

Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished

by William MacDonald

Transcript

“Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished.” (Prov. 13:11)

“You may have already won \$100,000!” With this and similar come-ons, we are constantly barraged by the temptation to participate in some form of gambling. The housewife shopping in the supermarket is enticed by the latest sweepstakes. The average citizen is encouraged to send his name (together with a subscription for a magazine) to participate in an upcoming lottery involving millions. Or it may be a bingo contest in which you are almost assured of being a winner.

Then, of course, there are the more obvious forms of gambling—roulette, horse-racing, dog-racing, the numbers game, etc.

What does the Bible have to say about all this? Nothing good.

It says, “Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labor shall increase” (Prov. 13:11).

It says, “He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him” (Prov. 28:22).

It says, “Like a partridge that hatches eggs it did not lay is the man who gains riches by unjust means. When his life is half gone, they will desert him, and in the end he will prove to be a fool” (Jer. 17:11 NIV).

While the Ten Commandments do not explicitly say, “Thou shalt not gamble,” they do say, “Thou shalt not covet” (Ex. 20:17), and what is gambling but a form of covetousness?

Gambling will always have an evil connotation for believers when they remember that Roman soldiers gambled for the Savior’s seamless robe at the scene of His crucifixion.

Consider also the poverty and grief that chronic gamblers have brought to their families, the crimes that have been committed to recoup losses, and the evil associations frequently linked with gambling, and it will be seen that it should have no place in a Christian’s life.

After reminding Timothy that the believer should be content with food and raiment, Paul warned that “they that will be (desire to be) rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition” (1 Tim. 6:9).

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