

POWERFUL PRINCIPLES FOR PROPER PRACTICE

Text:

- **1 Cor 6:12** - "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."

Introduction:

- There are a lot of Christians who wish that the Bible contained specific rules governing every possible situation in life.
 - Then, they think, they would know what they should do in every situation.
 - They would know what they could do and what they could not do.
 - A book like that would be too big to read, so men would still be in the dark.
 - God has, however, given us a book that contains all the principles that we need to be able to live for Him in this world.
- In this verse, and on through chapter 10, Paul lays out several very important principles for the Corinthian believers.
 - You see, he is writing to some very immature Christians, some true babes in Christ.

- He tells them so in **1 Cor. 3:1**, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ."
- He reminds them, that like little children, they think there is a rule for everything.
- **Illustration** - Little kids at play!
 - Before long, someone is going to yell, "That's not fair!"
 - Kids need, and by the way, love rules!
 - As children grow up and become old enough to leave home alone, we lay out all kinds of rules for them to go by.
 - But, when they are grown, you don't want to keep having to tell them every little do and don't!
 - By then, they should have established in their lives some principles by which they can live their lives.
 - By doing so, they will know how to respond in any situation!
- Today, I want to share with you some Powerful Principles For Proper Practice that will give us God's standard by which we can live our lives.
 - These principles, if practiced, will teach you how to live your life, and respond to any questionable situation or activity.

- As we grow in Christ, we need to be liberated from the legalism of rules and learn to apply these principles to life that we might know how to live, without someone having to tell us every move to make.
- The ability to make decisions wisely is a mark of maturity!
- These aren't rules, these are lessons that every Christian would do well to learn and use.

I. THE PRINCIPLE OF EXPEDIENCY - 1 Cor. 6:12

- This is a compound principle.
 - There are 2 questions raised here that can help you decide whether something is right or wrong.
- **1. Is It Lawful?** Is there any word from God concerning the matter?
 - **Illustration** - When God speaks on an issue, it is settled - **2 Tim. 3:16!**, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"
 - **Illustration** - There are some very clear moral absolutes
 - **1 Thess. 4:3**
 - **10 Commandments, etc.**
- **2. Is It Expedient?**
 - **Illustration** - Expedient - means "To bring toward a destination."

- Every decision or activity either moves us toward or away from Jesus Christ!
- Ask yourself, "Does this thing bring me closer to Jesus?"
 - If it doesn't, then it is wrong!
- **Illustration** - Goals, every believer should have them -
- **Illustration** - Paul's goal - **Phil. 3:13-15!**, " **3:13**: Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

3:14: I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

3:15: Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."
- **Illustration** - Ask yourself, "Does this thing get me closer to where I need to be, or not?"
- I can do anything I please, and it will not make me unsaved, Some will say!
 - However, not everything I can do will help me grow as a Christian, and if it doesn't bring me closer to my destination, it is wrong!
 - **Illustration** - ~~It doesn't matter what it is!~~

- **Illustration** - God's plan for you and me - **Eph. 4:13!**, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:"

II. **THE PRINCIPLE OF ENSLAVEMENT** - 1 Cor. 6:12

- To be "brought under power" means to be enslaved!
- **Illustration**
 - We were all slaves at one time, slaves to sin -
 - **Eph. 2:1-3**, "**2:1**: And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;
2:2: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:
2:3: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."
 - **Rom. 6:16**, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"
 - But we have been delivered by the Lord Jesus
 - **Eph. 2:4**, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,"

- **Rom. 6:14**, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."
- Now, anything outside Jesus that controls my life is a sin!
- **Illustration** - There are only 2 forces in operation in the world!
 - **Matt. 12:30, Jesus said**, " He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."
- **Illustration** - The lost man thinks he is in control, but he isn't! He is free to choose his actions, but not the consequences of those actions, he is a slave to the will of the devil!
 - Sinner friend, give your heart to Jesus, and He will set you free
 - **John 8:36!** "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."
- We need to search our lives and be sure that no habit, attitude, activity, pursuit, etc. has us enslaved.
 - If you are struggling with some "besetting sin", Jesus can set you free today!

