

Moral Opposition to Charity Bingo

We, as independent, autonomous congregations of the churches of Christ, hereby register our opposition to charity bingo. While we question the legality of the enterprise, our opposition stems first and foremost from our moral concerns with all that surrounds gambling, legal or otherwise.

We stand opposed to charity bingo and every other form of gambling because the Bible is opposed to it. We offer the following thoughts for your consideration regarding the immorality of gambling, including charity bingo:

Greed & Covetousness

Gambling is sinful because it embodies and promotes greed and covetousness. In every form it preys on man's desire to have something for nothing. "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk. 12:15). Covetousness is not to be named among the saints (Eph. 5:3). The Bible warns repeatedly of being overly desirous of material things, especially money. "For the love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Tim. 6:10). Gambling only serves to fuel an inordinate desire for money. Gambling, legalized or not, keeps man's heart anchored in the material world, which will be burned up one day (2 Pt. 3:10). Riches are uncertain at best (1 Tim. 6:17). We would be well served to lay up our treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:19-21).

Work Ethic

Gambling is sinful because it violates the Biblical work ethic. From the beginning God expected man to work for a living (Gen. 2:15; 3:19). If one is not willing to work, the Bible says he should not eat (2 Thess. 3:10). Man is to labor in order to give to man in need (Eph. 4:28). Many look upon work as a necessary evil, rather than a privilege to provide for one's family and for others. Gambling fuels man's disdain for honest labor. It teaches one to replace hard work and wise choices with luck and chance.

Means Not Justified

Gambling is sinful even if it is for a good cause (read 1 Sam. 15:1-23). To those who proclaim the virtue of gambling for funding education, making donations to charities, or whatever supposed good it may do, we would say, "Shall we do evil that good may come?" (Rom. 3:8). Why not simply donate the money used in gambling directly to the charity of your choice, or the school system? The end in no way justifies the means. Even some churches have received money from charity bingo. This was never God's intention for financing the work of the church. The work of the church is to be financed by the free-will offering of the members of the Lord's body (1 Cor. 16:1-2).

Destructive Nature

Gambling is sinful because it adversely effects the home, society, and individual lives. It is estimated that each addicted gambler negatively impacts between ten and twenty people (Dobson, *Solid Answers*, 533). The majority of those who gamble are those who can least afford to do so. Gambling preys upon the poor and downtrodden. This stands in stark contrast to God's loving-care and concern for those who find it difficult to care for themselves (see Deut. 10:18; 24:14; Ps. 10:18; 146:9). Additionally, gambling addiction is one of the fastest-growing addictions in our society. The Bible teaches that we are to maintain self-control (Gal. 5:23). Gambling, illegal or legal, has a great propensity to become addictive. The only thing to which we should be addicted is the service of the saints (1 Cor. 16:13). Gambling has brought many marriages and families to ruin, and it continues to plague our society.

Golden Rule

Gambling is sinful because it violates the Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12). In order for someone to win at gambling, many more must lose. Those who gamble do not want the best for other people. Gambling wishes misfortune upon others that one might be successful. Such thinking is a violation of the second greatest command, to love one's neighbor as he would himself (Matt. 22:39). Rather than concerning ourselves with our own well-being, we are to be concerned for others (1 Cor. 10:24; Phil. 2:3-4).

Contentment

Gambling is sinful because it violates the principle of contentment. "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5). We are constantly pressed to buy bigger houses, newer cars, more expensive clothing, etc. Gambling gives more strength to these pressures. Such displays an attitude of discontentment with the blessings of God (1 Tim. 6:6-8). Whether we have much or little, we must learn to be content with the provisions God has given us (Phil. 4:10-13), and not gamble them away.

We in no way oppose charity. God demands that we be people of charity (Gal. 6:10). However, we refuse to allow our charity to be done in the form of that which is immoral and ungodly. Gambling in any form is sinful, and we stand adamantly opposed to it, whether under the guise of "charity" or not. We stand in opposition to charity bingo because the Bible teaches that all forms of gambling are sinful.

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