

VI — GAMBLING

The Missionary Church reaffirms its opposition to gambling and lotteries, including those run by government. These are socially, morally and economically destructive. They are rooted in covetousness and violate the biblical work ethic.

We believe that gambling in any form is potentially addictive. It is a social evil that feeds upon greed and sells a set of fantasy values that exploit people. It especially harms the poor who can least afford to forfeit their financial resources on the promise of instant wealth. The tragic end result is often deepened poverty and increased welfare rolls, to say nothing of the emotional damage and disillusionment experienced by the vast numbers of planned losers.

Gambling undermines the economic base of a nation in that it reduces the purchasing power of people. Money gambled by wage earners cannot be spent to purchase goods and services of constructive and productive businesses.

Compulsive gambling may cause the individual's character to be further weakened and to disintegrate. It may lead to indolence and self-delusion, the break up of families, crime, loss of jobs and even suicide.

Since we deplore the exploitation of the weaknesses of humanity, the Missionary Church calls upon all who are in positions of influence and decision-making to seek other means by which to raise revenue. We further call upon the churches and schools to conduct programs that will inform people of the evils of gambling.

— Adopted by the 1985 General Conference