

**News and Current Events :: Church Rejects Donation from Lottery Winner****Church Rejects Donation from Lottery Winner - posted by ccchhrrriiiss () , on: 2008/8/14 22:22****Church Rejects Donation from Lottery Winner**

by Ryan Duffy  
First Coast News

ORANGE PARK, FL -- After Robert Powell hit the Florida Lottery jackpot last month and took home more than \$6 million , he thought of his church.

And he offered to drop his tithe, around \$600,000, in the collection plate of First Baptist Orange Park.

But the church and Pastor David Tarkington politely declined and told Powell they will not accept the lottery winnings.

Many churches do not approve of the lottery and gambling but on the other hand Pastor Dr. Lorenzo Hall of the El-Beth-El Divine Holiness Church says \$600,000 can do a lot of good.

"I'm against the lottery, but if one of my members won the lottery, I wish and I hope he would give 10% to the church, we could do a lot of things with that money," says Hall.

As a Holiness minister, Dr. Hall says he does not ask where members get the money they decide to donate.

He said he would welcome Powell's donation to his inner city church anytime.

"We are in the process now of building a youth center, and you would be surprised at the people that can be helped with \$600,000," says Hall.

Bethel Baptist Church member Lottie Walker says if she won, the first thing she would do is give lottery money to her church.

"Anything extra is bonus so that would be an extra blessing of offering after that, so if I did win lotto, sweepstakes I would tithe to my church," says Walker.

First Baptist Orange Park Pastor David Tarkington would not say exactly why the church refused the money, saying only he didn't want to talk about members' gifts.

Click  
(<http://www.firstcoastnews.com/news/topstories/news-article.aspx?storyid116301&catid15&GIDWMAmGCQI3vz6rtbfKlq97+DNDNHLKYU0cLrO+wQNI6Q&provideremail>) here to read the full article.

**Re: Church Rejects Donation from Lottery Winner - posted by Friedrich (), on: 2008/8/14 22:31**

Praise God for Pastor David Tarkington.

**Re: - posted by Lavishes (), on: 2008/8/14 22:41**

Is it right or is it wrong? There's a verse that says

You shall not bring the hire of a harlot or the wages of a dog into the house of the LORD your God for any votive offering , for both of these are an abomination to the LORD your God.  
Deuteronomy 23:18

So what does this verse mean? That gambling is wrong? Why didn't it say the money from casting lots or dice games? T he existed at the time

and isn't the stock market a professional form of gambling seeing how volatile it is?

**Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2008/8/15 1:02**

Lavishes, perhaps this will help. I just wrote an article on the subject...

**Are gambling and the stock market the same?**

"The lot is cast in the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD."  
- Proverbs 16:33

All of life's decisions are, in one very broad sense, a "gamble", inasmuch as we are not certain what the outcome of most decisions will be. There is, however, a significant difference between what we usually call gambling and what is considered a business risk.

Compare the stock market, or even typical college expenses without a definite promise of a job afterwards, to the lottery. In the first two situations, one who invests his time and money is doing so with an informed understanding of why his investment is likely to produce a profit. Generally, stocks are handled by experienced brokers who study the trends and business patterns of corporations. If, for instance, Microsoft makes an excellent product five years in a row and shows signs of continued growth, it is not blind chance that an investment in their company will prove worthwhile. You are pledging stock to a group of skilled professionals who are competing to earn money through their trade. Only a fool throws money into a random stock and hopes for the best.

On the other hand, lottery users cast their hope on nothing but the capriciousness of supposed chance to deliver them a fortunate win. The lotto gambler hopes for a one-in-a-million odds, or prays that God would 'throw the game' to give him a fortune with minimal effort.

"Wealth acquired by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathers by labor shall increase."  
- Proverbs 13:11

This differs greatly from the person who spends \$60,000 on medical training and is virtually assured a well paying job in the end. With experienced brokers the stock market is similar - over time, most gain money. The same is not true for gambling! It is almost always the gamblers who apply their addiction to the stock market who watch the money vanish in it.

Avoid opportunities that promise sudden improvements of lifestyle or wealth without applied skill. These are most often hollow, and may even bring great temptations to sin. "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs." Instead, be satisfied with the incremental improvements that come with diligent work, and learn to enjoy benefiting others through your gains. Faith in Christ alone is the only sure means of raising one's standard of living, and that by exchanging material desires for spiritual ones. The advice of the inspired writer is very fitting,

"Let your manner of life be without covetousness; and be content with such things as you have: for he has said, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' So that we may confidently say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."  
- Hebrews 13:5-6

**Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2008/8/15 2:20**

Hi lavishes...

