

Doubtful Things

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I. Introduction.

- A. The mark of a spiritual man is discernment.
- B. We are left to discern when the Word of God does not directly address an issue.
- C. There are principles for discerning in doubtful things.

II. We must decide whether it is a weight. (Hebrews 12:1)

- A. We should be more concerned with what is right about something and not what is wrong about it.
- B. We should look to what is beneficial to avoid burdens.

III. We must decide whether the thing controls us. (I Corinthians 6:12)

- A. Giving control to anything is sin.
- B. We must avoid the habit.

IV. We must be certain that it is good without doing damage to our consciences. (Romans 14:23)

- A. Christians had conscience issues over eating in the past.
- B. If one acts in doubt, he shows that he does not care about his relationship with God.
- C. One sins if he has doubts in his mind.

V. We must ask if it causes a brother to stumble. (I Corinthians 8:13)

- A. Whatever is not faith is sin—if we do something that puts someone else in doubt, we too sin.
- B. We must not harm our brother.

VI. We must ask if it will influence an unsaved person towards Christ. (Colossians 4:1)

- A. We have to ask who is influencing whom in a relationship with an unbeliever.
- B. We should maintain relationships with unbelievers so long as we are influencing them and they are not influencing us.

VII. We must obey parents if it is questionable. (Ephesians 6:1)

VIII. We must ask if it will bring glory to God. To bring glory to God means to show what God is like. (I Corinthians 10:31)

IX. Obeying these principles makes us slaves to others although we are free. We should submit ourselves one to another—this is where true Christian liberty is found. (I Corinthians 9:19)

Application questions:

1. What kind of things in your life can be a burden if not limited?

2. What is the relationship between doubt and sin? Explain.

3. How would you respond to someone who says that you should never do something because it is always a stumbling block to him? Explain.
