all people.**