Quote:

-----and isn't the stock market a professional form of gambling seeing how volatile it is?  
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I agree with what our brother theopenlife has written here. There is a vast difference between *investing* and *gambling*.

Investing is taking money that you have earned and applying it to a company that you feel is worthwhile. Yes, there is some risk involved (at times). But in a sense, you are placing your money in a company that you deem to be worthwhile rather than a bank. This investment allows that company to have "investment capital" by which they can operate and (hopefully) bring a good return for that investment.

In a sense, we "invest" when we give to ministries that are attempting to win souls. Someone created a thread the other

day in which they asked about giving to the United Way. I wondered just what the "return" for such an investment might be? In my opinion, is much more noble to invest in an aid organization, evangelist or Christian worker who has demonstrated that they are worth such an investment. Doesn't this remind us of what the Lord asked in Matthew 25:24-17?

Quote:  
-----24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou has t not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not s trawed:

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

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Interestingly, in a way, the Lord invests in us. The Bible says that God will make those who are faithful in small things to be "rulers" over many things (Matthew 25:21, 23). Unlike the rain (which falls on both the just and the unjust), God some times supernaturally cares for those who show a return for his investment. He provided food from ravens for Elijah. He provided escapes from prison, shipwrecks and snake bites for Paul. In other words, God has a way of investing in those who have proven themselves faithful. God help us to show a godly return for the great investment of His Son!

Gambling, on the other hand, is something entirely different. It is the act of taking the money that we have earned and then attempting to make a quick return based upon "chance" (or the casting of lots). This is the exact OPPOSITE of being a "good steward" of the things that God has given us. I have heard believers argue that the apostles "cast lots" in order to determine a replacement disciple for Judas. I then remind them that this was done BEFORE the disciples were endowed with power from the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts chapter 2. After this, they didn't have to rely on casting lots to choose apostles. In fact, Paul articulated that he was chosen by Jesus rather than men.

I'm sure that God *could* use the casting of lots to "settle disputes." But the difference between this and gambling is that we recognize that it is GOD who is settling a matter. Gambling, on the other hand, is empowered by greed. It is a lust to "get rich quick" -- which is the opposite of godly contentment. It is laying money that we have earned (thanks to the Lord) on a table of "chance." And nearly everyone loses in such "ventures." How many people win in a lottery? Usually a single person or two. Every other person has squandered their wealth! Yes, gambling is "playing the odds." But if someone truly understood the mathematics behind such odds -- they wouldn't be playing them! Have you ever wondered why that ugly, desert city of Las Vegas is so wealthy? It is because millions of individuals visit and lose to the odds there! They are literally giving their money away to play a game that they probably are not going to win! Is this what the Lord intends for us?

In the end, God has called us to be "good stewards" of the things by which he has blessed us. For some of us, the investment is small. For others, it is large. It is sort of like the talents that the king gave to his servants. Do we squander that investment on a risky game of odds? Or do we take it, use it or invest it, and then show a return from our work? Remember that the king rebuked the servant who buried his talent and called him an "unprofitable" servant.

May God help us to be good stewards and wise investors with all that He has blessed us with! Maranatha!

:-)

**Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2008/8/15 3:42**

ccchhhrrriiiss said,

Quote:  
-----Interestingly, in a way, the Lord invests in us. The Bible says that God will make those who are faithful in small things to be "rulers" over many things (Matthew 25:21, 23).  
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Neat observation. :-)

**Re: God is sovereign over all - posted by Lavishes (), on: 2008/8/15 3:52**

Thank you theopenlife for your response and the article. If I may I would like to challenge your reasoning just a little further provided I do not annoy you in the process.

So while it would seem that investing in shares would be a legitimate form of investment rather than a gamble, are you saying that by investing in high risk shares one is almost being sinful with their money for trying? Or to put it another way, a gambler who increases their odds to >50% (that is a one is two chance of winning or better) by increasing the number of games and syndicates is being less sinful because they are no longer taking a greater risk?

