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# BIBLE TALK

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This week the question is: ***Should Christians play the lottery?***

Gambling and playing the lottery are often condemned for several reasons:

- Gambling is often rooted in covetousness and the Bible condemns covetousness.
- Gambling often causes people to become bad stewards over their money. Very often people waste rent money and grocery money on lottery and raffle tickets.
- Gambling often promotes laziness.
- Gambling is addictive.
- And finally, gambling often promotes jealousy and envy.

All of these are good reasons to avoid gambling and the purchase of lottery tickets.

But suppose someone is not covetous when they buy a lottery ticket. Suppose also that they do not waste their grocery and rent money buying lottery tickets. In other words, they pay their bills and take care of the families. Suppose they aren't lazy, they don't get addicted and they don't become jealous or envious. Would it be wrong to play the lottery if one could avoid all these pitfalls?

The answer is: ***Yes ... the lottery would be wrong for a Christian because it is not an authorized form of gaining wealth.***

Bear with me for a moment while I explain this.

## **Colossians 3:17**

17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

**"in the name of the Lord Jesus"** – means *"by His authority."*

Look at three things which make this passage all inclusive:

- “whatever you do”
- “in word or deed”
- “do all”

When someone asks me, “*What passage forbids a Christian from buying a lottery ticket?*” I point out this is the wrong question. The proper question is: ***What passage gives a Christian authorization to gamble?***

There are scriptures which teach (authorize):

- Work as a way to make money (Eph 4:28).
- Inheritance as a way of gaining money (Lk 15:12).
- Owning a business as a way to make money (Acts 18:3).

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**NOTE:** Investing in the stock market is equivalent to “*owing a business.*” Therefore, if someone asked me for authority to invest in stocks, I would cite passages which authorize owning a business.

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**Q:** Where is the authorization for a Christian to gamble?

We have already seen: “***Whatever you do***” ... “***in word or in deed***” ... “***do all***” ... *in the name of the Lord Jesus (Col 3:17).*

When the Bible is silent about an action, that action is forbidden. Silence does not authorize. Silence forbids.

So when people ask the question, “What’s wrong with a Christian playing the lottery,” the question itself is admitting there is no Bible passage authorizing gambling ... for if there were authorization, the question would not even be asked to begin with.

- Why do you never hear the question, “What’s wrong with working to make a living?” Why do you never hear that question? Because everyone knows working is authorized.

- Why do you never hear the question, “What’s wrong with telling the truth?” Why do you never hear that question? Because everyone knows that telling the truth is authorized.

But asking what is wrong with the lottery is an admission there is no authorization for it in the NT scriptures.

Simply put: ***Gambling and the lottery are wrong for Christians because everything a Christian does must be authorized in the NT scriptures and neither gambling nor the lottery are authorized.***

Rather than asking what’s “wrong” with these things, the real question should be: ***What is right with these things?*** In other words, ***where are they authorized?***

### **1 Corinthians 10:31**

31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

### **Proverbs 3:5-6**

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;

6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

If everything we do is suppose to be to “*the glory of God*” and if we are suppose to “*acknowledge Him*” in ***all*** our ways, we must have the permission of God to gamble or play the lottery. Since He never gave the permission, it is simply wrong.

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Well ... thanks for listening to our message this week. To speak with someone about the congregation simply you may call **405-567-0575** or you may leave your name and number at the sound of the tone and one of our brethren will be glad to call you back and assist you. We also invite you to visit our web site [www.WillOfTheLord.com](http://www.WillOfTheLord.com) where you may also download the notes from the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on ***Bible Talk***.