III. **THE PRINCIPLE OF EXAMPLE** - 1 Cor. 8:8-13

- **Illustration** - Corinth, where Paul lived, was a pagan society. Many who lived there practiced idol worship.
 - They would sacrifice a sheep or a goat to their god and then they would sell the meat to the butcher at the meat market.

- He, in turn, would make the meat available to the public at a discount price.
 - It was perfectly good meat and the price was right, so some Christians would buy this meat and eat it.
 - Other Christians, however, felt that God's people shouldn't eat this meat because it had been offered to devils.
 - These opposing camps began to argue bitterly about this issue, and they turned to Paul for help and he, through the inspiration of the Lord, gave them this Principle Of Example.
- Paul did not give them an ironclad rule, but rather, he gave them a principle.
- He said that meat would not make you better neither would it make you worse.
 - However, his advise was this, don't do anything that would make you a stumblingblock to another believer.
 - The issue is not, "Will it hurt me?"
 - The question is, "Could it hurt my brother?"
 - **Illustration** - Others are supposed to come first!
Phil. 2:4
 - **Phil. 4:2!** ~~"I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord."~~
- Each side thought they were right and possessed greater insight into the issue, but Paul reminds them that brotherly love must be the main objective -

- **1 Cor .8:1**, "Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."
- You and I possess great liberty in the Lord and could lawfully do many things, but we must always be mindful of the example we are setting for others.
 - We must never do anything that will cause another brother to stumble.
 - Jesus said in **Matt. 18:6!** "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."
 - The Christian must always consider his brethren before himself!

IV. THE PRINCIPLE OF EDIFICATION - 1 Cor. 10:23

- "To edify" - "To build up" Everything you do, say, hear, etc. is either building you up, or tearing you down.
- Every conversation, every relationship, ever activity must be judged by the same principle, "Does this thing make me stronger in the Lord, or does it weaken my walk with Jesus?"
- All of life should be lived in such a way that it does nothing but build us up in the Lord Jesus.
 - Do the things you are doing make you stronger for Him? If not, they need to go!

V. THE PRINCIPLE OF EXALTATION - 1 Cor. 10:31

- Everything we do in life ^{will} with honor, or dishonor God!
 - **Illustration** - Every conversation, habit, relationship, business deal, vacation, book read, film watched, music listened to, etc.)
- **Illustration** - WWJD - "What Would Jesus Do?"
 - Learn to ask yourself this question!
 - Another good one to ask is this, "What would I do if Jesus were with me?"
 - **Illustration** - He is!
 - **Heb. 13:5**, "...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."
- Remember, as a Christian, everything you do reflects back on God.
 - It can be positive, or negative -
 - **Illustration** - **Phil. 1:27**, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;"
 - ^{You} ~~We~~ need to ask yourself, "Does your life exalt God in the eyes of the world?"

VI. THE PRINCIPLE OF EVANGELISM - 1 Cor. 10:32-33

- **Illustration** - Paul's desire - He did not want to turn anyone off to the Gospel by his lifestyle.

- Therefore, he strove to ^{be} inoffensive and an open book in his walk with the Lord.
- **Illustration** - People are watching you!
 - Does your life move men toward God or away from Him?
 - **Illustration** - Lifestyle does matter.
 - **Illustration** - "What you (do) speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you are saying!"
- **Illustration** - We should strive to reach everyone we come into contact with for Jesus, but we will be ineffective as long as our talk and walk do not agree!
 - **Illustration** - Are you a living witness for Him?
 - Paul the Apostle wrote in **2 Cor. 3:2**, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:"

Conclusion:

- If you and I will take these six principles and live our lives by them, we will be a blessing to the Lord's work in this world. ~~✗~~
 - Then, at the end of the way, we will meet Him face to face and He will say, "Well done ^{good} ~~god~~ and faithful servant!"
 - I Don't know about you, but that's what I want to hear!
 - Doing these things in regard to the issues of life will make that hope a reality!

*Plea unsaved -
Plea Christian*