



“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:20

**Church of Christ • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053**

## GAMBLING

Chuck Northrop

One of the great blights against our society is the growing trend of the vice of gambling. Gambling is a disease that has plagued mankind for centuries. More and more, gambling has become a way of life, and people are being desensitized into thinking it is a harmless form of entertainment. On the contrary, it is far from harmless. Gambling has resulted in broken homes, thefts, murder, starving children, broken-hearts, drunkenness, and suicide.

Though some people confuse gambling or wagering with taking risks, it is far more than simply taking a chance. There are three essential elements in gambling. First, there is the element of a stake or risk such as a “kitty,” “pot,” or “pool.” Second, there is the element of chance which is arbitrarily determined by the parties involved and is out of personal control. And, third, there is the element of a prize for the winner who is arbitrarily chosen by the element of chance. Though there are those who will argue that everything in life involves risks, gambling involves more than simple chance. Farming, crossing the street, driving a car, and investing necessitate risks, but these do not make gain by the loss of others.

Though gambling is not specifically mentioned in the Bible, it is condemned in principle. Consider these:

First, gambling violates the basic laws of good stewardship. There are three legitimate laws of economics. The law of labor in which labor is rewarded (1 Timothy 5:18; Ephesians

4:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:10). Also, there is the law of exchange in which a product is exchanged with something of equal value (Galatians 6:7-8; James 4:13-15). Finally, there is the law of love in which benevolence is shown to those in need (1 Corinthians 16:2-3; Matthew 7:12; 22:39). Since no one gambles to lose, then all must gamble in order to win. No one freely gives up what they risk, but they intend to win more than they ventured. For this reason, gambling is sometimes defined as “stealing by consent.” Can a person truly say he or she loves their neighbor while taking away what he or she has not freely given?

Second, gambling is based on and promotes covetousness (1 Timothy 6:10; Ephesians 5:5). Without a strong appeal to greed, gambling would hold little and possibly no attraction. Why do people gamble? To get money! The gambling industry knows this quite well. Why do they want you to think you might be the next winner? Because it creates an inordinate desire for wealth. The reality is this: if you gamble, you will far more likely be the next loser.

Third, gambling is accompanied by evil bed partners. Jesus said, “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:20). No matter where gambling goes, organized crime follows. The so-called glorious Las Vegas is full of organized crime. Gambling carries all the promise of revenue, but it actually costs our government. There is more than enough money used for gambling to build a hospital, a high school, a junior college, and a library in each of the three thousand counties in the United States. Did you know, you are three and a half times more likely to be killed by lightning and five times more likely to be eaten by a shark than to win a state lottery? For this reason, some people refer to state lotteries as a tax on people who are poor at math.

Gambling is not godliness. It is against God and harmful to society. “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Proverbs 14:34).

## The High Cost of Salvation

The Ransom Price Paid for Redemption

Jeremy Northrop

Mark 10:45 says, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Webster defines ransom as “a consideration paid or demanded for the release of someone or something from captivity.” In a spiritual sense, Jesus releases man from the captivity of sin. One might say they do not feel like they are in captivity or bondage. Another might say they did not know Jesus was a ransom given for

their redemption. However, in consideration of certain biblical truths, one can most definitely say Jesus is a ransom offered so mankind can have spiritual freedom from the guilt of sin.

Romans 3:23 says, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Sin is defined in scripture in many ways: (1) doing something in any motivation except for faith is sin (Romans 14:23); (2) not doing what a person knows he or she should be doing is sin (James 4:17); (3) breaking God’s law is sin (1 John 3:4); and (4) all unrighteousness is sin (1 John 4:16). The point of focus in Romans 3:23 is not necessarily what sin is but rather all men have sinned. There is not a person in this world that has not transgressed the law of God in one way or another. Now, in Romans 6:23, Paul says, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” This brings to light the idea that everyone is in bondage to sin. Sin leads to death — eternal death — or eternal separation from God. The debt of sin is death.

