

QUESTION: Where in the Bible does it say that gambling is a sin?

ANSWER: The word "gambling" is not used in the Bible, but the underlying sins related to gambling are. Why does a person gamble? Do they want to get rich quick? Do they not trust God to supply their needs? Are they obsessed with obtaining more and more material possessions? The Bible has a lot to say about the sins of coveting, greed, neglecting your family, not trusting God, and letting material wealth and "things" become "idols" in your life. All these things are either the underlying motive of the gambler, or are closely associated to the lifestyle of the gambler. Basically, **gambling is breaking the Tenth Commandment** of the Ten Commandments, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant, or his ox or his donkey or **anything** that belongs to your neighbor" (Exodus 20:17). We may not be concerned about oxen and donkeys and servants in the 21st Century, but just substitute money, automobiles, houses, and material possessions, and you've got it.

What is sin? Sin is disobeying God. Sin and its resulting death came through the "Fall of Man", when Adam and Eve sinned. Satan, through the serpent, DECEIVED Eve, but Adam took the fruit and **disobeyed God of his own FREE WILL**, and his disobedience brought the consequences of sin and death (the "curse").

- **Romans 5:12** "Therefore, just as through ONE MAN (Adam) sin entered the world, and DEATH through sin, and thus DEATH spread to all men, because ALL SINNED - "
- **Romans 5:18-19** "Therefore, as through one man's (Adam's) offense **judgment** came to all men, resulting in **condemnation**, even so through one Man's (Christ's) righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience **many were made sinners**, so also by one Man's obedience many will be MADE righteous."

Definition: "MANY WERE MADE SINNERS" - Adam passed the **sin nature** to his descendants, and we all became sinners by nature. We are not "sinners" because we commit sin - **we SIN because we are sinners!** We are BORN into this world with a NATURE that is warped and twisted, and each one of us wants to do everything **"MY WAY"** - **not God's way**, and **that is the basis of all sin**. We see this so clearly in little children: you don't have to teach them to lie, hit another child, steal another child's toy, or have a temper tantrum to have their way - it comes naturally! The only human being since Adam and Eve sinned **who was born WITHOUT a sinful nature was Jesus**. That is why He was born of a virgin, and had no human father, because the sin nature is passed down through our human FATHERS, through Adam.

Some other words used in the Bible to mean sin are INIQUITY, TRESPASSES and TRANSGRESSIONS. The dictionary describes iniquity as sin or wickedness, but the Bible meaning is more of **"doing your own thing"** (see Isaiah 53:6). Trespass means an unlawful act, a deliberate disobedience of one of God's commandments. Transgression - to go beyond the limits or violate a command.

- **Isaiah 53:6** "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, **every one to his OWN WAY**; and the Lord has laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us ALL."
- **Romans 3:23** "For **ALL have sinned** and come short of the glory of God."

1.) Gambling For the Non-Believer - When we say "non-believer" we mean the person who has not received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and is not trusting in Christ alone to get them to heaven. The issue for the non-believer is not **"Is gambling a sin?"** but

rather, "**How can I receive forgiveness and not be punished for ALL of my sins?**" The Bible says in Proverbs 31:6-7 that the one "who is perishing" (going to hell) might as well gamble, or drink, or do whatever they want, because it will not make any difference as far as their eternal destiny goes. Oh, it may make their life here on earth better to not drink, gamble, or commit any of the things the Bible calls "sins," but it is not the doing or not doing of those things that gives a person eternal life.

- **Proverbs 31:6-7** "Give strong drink to him who is perishing (going to hell), and wine to him whose life is bitter. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his trouble no more."
- **II Peter 3:9** "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering (patient) toward us, **NOT willing (wanting) that any should PERISH** but that ALL should come to repentance."
- **John 3:16** "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever BELIEVES in Him **should not perish**, but have EVERLASTING LIFE."

