

Christians and Maryland's Slots Referendum

Three Biblical Tools for Decision-Making¹

| Tool | <u>Tool 1: The Theological Principle</u> | <u>Tool 2: The Stewardship Principle</u> | <u>Tool 3: The Evangelical Principle</u> |
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| Summary | We are part of something bigger than ourselves – our relationships with God and others – and it is these, and not luck, that will sustain us. | We are managers of what God owns, and are responsible to make our decisions in the public world accordingly. . | As Christians, our central truth is what God did on the cross, the love behind it, and the imperative to represent that love in the world. |
| Hebrew Scripture | “We make our own decisions, but the Lord alone determines what happens.” Proverbs 16:33 CEV | “The earth and everything on it belong to the Lord. The world and its people belong to him.” Psalm 24:1, CEV | “I am the You’re your God, and I command you not to make fun of the deaf or to cause a blind person to stumble.” Leviticus 19:14, CEV |
| Christian Scripture | “If one part of our body hurts, we hurt all over. If one part of our body is honored, the whole body will be happy. Together you are the body of Christ. Each one of you is part of his body.” 1 Corinthians 12:26-27 CEV | “Give the Emperor what belongs to him and give God what belongs to God.” Matthew 22:21b, CEV | “Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to the person through whom they come.” Luke 17:1 “God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die.” John 3:16 CEV... |
| Opposing Concept | Trust luck, not God | Spend with abandon <i>Give to churches</i> | Care only for oneself <i>Give</i> |
| Opposing “Excuse” | This is entertainment, a harmless form of recreation | Slots or other gambling will pay for education or the social service of your choice. | A portion of earnings can be earmarked for treatment of addicts; casinos can cut off their credit after a certain point. <i>only the willing remain free</i> |
| Result | Hopeless | Penniless Losers victimized by society <i>innocent community</i> | Godless <i>isolated</i> Loved by God <i>Addictive</i> |
| Result of using tool: | Helps your personal decision | Decide how to vote | Activity on behalf of God. |
| Issues | In what will I personally engage/not engage: Firehall bingo Raffles Casinos Lotteries Betting on a horse Poker game with friends | What shall we make legal and what will benefit the community as a whole? Lottery Slots Casinos Numbers | How do we best express God’s love for the least, the last and the lost? Addiction programs Rehabilitation Homeless shelters Jails Evangelization ministries |
| Strategy to Overcome | Highlight the counterfeit nature of the excitement | Analyze the numbers <i>Do the Math who wins who loses</i> | Real compassionate effort to change both the lives and the circumstances of those who have lost. |

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| Biblical Conclusion | <i>For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land...a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing...</i> | <i>You have not strengthened the weak, you have not healed the sick, you have not bound up the injured...</i> | <i>For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places</i> | <i>From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required.</i> |
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Health Care: www.umc-gbcs.org/healthcare

To take action or join a network: www.umcpower.org

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