It's almost the same principle. If you invest in large stable corporations (they are worth \$\$\$) and if you are willing to put a lot of \$\$\$ into a syndicate you have a better more informed and likely chance of succeeding especially in the long run. So if you're poor and can't afford to invest in large stable shares or in large lottery syndicates you a fool for trying or better still destined to remain poorer for longer and possibly never get a chance to change your lifestyle. It was not your fault that others were born in rich homes and you were born in a less fortunate home. It was your lot in life for which you had no control or say up until this point.

Just like the stock market, the money or the goods are put in voluntarily: while on the one hand stocks are sold from reasonably wealthy companies on the other hand lottery money is collected from both the wealthy and the poor but both hands contribute willingly.

Please note I am not endorsing either, or and if I'm being a stumbling block for anyone it might be best I delete my posts and shut up. I am being sincere in asking these questions and challenging your reasoning if I have any merit to call it a challenge at all. It's one thing to talk about gambling when you have a stable income, a good lifestyle, it's another when you're struggling and your only hope other than a Godly intervention is to risk the little you have provided it is not a sin in the eyes of God.

**Re: How much does a King deserve? - posted by Lavishes (), on: 2008/8/15 4:13**

Thank you cchhhrrriiss for your response and your reasoning also. If I may I would like to reason with your response also.

Using a verse already mentioned  
Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.

Seeing how the lot was cast for Achan, for Jonah, the garment of Jesus to fulfill scripture, for the Apostles et cetera, wouldn't it be fair to say that those casting the lot in some cases were taking a bigger risk than money? They were literally casting the lot on someone's life. In the case of Achan if God had not been part of the decision making an innocent family could have been killed or Achan and his family may have gotten away with sin. Jonah likewise had it not been for God an innocent sailor could have been thrown overboard or unfairly interrogated.

Supposing those who do gamble only gamble 0.1% of their income weekly or yearly. Are they being bad stewards when they have a greater chance than someone who doesn't buy a lottery ticket to make a substantial winning IF they win? Like I said in the previous post supposing a person who is very wealthy has managed to calculate a means of winning division on 1 or 2 each time and has the money to "gamble" are they exempted because they are technically not gambling but investing? The return might be small but he can afford it. Is it a sin because he is taking both the money from rich people and poor people while the stock market taking money from companies where in fact there are poor people working to make the profit for the stock market investor who can afford to invest?

I hope you can see the point I am making. Like I said I am not endorsing either, or but if this is a stumbling block I will delete my posts. Please moderators do not delete my posts for me I'd like to copy and save them as a personal record. Thank you

Re: - posted by cchhhrrriiiss ( ), on: 2008/8/15 12:38

Hi Lavishes...

I suppose that there is a huge difference between casting a lot that we have urged the Lord to decide the outcome...and mere gambling that is simply done to make some quick money.

Yes, there were times in which people in the Scriptures used the casting of lots to "settle disputes." In fact, like I said earlier, the disciples did this in order to find a new disciple that would replace Judas (in Acts chapter 1). How is this different?

First of all, the disciples weren't trying to get rich quick. They simply wanted to know the decision of God and, at the time, knew of no other way. Secondly, this happened BEFORE they were baptized with the Holy Spirit (in Acts chapter 2). This is true of all of the uses of the "lot" before the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. We NEVER read of a lot being cast by believers after this...because they were now led by the Holy Spirit with a "sure word" from the Lord. Finally, there are examples of ungodly people who cast lots in the Scriptures. For instance, the soldiers cast lots to determine who would "win" the garments of Jesus. This is far more akin to "gambling" than those who used the lot to make a decision. It is a game of chance...rather than a tool used to make decisions.

I don't believe in casting lots any more. The disciples did so at a time in which Jesus had ascended...and they felt compelled to receive a new disciple to replace Judas (as if Judas needed replacing). After Acts chapter 2, they no longer needed to consult such a rudimentary tactic. We now realize that we can obtain wisdom by boldly approaching the Creator of the Universe.

Sadly, I even know of a pastor who admitted to having consulted a similar tactic. He used wadded up pieces of paper with various words written upon them in order to "determine direction" in various matters. A friend and I asked him why he didn't simply purchase one of those "Eight Ball" toys (you know, the one that you shake until an answer appears). This pastor consulted on a regular basis his rolled up wads of paper to determine direction for the Church. How is this different than a witch who consults tarot cards? Yeah, the pastor may think that he is consulting God for answers...but so do most tarot card readers (who claim that they have a "gift from God"). How different is this from a prophet! Such tactics are unnecessary when we now have the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us into all truth. We don't have to rely on something as silly as casting lots. Yes, Gideon indeed laid a "fleece" before the Lord. But he didn't rely on odds. He asked God to do the impossible - not once, but twice!

