

THE BIBLICAL PRECEPTS OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

I. ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER WITHOUT PASSING JUDGMENT ON EACH OTHER, FOR WE BELONG TO THE LORD.

- Accept him whose faith is weak. Romans 14:1
- Accept your brother without passing judgment on disputable matters. Romans 14:2, 5-8
- As born-again Christians, we are all the same; yet also, we are different. Romans 14:2, 5-8
- We must not look down or condemn each other FOR GOD HAS ACCEPTED US BOTH. Romans 14:3
- Who are you to judge someone else's servant? Romans 14:4
- We will all stand before the judgment seat of God, in order that each of us will give an account of himself to God. Romans 14:10-12
- Do not by your liberty destroy your brother for whom Christ died. Romans 14:15
- We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Romans 15:1

II. ANYTHING THAT IS NOT DONE FROM FAITH IS SIN.

- The man who has doubts is condemned if he eats because his eating is not from faith. Romans 14:23
- Everything that does not come from faith is sin. Romans 14:23

III. DO NOT PUT A STUMBLING BLOCK IN YOUR BROTHER'S WAY.

- It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall. Romans 14:21
- Make up your mind not to put a stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way. Romans 14:13
- Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ has died. Romans 14:15.
- It is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. Romans 14:20
- If your brother regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean. Romans 14:14
- Romans 15:2, 3a - "Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. FOR even Christ did not please himself."
- Don't let your knowledge of your freedom (liberty) stumble your weaker brother for whom Christ died. 1 Corinthians 8:10,11
- If your liberty causes your weaker brother to fall into sin, then never use that liberty again. 1 Corinthians 8:13
- A weak conscience will be a defiled conscience. 1 Corinthians 8:2
- Be careful that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. 1 Corinthians 8:9
- Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others. 1 Corinthians 10:24
- Do not exercise your liberty if by doing so you will offend an unbeliever's conscience. 1 Corinthians 10:27-29

- Do not let your freedom be judged by an unbeliever or weaker brother's conscience. 1 Cor. 10:29
- Do not cause anyone (unbeliever or believer) to stumble. 1 Corinthians 10:32
- Strive to please everybody (unbeliever or believer) in whatever freedom you choose to exercise. 1 Corinthians 10:33

IV. GOD HAS MADE ALL THINGS GOOD.

- No food is unclean in itself. Romans 14:14
- All food is clean. Romans 14:20
- The earth is the Lord's and everything in it. 1 Corinthians 10:26
- If you thanked God for it with a clear conscience, partake in it with a clear conscience. 1 Corinthians 10:30

V. LOVE ONE ANOTHER AND SERVE ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE.

- Romans 15:1 - "We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves."
- Romans 15:2, 3a - "Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For even Christ did not please himself."
- If what you eat causes your brother to be distressed, then you are no longer acting in love. Romans 14:15
- Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. Romans 14:20
- Do not by your liberty destroy your brother for whom Christ has died. Romans 14:15
- Let us make every effort to do what leads to peace and mutual edification. Romans 14:19
- Knowledge puffs up but love builds up. 1 Corinthians 8:1
- Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others. 1 Corinthians 10:24
- Strive to please everybody (unbeliever & believer) in whatever freedom you partake. 1 Corinthians 10:33
- Seek not your own good but the good of many so that they may be saved. 1 Corinthians 11:1
- If your liberty causes your weaker brother to fall into sin, then never use that liberty again. 1 Corinthians 8:13

VI. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT BASED UPON DISPUTABLE MATTERS, BUT RATHER ON LOVE, RIGHTEOUSNESS, PEACE AND JOY IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- The Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Romans 14:17
- Anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men. Romans 14:18
- Make every effort to do what leads to peace and mutual edification. Romans 14:19
- Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. Romans 14:20
- Romans 15:5,6 - "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

- Food does not bring us near to God. 1 Corinthians 8:8

VII. WHATEVER YOU BELIEVE ABOUT DISPUTABLE MATTERS KEEP BETWEEN YOURSELF AND GOD

- Do not allow what you consider good to be spoken of as evil. Romans 14:16
- Whatever you believe about disputable matters keep between yourself and God. Romans 14:22
- Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves. Romans 14:22

VIII. DO ALL THINGS FOR THE GLORY OF GOD.

- Though "everything" may be permissible -- not everything is beneficial. 1 Corinthians 10:23
- Whatever freedom you take do all for the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31
- Follow other Christian's example as they follow the example of Christ. 1 Corinthians 6:12
- Your body is meant for the Lord; therefore, glorify God in your body. 1 Corinthians 6:13

PRACTICING THE BIBLICAL PRECEPTS OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTIES

1. Determine if all or any part is a true liberty.
2. Read the appropriate Scripture passages and substitute your liberty for the ones spoken of by the apostle. Romans 14 and 15; 1 Corinthians 6:12; 8; 10:25-11:1
3. Seek Godly/wise counsel to help you examine your thinking and heart.
4. Review the basic precepts/questions concerning disputable matters.
 - Will this glorify God? 1 Corinthians 10:31
 - Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of liberties.
 - Do not by your liberty destroy your brother for whom Christ died.
 - We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.
 - Can I do this in the name of Jesus and offer a prayer of thanks over it?
 - Does this help to tear down my Christian life or that of my brothers?
 - Will this hinder others from knowing the Lord?
 - Will this focus my attention away from the Lord's will for my life (seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; for the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of love, righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit)?
 - Can I do this and obey god's command to love one another and serve one another in love?
 - Whatever you believe about disputable matters keep between yourself and God.
 - Am I able to view this from God's perspective/brother's perspective?
 - Am I mastered by this?
 - As born-again Christians, we are all the same, yet we are all different. Romans 14:2,5-8
 - Am I compelled by the love of Christ in this decision to no longer live for myself, but for Jesus? 2 Corinthians 5:14,15

- Its okay to do it today, but might not be okay tomorrow.
- Am I being provided an opportunity to practice Christ-likeness?
- Can I do this and keep a clear conscience? 1 Corinthians 10:30
- Even if I have a clear conscience, am I considering others better than myself? Phillipians 2:3,4
- Remembering that "disputable matters" are just that, disputable, will I continue to accept my brother without passing judgment? Romans 14
- Keeping all of the above guidelines; when I allow myself a liberty, I will keep a low profile (between God and me) Romans 14:22
- Am I really being sensitive to others?
- Am I making every effort to do what leads to peace and mutual edification? Romans 12:18
- Am I acting out of selfish ambition? Phillipians 2:3-5
- Am I imitating God, am I living a life of love? Ephesians 5:1
- Am I making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace? Ephesians 4:2,3
- In my liberty am I hurting others, or am I showing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control? Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22-25
- After carefully considering the spiritual impact on all others and myself, can I honestly thank God for this or do I want to hide it from Him?

5. If/when in doubt - refrain - wait - continue to pray, to examine the Word of God and self, and to do that which you know to be good.

Remember:

- To take any liberty without faith is sin. Romans 14:23
- Though everything may be permissible, not everything is beneficial. 1 Corinthians 6:12
- When it comes to disputable matters, we are no worse if we do not partake and no better if we do. 1 Corinthians 8:8
- Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves. Romans 14:22