

CAMPUS CHRONICLES

EPIC Bible College

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IS GAMBLING A MORAL SIN? By Cassandra Friday

Gambling is one of those topics where Christians definitely possess different opinions over whether it is acceptable or not. Many even argue that it is a moral sin. So, how do we come to a true conclusion on the matter? While there is no straightforward statement 'thou shall not gamble' in the Bible, gambling does go against many biblical principles. Let's look at the aspects of this pastime and some different interpretations.

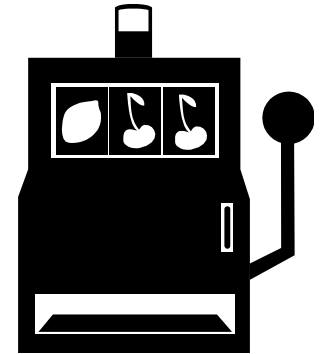
First, it is a fact that gambling is an addictive activity. Not everyone who gambles will become addicted to it, but there are those who do—as proven by the Gamblers Anonymous groups. As with any addiction, this can cause problems in a person's work and home life, along with affecting their personal relationships. However, simply for the fact that gambling has the ability to become addictive, does that make it a moral sin?

Second, there is the biblical teaching that the love of money is the root of all evil. "For the love of money is a root of all kind of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs" (1 Timothy 6:10). This is where a person needs to ask him or her self why gambling is enjoyable. God looks at a person's heart, and their motivation for participating in the act of gambling plays a role in whether it would really be considered a sin or not.

Third, is the biblical teaching of working for your money and being a good steward of it. Some Christians believe that gambling is in direct violation of this teaching because by winning, you are taking money that you did not earn. Also by winning, you are taking another person's hard-earned money; and if you lose, you are gambling away your income and not being a good steward of it. "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money" (Matthew 6:24).

These are all aspects to consider when trying to come to a conclusion as to whether gambling is a moral sin or not. The problem is that everyone interprets these aspects in different ways; and it eventually comes down to a personal decision between you and God. No one can make that decision for you. It is true, however, that as an individual matures in Christ, more time is spent in His service, rather than the pursuits of this world. In any case, it is important to keep this verse in mind: "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will" (Romans 12:2).

**Sidenote: the EPIC Code of Conduct does not allow gambling.*





DREAM UNTIL YOU CAN'T DREAM ANymore!

By Alexandra Renkvist

It's scary sometimes to think that what has been will never be again; to understand that whatever comes next can not be erased; to look ahead without daring to take the next step, mindfully knowing that the choices we make and the steps that we take affect our whole being.

As individuals, we each have dreams. When my sister was a little girl, her dream was to be a Princess (with a capital "P"). Not just any kind of Princess, but a real one. The kind of Princess that has a royal castle, a royal dress, and a royal horse; she wanted the works. Never did she let the dream go. She had determined, that since she was not born into a royal family, she would instead have to marry a Prince in order to become a Princess. Some people may call it crazy, but I call it faith. She dreamed a dream and refused to let it go.

This is what life is about. We can either put one foot in front of the other in faith, or we can stand still and just wait hoping that whatever it is that God has for us will come along sooner or later. Too many of us wait around until it's too late, only to know that if we would have just taken that step, our dreams might have been reality.

Thinking that your dream was just a dream, and never has a chance to become reality, is foolish. You have to believe it to see it, not see it to believe it, and know the difference between the two. Often the desires of our heart [that which we dream of] are God's plan for us. We must, in faith and prayer, walk towards that.

My sister has now found her prince; even though he is not of royal blood, he is just the kind of prince she always wanted. She may not have the horse, or the castle, but in her eyes she has so much more. He sees her as a princess and treats her like royalty. This is the reality of what she always dreamed of; what her heart always wanted, and through faith she received it.

I say, dream until you can't dream anymore. As we walk out our dreams, whatever they may be, it is important to never give up. Setting your eyes on something and not letting go of that goal is one of the greatest things you can do for yourself. There is one life, one chance to live in faith. ***Dream until you can't dream anymore!***

SERVANTS OF THE LORD,

By Timothy L. Wellington

If you are a new student here at EPIC, welcome. The Lord loves you and we do too. May the Lord grant you peace in Christ Jesus as we make our ministry and journey at EPIC Bible College. When I first started in ministry there were some rough mountains to climb. I can hear the old songwriter singing, “I’m climbing up – the rough side, of the mountain.” So let me encourage you: in faith He will see you through.

