

Gospel and/or Culture

Christian faith is always lived out in the midst of a particular socio-cultural context. Faithful discipleship and witness, then, requires an ability to distinguish between gospel essentials and cultural norms. The following exercise invites you to attempt to distinguish between these. Separate all the items that follow into three categories. Mark those commands and practices that are essential for followers of Jesus in every context with an "E." Mark those that may be valid for the church in some contexts with an "S." Mark those that should not be applied in any context with a "N."

1. ___ Greet each other with a holy kiss.
2. ___ Construct a building for worship.
3. ___ Forgive all those who sin against you.
4. ___ Women in the assembly should be veiled.
5. ___ Share the Lord's Supper together.
6. ___ Lay on hands for ordination.
7. ___ Abstain from eating blood.
8. ___ Abstain from fornication.
9. ___ Abstain from alcohol.
10. ___ Include foot washing in the celebration of the Lord's Table.
11. ___ Pray the Lord's Prayer regularly.
12. ___ Anoint with oil for healing.
13. ___ Women are not to teach men.
14. ___ Men are not to have long hair.
15. ___ Slavery is permissible if you treat slaves well.
16. ___ Do not use marijuana.
17. ___ Turn off celphones during worship.
18. ___ Seek the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit.
19. ___ People who do not work, shall not eat.
20. ___ Have a private devotional time every day.
21. ___ Appoint elders and deacons in every congregation.
22. ___ Elect church leaders democratically.
23. ___ Do not show deference to symbols of empire.
24. ___ Confess your sins to one another.
25. ___ Give at least 10% of your income to God.
26. ___ Do not go to court to settle disputes between Christians.
27. ___ Share your faith with those who do not follow Jesus.
28. ___ Baptize only persons able to make a personal profession of faith.
29. ___ Polygamy is not permitted.
30. ___ Conduct church meetings using Robert's Rules of Order.
31. ___ Do not divorce your spouse for any reason except for adultery.
32. ___ Do not break civil laws unless those laws are contrary to God's law.

E = every context

S = some contexts

N = no contexts