

## The State Lottery, the Local Casino and the Lure of Las Vegas

Gambling Defined: “An artificially contrived risk, taken for selfish gain at another’s expense, with no constructive product or social good as its goal.”  
(Kenneth Kantzer in Christianity Today, November, 1983)

There are at least **four biblical principles** that teach believers to say “no” to gambling.

Biblical Principle = a general expression of moral truth found in God’s Word that might be applied in a number of different ways

- **Principle #1: THE PRINCIPLE OF HARD WORK.**

*Lazy people are soon poor; hard workers get rich.*  
Proverbs 10:4 (New Living Translation)

*A hard worker has plenty of food, but a person who chases fantasies has no sense.*  
Proverbs 12:11 (NLT)

*He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty.* Proverbs 28:19 (New International Version)

The Principle Restated: God values hard work and He sets up life so that hard work leads to financial success.

*The trustworthy person will get a rich reward, but a person who wants quick riches will get into trouble.* Proverbs 28:20 (NLT)

- **Principle #2: THE PRINCIPLE OF CAREFUL STEWARDSHIP.**

- The Concept: God owns everything, and I am His money manager.

(See Luke 16, Matthew 25 and Luke 19)

[Jesus said,] “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them.” Matthew 25:14 (NIV)

- Stewards ask three questions: Should I spend this? Save this? Or, should I give it away?
- The closer we get to answering those questions in light of God’s values and purposes, the better steward we will be.
- Two ways that buying stocks and gambling are different.
  - When you buy stock, you’re buying something real.
  - Over time, the stock tends to appreciate in value.

- **Principle #3: THE PRINCIPLE OF GUARDING YOUR HEART.**

*Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.*  
Proverbs 4:23 (NLT)

“Heart” is the word that the Bible uses to represent the real inner you.

*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.* Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

More than anything else, the position that God occupies in your heart will determine the course of your life.

*“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup>But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. <sup>22</sup>“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup>But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! <sup>24</sup>“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.* Matthew 6:19-24 (NIV)

- **Principle #4: THE PRINCIPLE OF SPIRITUAL SLAVERY.**

*Someone will say, “I am allowed to do anything.” Yes; but not everything is good for you. I could say that I am allowed to do anything, but I am not going to let anything make me its slave.* 1 Corinthians 6:12 (Good News Translation)