

What if the Bible doesn't say?

The Bible doesn't give specific teaching about some things. For example, the Bible doesn't teach us specific things about entertainment, hobbies, relationships, appearance and clothes, humor, language, what kinds of food we should eat, or what we should drink. How do we decide on these questions? We will study some biblical guidelines for us to use.

But first two questions to ask yourself:

1. How determined are you to surrender everything in obedience to Christ?

Luke 9:57-62 As they were going along the road, someone said to Jesus, "I will follow you any place you go." ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "The foxes have holes to live in, and the birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to rest his head." ⁵⁹ Jesus said to another man, "Follow me!" But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." ⁶⁰ But Jesus said to him, "Let the people who are dead bury their own dead. You must go and tell about the kingdom of God." ⁶¹ Another man said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me go and say good-bye to my family." ⁶² Jesus said, "Anyone who begins to plow a field but keeps looking back is of no use in the kingdom of God."

Luke 14:25-33 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ "If anyone comes to me but loves his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, or sisters—or even life—more than me, he cannot be my follower. ²⁷ Whoever is not willing to carry his cross and follow me cannot be my follower. ²⁸ If you want to build a tower, you first sit down and decide how much it will cost, to see if you have enough money to finish the job. ²⁹ If you don't, you might lay the foundation, but you would not be able to finish. Then all who would see it would make fun of you, ³⁰ saying, 'This person began to build but was not able to finish.' ³¹ "If a king is going to fight another king, first he will sit down and plan. He will decide if he and his ten thousand soldiers can defeat the other king who has twenty thousand soldiers. ³² If he can't, then while the other king is still far away, he will send some people to speak to him and ask for peace. ³³ In the same way, you must give up everything you have to be my follower.

John 7:17 If people choose to do what God wants, they will know that my teaching comes from God and not from me.

2. Are you prepared to stop doing anything that doesn't help you to follow Christ?

Here are some questions to ask yourself. Be prayerful. Ask God with complete honesty and search your heart.

Will it bring Glory to God?

1 Corinthians 10:31 "... if you eat or drink, or if you do anything, do it all for the glory of God."

Will it really please and honor the Lord?

Will it help my Christian life, my Christian witness and my Christian service?

1 Corinthians 10:23 "We are allowed to do all things," but not all things are good for us to do. "We are allowed to do all things," but not all things help others grow stronger.

It might not be evil, but will it really benefit your relationship with the Lord? Will it make you more effective in your witness and your service. Some relationships, pleasures and activities are not evil in themselves but are “weights” slowing you down spiritually.

2 Timothy 2:22 But run away from the evil desires of youth. Try hard to live right and to have faith, love, and peace, together with those who trust in the Lord from pure hearts.

Could it become an addiction?

1 Corinthians 6:12 ... “I am allowed to do all things,” but I will not let anything make me its slave.

God wants us to be self-controlled. Some things seem to be innocent things, like reading non-Christian books or watching harmless TV. But they can sometimes become an addiction. They can take up time for prayer, Christian fellowship and service.

Will it make me stronger, or will I be overcome by temptation?

We pray “...do not cause us to be tempted...” (Matthew 6:13) but do we lead ourselves into temptation?

Galatians 6:8 If they plant to satisfy their sinful selves, their sinful selves will bring them ruin. But if they plant to please the Spirit, they will receive eternal life from the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:3-4 But there must be no sexual sin among you, or any kind of evil or greed. Those things are not right for God’s holy people. ⁴ Also, there must be no evil talk among you, and you must not speak foolishly or tell evil jokes. These things are not right for you. Instead, you should be giving thanks to God.

Does it lead me to an unhelpful association with the world?

The New Testament usually uses “world” to mean things that are far from God and against God.

1 John 2:15-16 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If you love the world, the love of the Father is not in you. ¹⁶ These are the ways of the world: wanting to please our sinful selves, wanting the sinful things we see, and being too proud of what we have. None of these come from the Father, but all of them come from the world.

Am I really absolutely sure in my heart this thing is right?

Would I feel happy to ask Jesus to do it with me?

The Apostle Paul used the example of questions about food.

Romans 14:23 But those who eat something without being sure it is right are wrong because they did not believe it was right. Anything that is done without believing it is right is a sin.”

Should I avoid it so that I won’t hurt other people?

Romans 13:10 Love never hurts a neighbor...

Romans 14:21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that will cause your brother or sister to sin.

Romans 15:2 Let each of us please our neighbors for their good, to help them be stronger in faith.

1 Corinthians 8:9 But be careful that your freedom does not cause those who are weak in faith to fall into sin.

See also 1 Corinthians 8:10-13; 1 Corinthians 9:12; Ephesians 4:3.

Is it a wise use of my time, money and energy?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 You should know that your body is a temple for the Holy Spirit who is in you. You have received the Holy Spirit from God. So you do not belong to yourselves,²⁰ because you were bought by God for a price. So honor God with your bodies.

Ephesians 5:15-16 So be very careful how you live. Do not live like those who are not wise, but live wisely.¹⁶ Use every chance you have for doing good, because these are evil times.

We each must make up our own mind before God. We are accountable to God. However, we need to avoid judgmental attitudes about the decisions other Christians make.

Romans 14:3-4 The one who knows that it is right to eat any kind of food must not reject the one who eats only vegetables. And the person who eats only vegetables must not think that the one who eats all foods is wrong, because God has accepted that person.⁴ You cannot judge another person's servant. The master decides if the servant is doing well or not. And the Lord's servant will do well because the Lord helps him do well.

1 Corinthians 13:7 Love patiently accepts all things. It always trusts, always hopes, and always endures.