



OCTOBER 2026 GENERAL CONFERENCE · SATURDAY MORNING SESSION

O Be Wise

President D. Todd Christofferson · Second Counselor in the First Presidency

Words to remember

- *“Gambling is built on the desire to obtain something for nothing. Its structure requires that any gain comes at others’ expense.”*
- *“Remembering President Oaks’s comments about ‘opportunity cost’ and the opportunities lost when a person devotes time and money to gambling, my plea again is not only to refrain from gambling but to use the time and resources saved thereby for doing good.”*

In President D. Todd Christofferson’s own words, from the talk.

President D. Todd Christofferson of the First Presidency said he felt a bit like the Book of Mormon prophet Jacob, who felt the Spirit pushing him to talk about a hard subject with “boldness of speech.” With a sense of duty, he turned to the subject of gambling.

He began with a story President Gordon B. Hinckley once told about U.S. President Calvin Coolidge, a man of few words. When Coolidge came home from church, his wife asked what the preacher spoke about. “Sin.” “Well, what did he say?” “He was against it.” President Hinckley said he could answer the question about gambling just as briefly: We’re against it.

Gambling means risking money or something valuable on how something will turn out. President Christofferson said it has troubled people since ancient times, and time hasn’t made it any better. But recently the smartphone has turned gambling from something people did once in a while into something available all the time, privately. About 46% of adults worldwide gambled in the last year, and the gambling industry made about \$758 billion in 2025. He pointed out that the industry’s money is the gamblers’ loss. Its whole business depends on customers losing.

He named three growing kinds: online sports betting, online casino-type games, and prediction markets, where people bet on whether something will happen, even, he said that the timing of the second coming. He wondered how anyone could ever collect on a bet like that.

Young people are especially affected. In the United States, 36% of boys ages 11 to 17 said they gambled last year, rising to almost half of boys by age 17. Many young women ages 18 to 29 gamble too. Gambling can become consuming. It takes time from school, relationships, and work, crowds out good things, and grows greed. People know the house always wins, but they think it won’t win against them.

President Oaks teaches us to ask, “Where will this lead?” Every choice has an opportunity cost. Time and money spent gambling can’t be spent on something worthwhile.

Even if someone thinks they can gamble for fun without harm, President Christofferson asked us to think about our example. Children and people who are newer or weaker in the faith may follow us. The Apostle Paul taught that even something harmless to us could become a stumbling block to them that are weak. “Every soul is precious, and Christ died for him, for her, as He did for you.” President Christofferson said, and Christ died for each one.

Most of all, gambling is morally wrong. It is built on wanting something for nothing, and any gain comes at someone else’s expense. That’s hard to fit with the commandment to love our neighbor. President Oaks taught that it leads us away from the giving path of Christ.

President Christofferson pleaded with us to live life on a higher plane. A life well lived means helping others, working on worthy things, and “It is being and doing better without others doing worse.” He asked us not only to avoid gambling but to use the time and money we save for good, to be anxiously engaged in a good cause. He ended with Jacob’s words: “O be wise; what can I say more?”

Scripture to look up: Jacob 6:12. Jacob ended his teaching by pleading with his people to be wise, the counsel President Christofferson took for his title.

Let’s talk about it

What did this talk teach us about the Savior? What is one small thing our family can do this week?

Kid-friendly summary in our own words · Read or watch the full talk: [churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/19christofferson](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/19christofferson)