

Glorifying God in Gray Areas

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Making Decisions in Gray Areas

If the issue you are wondering about is not specifically addressed in the Bible, then it's helpful to ask these questions from 1 Corinthians to help you in deciding what to do. Asking these questions (and others like them) will help you make a wise decision based on sound biblical principles.

1. Will it benefit me spiritually? First Corinthians 10:23 says, "All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify."
2. Will it put me in bondage? First Corinthians 6:12 says, "All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything." Any questionable practice that can be habit-forming is not wise to pursue.
3. Will it defile God's temple? First Corinthians 6:19-20 says, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body." We should not do anything with our bodies that would dishonor the Lord.
4. Will it cause others to stumble? First Corinthians 8:8-9 says, "Food will not commend us to God; we are neither the worse if we do not eat, nor the better if we do eat. But take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak." One should refrain from using his freedom in an area which might cause others to sin. For "by sinning against the brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore," Paul said, "if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, that I might not cause my brother to stumble."
5. Will it help the cause of evangelism? First Corinthians 10:32-33 says, "Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be saved." We must think of the effect any practice might have on our testimony to the lost.
6. Will it violate my conscience? First Corinthians 10:25-29 contains three references to abstaining from a certain practice "for conscience' sake." And Romans 14:23 says, "He who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin." If we are not sure whether an action is pleasing to God, we should not do it. That way our conscience will remain clear and our relationship to God will not be hindered.
7. Will it bring glory to God? First Corinthians 10:31 summarizes all these principles by saying, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."