Previous to my times here at EPIC, I attended Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary (GGBTS) in Mill Valley, California, and graduated in 1995. This week while going through a stack of magazines I came across an article from the alumni magazine, *Gateway*, “Chaplains: Stepping Into Lives in Crisis.” It got my attention explaining how chaplains really step out in faith with their many unique ministries.

Those of you on active and reserve duty in the military know that military chaplains perform many different unique roles. The beginning of this article got my attention with many GGBTS graduates describing their unique ministry and how visible their lives are in that ministry role. The article also served as a reminder to me of the very tangible and constant presence of the Lord in the lives of those who are doing His work.

This article pointed out to me that each of these chaplains—in whatever capacity they serve and wherever they serve--truly give God the glory. It’s the transparency of your faith, trust, and dependence on the Lord that brings all glory to Him. While you are here at EPIC, diligently study His word, seek to know the Lord, and relentlessly seize the opportunity to discipline the saved and minister to the unsaved. Wherever you are-- on the bus, on light rail trains, serving one of our local churches--give Him the glory.

We all have our own ministry goals. Mine is to serve in the U.S. Naval—Marine Corps Chaplaincy and to give of myself as “One who sees things not as they are, but as they can be” (2 *Corinthians* 4:18). Whatever our ministry, there will be times when we step into lives in crisis. In those situations, the Lord challenges us, not just to council the hurting heart, but to do the mission Christ Jesus has commissioned us: go into the world and spread the good news. The simple preaching of the word that will convict, pierce, and open the heart and mind of at least one person to receive Him in the power of His Holy Spirit.

In whatever capacity you serve: truly give God all the glory.

Stepping out in faith!



A New Day Starts Right Now,

By Sonia Kotko

My day has just started and things are not going well at all. First my alarm clock didn't go off and now I am running an hour behind schedule. Quickly I jumped out of bed only to jump onto several pieces of Legos that got missed while cleaning up last night. As I stumble, I hit my toe on the corner of the wall. Ouch! Continuing down the hallway limping on one foot, I see that my son has not even gotten out of bed. Ugg! Now he'll be late for school. I then throw open his door, turn on his light, draw up the blinds and shake him. He's not waking up so I pull back the covers to expose his body to the crisp cold air. Now he's moving! Then off to the kitchen I go. I grab the box of cereal out of the cupboard only to find that the ants are having breakfast. No cereal today. I'll deal with the ants later. I grab some waffles from the freezer, toss them in the toaster, and put them on a plate. Breakfast served! This morning is not off to a good start. Oh, but tomorrow will be better.

With everything in motion I head back to my room. Paying close attention to not step on those Legos again, I lie back down in bed and spend time thanking God for this new, not so wonderful, day. Then a memory comes back about the time God revealed to me what a new day is and when it begins. God reminded me that my new day could start at anytime, and at any moment, not just tomorrow.

About 14 years ago, I had to undergo a bone marrow transplant just one month after the birth of my son. On one of those first lonely nights in the hospital, I realized how short life could be. God began to speak to me: not through words, but through a simple breath. As I was watching my chest rise and fall, I realized that the breath I just took could be my last. I didn't want to leave this world with regrets, with words or actions that would leave someone hurting or with an impression of me that did not reflect God. So, when things go wrong (such as a bad start to a day or saying things wrong) I don't wait until the next day to restart or work on my faults. James 4:14 says it best, "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow... You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." Psalm 39:5 states "...Everyone is but a breath, even those who seem secure." To prove this point, you can do the following exercise. Take a deep breath and then hold it as long as you can. You cannot survive without breathing. As you see tomorrow wouldn't come for you, if it were not for the breath of life from God. Don't put off what you can do today for tomorrow. Tomorrow has enough problems. Now stand up, take a deep breath, and begin your day now; again, again, and again. Humble yourself before others and begin your *New Day*. I have, and my new day looks awesome. How does yours look?



THIS WEEK IN CHURCH HISTORY with Pastor Charlie

JANUARY 2

533: John II began serving as Pope. Named Mercurius by his parents (after the Roman god Mercury), he did not want to use his pagan name to lead Christians, so he was the first bishop to change his name when elected to the Papacy.

1839: French photographer Louis Daguerre took the first known photograph of the moon.

JANUARY 3

1521: Martin Luther was excommunicated by Pope Leo X for challenging Catholic Church doctrine.