How many Christian young people today feel the need to "lay a fleece" before the Lord to help them determine their futures? I've heard several young ladies claim that they "laid a fleece" or "cast lots" regarding their future spouse! Every time, however, the young man didn't feel the same way. I told them that the next time that they lay a fleece before the Lord, they should ask God to do something impossible...twice. But I warned them that Satan can, on occasion, also do the impossible! We must still consult the Lord!

Even so, there is a vast difference between seeking direction from a lot...and ill-gotten gains.

Remember, gambling is simply profiting from someone else's loss. Every time you buy a ticket, the winnings are taken from the money that nearly every other person lost. In other words, it is profiting from someone else's loss (versus an investment that is derived from a company's gain). How many poor people spend money on the lottery? A study from a Public Policy class in grad school revealed that the poor are the most likely to spend money in a lottery. As a result, there was a call to ban sale of lottery tickets in poor communities in Texas. Far too many poor people were spending their much needed money on tickets every week. This could be due to the fact that the poor might not understand the mathematics behind the odds.

The mathematical chances of winning the lottery are often lower than the odds that our bank's ATM will accidentally give us more money than we requested. Yet the outcome is still the same. It is receiving money at someone else's loss. The fine print on the back of a lottery ticket probably reads that the mathematical chances of winning the lottery are "1 in a million" (or something to that effect). But even if you were to win \$25,000,000 from the lottery, it would simply mean that this is \$25,000,000 that other people lost. My dad used to tell me that "a lottery is a tax upon people who are bad at math."

More importantly, there is a root in gambling that is seldom mentioned. It is the result of individuals who covet a quick means to the riches of this world. God instructs us to be content. He is our provider. He provides us jobs by which we ca

n support our families (or risk being "worse than an infidel"). Gambling is simply a lust for the things of this world. It is taking a small portion of our income and somehow hoping (against mathematical odds) that it will quickly turn into something more. How is this any different from the Israelites who tried to stuff a bunch of manna into their homes in the desert? Those who tried to quickly hoard up more than what they were instructed woke up to the sight and smell of worms in their tents (Exodus 16:20).

In a sense, this is a type and shadow of what it is like to covet the things of this world. Yes, we certainly need money to live and operate (and provide for our families) in this present world. But wouldn't it be far more expedient to take the money that we would invest in a lottery or slot machine and put it to work? We can place it in a bank to collect interest (albeit a Matthew 25). Or we could use it for some other noble purpose in which we can provide a service and receive an increase. However, gambling doesn't fit such a description! Gambling is trying to come into some fast money that comes from every other player's loss!

I knew a brother in the Lord who was actually addicted to gambling. He quietly confided in me that he couldn't help but purchase a lottery ticket when he went into a convenience store. I told him to stop going to convenience stores. Still, he would feel a need to purchase one nearly every time he went to the gas station. He told me that he had spent \$50 over a period of two months...and won all of \$4 (from "scratch off" lottery tickets). When I explained that he simply received the \$4 from individuals (like himself) who were losing money, he admitted that he knew it was wrong. He estimated that he might have spent over \$500 in a single year! Since he couldn't seem to find "victory" over this addiction, I told him to take the money that he would spend on lottery tickets...and invest it in a missionary organization. Take the money and spend it providing for the Kingdom of God! I told him that this is placing his money that brings an eternal reward. I explained that lives will be changed and souls will be saved!

It worked! This brother has been "lottery free" for nearly two years now!

:-)

**Re: Church Rejects Donation from Lottery Winner - posted by Compton (), on: 2008/8/15 13:54**

Quote:

-----\$600,000 can do a lot of good.  
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Apparently Pastor David Tarkington doesn't think it does enough good to be willing to abandon his conscience. Now comes the accusations..."you could have helped so many people! You could feed the poor, and build churches in the third world!"

I've heard many say God doesn't need our money. Here is one man that demonstrates it. I wonder what I would do? Perhaps the question is mute without considering the life of Christ working in me...

Interesting,

MC

**Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2008/8/15 14:14**

Perhaps some people will hear about this pastor's decision, quit gambling, and give their money to ministries? Maybe more the \$600,000 worth.