



A Pastoral Statement on Gambling and Casino Engagement **Pastor Oriental J. Newburn, Sr. 3/28/26**

As pastor, I am committed to providing biblical guidance that honors the truth of Scripture as we navigate the culture and world in which we live. With the development of a new casino in our community, I want to offer thoughtful, Spirit-informed direction. The Apostle Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 10:23 that all things are lawful, but not all things are expedient, meaning that permissibility does not equal wisdom, and participation does not constitute sin. Simply put, just because you can does not always mean you should, and just because you engage does not mean you have sinned. Gambling, like many forms of entertainment, is not explicitly condemned in Scripture. Yet the believer is always called to exercise Spirit-led discernment, self-control, and moderation. What begins as recreation can quietly become ruin for those who fail to establish boundaries. I encourage every member to seek the counsel of the Holy Spirit before engaging and to practice discretion in all things, and to never allow any form of entertainment to compete with your stewardship, your family, or your integrity.

Regarding employment, Scripture does not prohibit a believer from working in a casino environment, provided they do so with integrity, character, and an unwavering commitment to their witness. God is fully capable of using His people as salt and light in every arena of society. Whether you find yourself as a patron or an employee, my pastoral counsel rooted in Scripture remains the same — walk in wisdom,

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exercise self-control, and let the Holy Spirit govern your choices. I trust our members as maturing disciples who can navigate these decisions with godly discernment, and I remain available to anyone who desires pastoral guidance. I also want to gently remind you that Baptist churches operate autonomously, and another pastor or congregation may hold a different interpretation on this matter. Should that be the case, please do not engage in debate or argument, extend grace and move forward.

Finally, as a word of practical wisdom: while gambling, lottery tickets, and scratch-offs are not automatically sinful, they are unwise choices for anyone currently facing financial hardship, debt, or bankruptcy. Let your stewardship always reflect the faithfulness of the God you serve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Oriental J. Newburn, Sr.', written in a cursive style.

Pastor Oriental J. Newburn, Sr., M.Div.