The good news is the debt of sin has been paid. Someone has died in place of every man. God sent His Son into the world so that everyone can be saved (John 3:16). The writer of the book of Hebrews said, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone” (Hebrews 2:9). Jesus went to the cross and died so no one else would have to pay the debt of sin. More than that, He gave up equality with God so every person who has ever lived on earth would have the opportunity of salvation or reconciliation with God (Philippians 2:5-11). **This is what Jesus did for you! What will you do for Jesus?**

“Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:18-21).

We should take a look, once in a while, at what has been accomplished instead of brooding over what we have not yet succeeded in doing.

Either the Bible will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from the Bible.

There is no winning without working, opportunity without opposition, advancement without adversaries, triumph without trouble, victory without vigilance, crown without the cross.

Observations and Concerns

August 30, 2023

**Welcome Visitors!** To us, it is never a bother for you to be a part of our assembly.

**Praise in Psalm:** “Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: *for* praise is comely for the upright” (Psalm 33:1).

**Declaration of Appreciation:** To those who are always on time and in attendance, we appreciate the encouragement you provide by being present and fulfilling Hebrews 10:24-25.

**Summer Series** — This evening’s speaker is **Bill Dilks**. His topic Is **“Blessed Are the Dead Which Die in the Lord”** (Revelation 14:13).

Please check the **sign up sheets** in the hallway. There are opportunities to serve, as well as a sheet to sign if you would like a songbook.

Our **Gospel Meeting** with Landon Rowell is September 10-14, 2023. There are flyers in the foyer for all to take and hand out. Please make plans now to attend! The theme is Renewed Christians.

There will be a **Youth Devo** for all ages on September 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 PM at the Nelson’s house. It will be geared for the youth, but all are invited to come study the Bible and encourage one another. Bring your favorite side or sweet to go with tacos.

Our sympathy is extended to the **family of Fred Phillips** upon his passing last week. His memorial service is Saturday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 2:00 PM at the Owasso church of Christ building.

- Remember in Prayer:**
- ▶ **Jim Allison** is undergoing medical tests this week and possible biopsy on Friday.
  - ▶ **Dan Dennis** had a successful port removal.
- Extended Prayer List: **Ed Carmona** – health issues; **Joyce Cash** – health difficulties; **Dan & Marcella Dennis** – health issues; **Bill Dilks** – cancer; **Sammy Gray** – health concerns; **Nelda Hudson** – heart struggles; **Chuck Northrop** – blood disorder; **Vance & Darla Smith** – declining health; **Pat Taylor** – health issues; **Ed Dindy** – cancer; **Betty Jackson** – health issues; **Mark Odell** – recovering from fall; **Sam Orr** – health concerns; **LeAnna Shafer** – chemotherapy; **Jacob Webster** – dog attack.
- September Birthdays: 8 – Dana Campbell; 16 – Stormi Mashburn; 17 – Dicie Jackson; 18 – Avery Praschnik; 24 – Spencer Mashburn; (No anniversaries we are aware of.)

Schedule of Services	Assignments			
		Wednesday, Aug. 30	Sunday, Sep. 3 AM	Sunday, Sep. 3 PM
	Announcements	Chris Nelson	Chris Nelson	Ross Swearingen
	Song Leader	Doyle Jackson	Doyle Jackson	Bill Dilks
	Prayer	Paul Praschnik	Chuck Northrop	Paul Praschnik
	Lord's Supper (speaker)		Ross Swearingen	Doyle Jackson
	Lord's Supper		Chuck Northrop	
	Lesson	Bill Dilks	Bill Dilks	Chuck Northrop
	Prayer / Door Attendant	Ross Swearingen	Chris Nelson	Chris Nelson
Sundays				
Bible Classes. . . 9:30 AM				
Worship . . . . . 10:30 AM				
Worship . . . . . 5:00 PM				
Wednesdays				
Bible Classes. . . 7:00 PM				
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