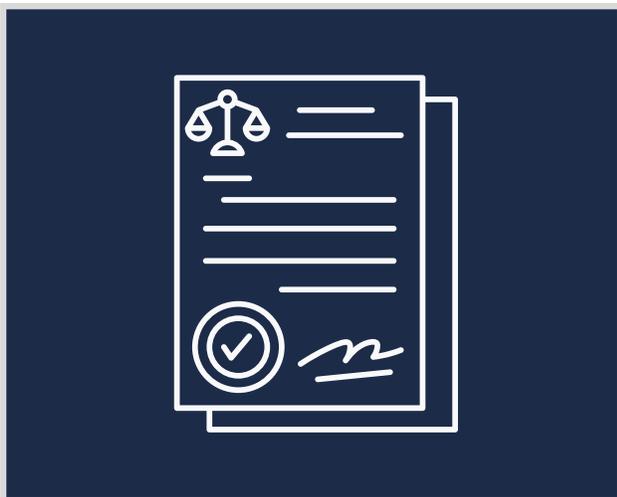
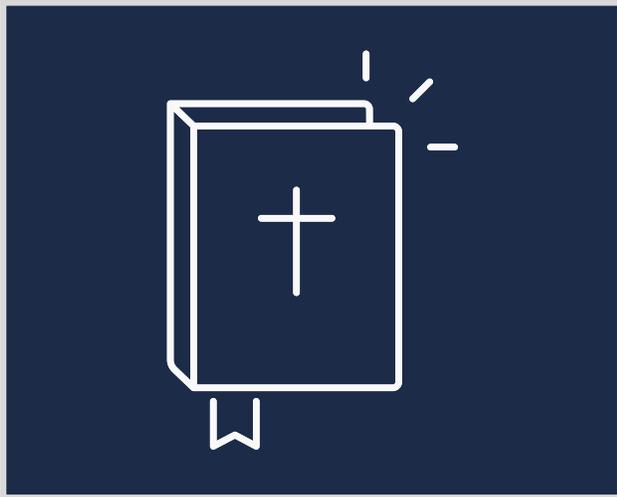




BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES ON BONDAGE AND ADDICTION

Gambling



“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”
Matthew 22:37-40

FACILITATING A DISCUSSION ON THE IMPACT OF GAMBLING

The Church Ambassador Network of Texas partners with churches throughout the state to confront and break the patterns of bondage that undermine the well-being of our communities. Bondage refers to the destructive cycles of behavior and oppression that people struggle to escape. Among the forces that create such cycles, gambling stands out as a particularly powerful and dangerous driver of addiction.

The Church Ambassador Network is committed to protecting Texans from these harms and ensuring that those already affected have a clear path toward deliverance. We also call on the evangelical Church in Texas to speak boldly and proactively into today's cultural debates. Scripture is not silent on matters related to exploitation, temptation, and the misuse of resources. As such, the principles of God's Word must play a central role in shaping public opinion and public policy alongside the historical and statistical evidence.

WHAT DOES THE DATA SAY?

- 24% of fantasy sports bettors and 17% of traditional sports bettors reported problematic behaviors. [1]
- Approximately 2.5 million U.S. adults suffer from severe gambling problems, with an additional 5 to 8 million facing mild to moderate gambling problems due to their gambling behavior. [2]
- 15% of adults ages 18–34 reported concerning behavior, compared to 2% of those 55+. [3]
- Online gambling participation rose significantly, from 15% in 2018 to 22% in 2024, and is closely associated with risk. [4]
 - 22% of online gamblers are at risk gamblers compared to less than 10% non-online gamblers. [5]
- Rates of gambling addiction for criminal offenders far exceed rates found among non-offenders. On average, an estimated 50% of those affected by gambling problems commit crimes to support their addiction. [6]
- A 2026 article in the *Journal of Psychiatry* reported that people with gambling disorder had 58% higher odds of experiencing suicidal ideation, were nearly three times more likely to attempt suicide, and faced an over eight-fold increase in suicide mortality. [7]
- Both clinical studies and surveys show that the rate of divorce is consistently higher than that found in comparison groups. [8]
- Only about 7%–12% of individuals with a lifetime history of gambling disorder have ever received formal treatment or attended self-help groups for gambling problems. [9]
- “Our conclusion is clear: gambling poses a threat to public health.” World Health Organization Researchers [10]

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PRINCIPLES OF BONDAGE AND ADDICTIONS

Addictions start by offering entertainment and excitement, but they inevitably tighten their grip, resulting in bondage and the loss of control over one's life.

*“Everything is permissible for me,” but not everything is helpful.
“Everything is permissible for me,” but I will not be brought under the
control of anything.”
1 Corinthians 6:12*

Addictions and bondage exact a heavy toll, devastating individuals, straining families, and undermining the health of our communities.

*“But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his
own evil desire. Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin,
and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.”
James 1:14-15*

Breaking free from addictions and bondage demands recognition of one's need for help and intentional intervention.

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and
purify us from all unrighteousness.”
1 John 1:9*

Oppressors perpetuate systems and behaviors that sustain bondage and limit freedom.

*“Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the
fatherless, plead the widow's cause.”
Isaiah 1:17*

Those who oppress often create conditions that allow corruption to take root and grow.

*“He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house,
But he who hates bribes will live.”
Proverbs 15:27*

Every Texan has a vested interest in the health, safety, and prosperity of our communities and state.

*“Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the
Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.”
Jeremiah 29:7*

The Law functions as both a guiding framework and a protective measure against the harmful effects of bondage and addiction.

*“What should we say then? Is the law sin? Absolutely not! But I would not have
known sin if it were not for the law.”
Romans 7:7*



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