Because God loves you so much, **He made a WAY for you to be SAVED from your SINS** so that you could have a relationship with Him, and be saved (rescued) from having to go to hell. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross and TAKE the PUNISHMENT for YOUR SINS so that you could be REDEEMED from sin, receive NEW LIFE, and spend eternity with Him. Jesus said, ".....Unless a person is BORN AGAIN, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3). Salvation does NOT come by joining a church, following a certain religion, doing good deeds, or living a moral life. If it were possible for you to "stop sinning" today, you would never be able to "make up" for your past sins. The Bible says there is only **ONE WAY** to become a child of God and **to receive SALVATION** and eternal life in heaven: **YOU MUST be BORN AGAIN by ACCEPTING JESUS CHRIST as YOUR LORD AND SAVIOR.**

- **John 1:12** "But as many as received Him, to them He gave power **to become the children of God**, even to them that believe on His name."
- **Isaiah 64:6** "But **we are all as an UNCLEAN thing**, and all our righteousnesses (good deeds) are as **FILTHY RAGS**; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities (sins), like the wind, have taken us away."
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** "For by GRACE you have been saved through FAITH, and that NOT of YOURSELVES, it is the **GIFT of God; NOT of WORKS**, lest anyone should boast."

Definition: "GRACE" - Unmerited or UNEARNED favor. **Being accepted and loved by God** when we have done NOTHING and CAN DO NOTHING to EARN or DESERVE it. Because **it is ALL God's work**, and not our own, NO ONE can "boast" of how their good behavior got them saved in the first place, and **no one is too bad a sinner** for God to save!

- **Titus 3:5-7** "**NOT by works of righteousness** which **WE have DONE**, but **according to His MERCY** He saved us; by the washing of regeneration (being born again), and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through **Jesus Christ our Savior**. That having been **JUSTIFIED by His GRACE** we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life"

Definition: "JUSTIFIED" - God by His GRACE **declares RIGHTEOUS** the sinner who believes on Jesus Christ. It is **NOT a process of becoming** righteous, **it is a ONE-TIME ACT of GRACE** - we are MADE RIGHTEOUS the moment we accept Jesus as our Savior! It is NOT merely FORGIVENESS, although forgiveness is INCLUDED - God does indeed FORGIVE and FORGET OUR SINS. However, **JUSTIFICATION means God even FORGETS THAT WE WERE EVER SINNERS!** There is NO MORE RECORD of our sins.

2.) Gambling For the Believer - For the believer in Jesus Christ, the born-again Christian, the issue involved with gambling is either greed or lack of trust in God to provide for your needs. I Timothy 6:6-10 says that Christians are to live in "godliness with CONTENTMENT," which is the opposite of the gambler. We also know that much of the gambling world is connected to organized crime. A Christian should not be associated with anything to do with crime and Satan's world of darkness, or of greed and covetousness.

- **II Corinthians 6:14-18** "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with DARKNESS? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial (Satan), or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, 'I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God and they shall be My people. Therefore, **come out from among them and be separate,**' says the Lord. 'And do not touch what is UNCLEAN; and I will welcome you. And I will be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me,' says the Lord Almighty."
- **Ephesians 5:3-5** "But immorality and all impurity or GREED (covetousness), **let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;** neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor **covetous man, who is an idolater,** has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."
- **I Corinthians 5:9-12** "I wrote to you in my epistle (letter) not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean the sexually immoral people of this world, or with **the covetous (greedy)**, or extortioners (con men), or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone called a brother (calling themselves a Christian), who is a fornicator, or **covetous**, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner - not even to eat with such a person. For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside (non-believers)? Do you not judge those who are inside (in the church)?"
- **I Timothy 6:6-10** "But godliness with CONTENTMENT is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be content with that. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and a SNARE, and into many FOOLISH and HURTFUL lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For **the LOVE of money is the root of all evil;** which while some COVETED after, they have gone astray from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."
- **I Corinthians 6:9-11** "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor **covetous**, nor drunkards, nor revilers (users of abusive language), nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."

Definition: "And SUCH were some of YOU" - Paul is speaking to Christians here, showing us that the Church of Jesus Christ is made up of SINNERS!! However, it is only by the BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST that we are forgiven and CLEANSED of those sins. A person who has NOT trusted Jesus Christ for salvation and forgiveness of their sins has NO PART in the kingdom of God. Jesus said, "Unless a man is BORN AGAIN, he cannot [even] SEE the Kingdom of God." (John 3:3) "**SANCTIFICATION**" means HOLINESS, PURITY, being SET APART for God and His use. The word "SAINT" comes from the same word as "sanctified" in the Greek. SANCTIFICATION is a PROCESS and a ONE-TIME EXPERIENCE, both. We are sanctified, or MADE HOLY in God's sight when we accept Christ as Savior, but our continual SANCTIFICATION is the process by which we are becoming MORE LIKE CHRIST as we YIELD more and more of our SELVES to the control of the Holy Spirit.