1793: Birthdate of Lucretia Mott, often called the "first American feminist." She is remembered as a lifelong advocate for women's rights and one of the greatest leaders of the anti-slavery movement. She founded the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society.

1962: Pope John XXIII excommunicated Cuban communist dictator Fidel Castro.

JANUARY 4

1809: Birthdate of Louis Braille, the Frenchman who invented the reading system for the blind.

1821: Elizabeth Ann Seton died in Maryland. "Mother Seaton," as she was called, was the first native-born American to be declared a saint by the Catholic Church in 1975.

1893: President Benjamin Harrison granted amnesty to all Mormon polygamists. Exactly two years later, the Utah territory - having officially abandoned polygamy - was admitted as the 45th state in the Union.

1915: Moses Alexander was sworn in as governor of Idaho, the first elected Jewish governor in the U.S.

JANUARY 5

1527: Swiss Anabaptist reformer Felix Manz was drowned as punishment for preaching adult baptism, as opposed to the Catholic and Lutheran doctrine of infant baptism. He was the first Protestant in history to be martyred at the hands of other Protestants.

JANUARY 6

548: This was the last year the Church in Jerusalem observed the birth of Jesus on this date. (Celebrating Christmas on December 25th began in the late 300s in the Western Church.)

1494: The first mass in America was celebrated in the Roman Catholic Church on Isabella Island in Haiti. Held at the first Christian church established in the New World, it was founded by Christopher Columbus.

1850: Sixteen-year-old Charles Spurgeon was converted to a "living faith." He later became England's great Baptist preacher and is still known as the "Prince of Preachers." In his lifetime, Spurgeon preached to around 10 million people, often up to 10 times each week at different places. Spurgeon was the pastor of the New Park Street Chapel in London for 38 years and later the Metropolitan Tabernacle, which could hold 6,000 people.

1924: The first worship service heard over radio was aired by the BBC in England.

JANUARY 7

1610: Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei discovered four moons of Jupiter with the aid of the newly invented telescope. His discovery convinced him the sun is the center of the solar system. The Church's Inquisition arrested him, accusing him of heresy for denying the earth was the center of all Creation. (In 1992, Pope John Paul II expressed regret for how the Galileo affair was handled. In 2008 the Vatican erected a statue of Galileo.)

JANUARY 8

1198: Giovanni Lotario dei Conti di Segni was elected as Pope Innocent III. He became the most influential Pope of the Middle Ages and arguably the most politically powerful Pope ever to hold that office.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE Actor's Workshop and Integral Theatre Company, 2011 Season Auditions

Tuesday January 11th, 7:00pm & Monday, January 17th, 7:00pm

Integral Theatre Company will be holding general auditions for 4 of its 2011 season shows on Tuesday, January 11th, 2011 @ 7PM. Shows will perform in April, May, July and October.

For more info, please contact us at info@actorsworkshop.net, OR call 916-207-5606.

April production, to honor the Easter season, will be *The Lower Room* written by Pat Wooley, and directed by EPIC Bible College professor Tana Colburn.

Cast consists of 2 men and 9 women of varying ages.

May production, *Victoria at 18* by Tim Kelly.

Cast: Victoria is precast. 2 men of 40's or older, 3 young women of late teens to early 20's, and 3 women of 40 or older.

July production, *The Adventure of Treasure Island* based on the book by Robert Louis Stevenson. Dramatized by Max Bush.

Cast: Jim Hawkins, a young man who LOOKS 13 or so; Mrs. Hawkins, his mother; Old Kate, a pirate; and various Pirates:— All men of varying ages from 20's to 50's.

October production TBD.

Auditions will consist of at least one 1 1/2 minute monologue, of your choice.

Raley Field Job Fair

Saturday, Feb 5: 10 AM - 3 PM & Saturday, Feb 12: 10 AM - 3 PM
Job Fair held on the concourse, enter through main gates. Bring driver's license or state ID AND social security card or passport.



**5225 Hillsdale Blvd.,
Sacramento, CA 95842**

Phone: (916) 348-4689

Website: www.epic.edu

E-Mail: info@epic.edu

Audio Boot Camp

The workshop is being offered as a service to churches in our community at a discount from the regular for credit per unit fee.* This church sound training will offer audio foundational basics to advanced techniques and has something for every skill and experience level. Past workshops have proven beneficial for Music Pastors and the entire Worship Team as well.

Register at the EPIC Bible College office, or for more information contact Prof. Colburn at (916) 348-4689, ext 424.

**This discount does not provide college credit, and is not available to EPIC students.*