

*Fostering the Passion to Grasp***THE TRUTH ABOUT GAMBLING**

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FOR CHARITABLE PURPOSES

Gambling for charitable ends is as wrong as gambling in other forms. It is a sad fact that many charities and a few Churches sponsor or permit raffles and other forms of gambling for financial gain. It is frequently argued that the end justifies the means. But that very assertion implies condemnation. For the "means" must be bad if it requires a good "end" to justify it.

Even though it may wear religious garments, gambling remains inherently bad. Even though it be used to promote a most worthy cause, it remains in itself a source of moral corruption.

The fact that some religious leaders see no harm in gambling does not alter the truth that it violates a moral law. Moreover, the sordid and cruel history of gambling proves the moral law to be wise and good. For example, some time ago a British newspaper reviewed the lives of all winners of the Irish Sweepstakes throughout twenty-five years. These so-called lucky people had each won a fortune with which they were to turn life into a veritable paradise, with houses, servants, cars, swimming pools and so on. But an impartial investigation showed that in every case the story was one of trouble and tragedy.

The fact is that all money gained by gambling is corrupted and the gambler is corrupted in the process.

To give to charity by a system out of which you hope to gain something for yourself at the expense of one of your neighbours, amounts to clothing love in the garments of lust.

No action can be economically sound if it is morally wrong, even though sponsored by ecclesiastical authority. Even Satan sometimes appears as an angel of light. Let those who indulge in this vice under the guise of good works face the facts.

Anti-Social in Principle

Gambling is anti-social in practice. In other words, though he seldom realises it, the gambler is the enemy of democracy. He may be shocked and amazed to know that he is helping to destroy the heritage purchased by the blood of millions.

The aim of the gambler is to enrich himself at the expense of others. He is not content with the reward of honest labour and prudent foresight but schemes to gain money for which he has given no appropriate return. There are those who would deny this, asserting that all they seek is the excitement, which results from the element of chance inherent in gambling. They claim that they have little or no interest in any financial gain or loss involved. Then why not gamble with coloured marbles or the counters used in the game of tiddleywinks?

The element of chance would still be there and the possibility of financial gain or loss would be entirely eliminated.

The plain truth is that gamblers use money for one reason and one reason only, because it provides the element of gain at someone else's loss.

At the very heart of the gamble is covetousness. Take that out of the transaction and the vast organisation built up to maintain this vice would crumble overnight. By its very nature gambling breeds the spirit of recklessness and indolence which, but for Christian influence, would rapidly undermine our democratic way of life.

Gambling may be said to be a "fifth column" of those subversive spiritual forces which now hold millions of our fellow men in cruel bondage. Let the gambler face this undeniable fact.

Are Gambling Facilities Essential?

It is often argued that gambling facilities are essential, because if people cannot gamble legally they will gamble illegally. **That argument is worthless.** It is true that men have always gambled. They gambled for the garments of our Lord as He hung on the Cross. It is equally true that illicit gambling is rampant, but experience shows that it will continue even after all the new legal facilities are made available to the public.

Gambling is in the blood, some say, so why not legalise it, tax it, and get fat on the proceeds. But NO intelligent person would give a second thought to such foolish reasoning. Men have always murdered, so why not legalise it, tax it, and get fat on the proceeds. And likewise any other form of evil. We forbid these crimes because their evil results are both apparent and immediate. But we encourage gambling because we fail to see that its evil results, though often hidden and remote, are none the less real.

Only when we recognise that the law of God classes gambling with murder and other crimes, and that we cannot break that law without punishment, will we treat this cursed thing in the manner it deserves to be treated—like leprosy.

Let us face the facts. Let us tell the truth—in Parliament, in our schools and universities and in our pulpits. Above all, let us admit that only in a return to the teachings of Christ is there to be found a cure for this moral disease.

It seems that New Zealand has determined to learn by bitter experience. At least she will never be able to say that as among her truest friends, yearning for her highest good, the Salvation Army (among others) did not raise its voice in earnest and reasoned warning.

(The second of a series of articles on gambling by the Territorial Commander of the Salvation Army and printed by courtesy of the "War Cry.")

A CHALLENGING SURVEY

An interesting piece of research was recently done by Mr. and Mrs. Horace Burrell of the Yorkshire Band of Hope Union and the National Youth Temperance Council in an attempt to ascertain how far the drink factor was associated with crime and anti-social behaviour.

The search was confined to the columns of one Yorkshire evening newspaper, and cuttings were taken from April 1, 1951, to March 31, 1952.

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