

# Guidance from God's Word

## 67 Tests

That Can Be Used by a Believer  
To Decide Upon a Course of Action

### BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF GUIDANCE

#### Introduction

SHOULD I or should I not? Life is full of decisions: Should I do a certain thing? Should I go a certain place? Should I take part in a certain activity?

Those who are believers in Christ have a wonderful objective standard of truth which can guide our conduct and govern our lives in a way that pleases our Saviour. The heart cry of the Psalmist was this: "Order my steps in Thy Word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me" (Psalm 119:133). Our lives, our actions, our decisions are all to be ordered and governed by God's Word.

In many, many areas God's Word is not specific. Instead the Bible gives us clear principles and sure guidelines which if rightly understood and applied would answer *every specific question*. The problem is that we often fail to apply the principles and follow the guidelines which the Lord has given to us.

In this study we have set forth 67 TESTS by which we can determine which course of action to take. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list. Other TESTS could be added to it. Most of these guidelines are taken from the New Testament epistles. Many other guidelines or "tests" could certainly be found in the gospels, in the book of Proverbs and elsewhere in the Bible.

These tests might be useful in pastoral counseling. When someone in the church wants to know if some questionable practice is acceptable, he can be given this study as a homework assignment. Or the pastor (or SS Teacher or parent) could sit down and go through these questions with him. This study is available in booklet format and is available from the Middletown Bible Church (25 cents each).

None of these tests will do us any good unless we really apply them. With a desire to please Christ in all that we do, let us test our deeds and actions by these New Testament guidelines:

(*Note:* These "tests" are given in New Testament order so that the verses can be more easily found)

**1. The Scripture Test** (Isaiah 8:20; 1 Thess. 5:21)

Does the Scripture forbid it? Am I commanded not to do it?

**2. The Stewardship Test** (Luke 16:9-12)

Will doing it involve a waste or poor use of the money, possessions and time God has entrusted me with?

**3. The Separation Test** (Rom. 1:1)

Is this action or activity consistent with a life which is separated unto God's good news?

**4. The "Bodily Members" Test** (Rom. 6:13)

In doing this are my bodily members being presented to be used as instruments of righteousness unto God or are they being used in a way that is not honoring to the God who owns me and Whom I serve?

**5. The Abhorrence Test** (Rom. 12:9; cf. Jude 23)

Would doing this in any way make unclear the fact that I hate sin and abhor evil and must avoid it (1 Pet. 3:11) at any cost?

**6. The Love Test** (Rom. 14:15)

In doing this am I walking according to love? Am I seeking God's highest and best for those persons that I am involved with?

**7. The Conscience Test** (Rom. 14:22-23)

Can I do it with a good and clear conscience? (The believer must never do what his conscience forbids. The believer's conscience may need to be corrected and brought more and more into harmony with God's Word, but it is never safe to go against one's conscience and to rebelliously do what my own heart condemns) When in doubt DON'T!

**8. The "Who Am I Pleasing?" Test** (Rom. 15:1-2)

Am I doing this to please myself or others?

**9. The Fire Test** (1 Cor. 3:11-15)

Would this be building upon that which will last forever or will it contribute to mere wood, hay and stubble which will all be burned up at the judgment seat of Christ?

**10. The Expediency Test** (1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23)

Is it profitable, beneficial, advantageous to do such a thing? (This is better than asking "Is it permissible?")

**11. The Slave Test** (1 Cor. 6:12)

In doing this will I become a slave to anything? Will it make me a slave? Will it bind me up so that I am not free to serve my Saviour as I must?

**12. The "Temple of God" Test** (1 Cor. 6:19-20)

Will it harm my body? Will God be honored by the way I use my body? Will this course of action rest and strengthen or will it weary and weaken the body and brain? If I spend myself to the point of physical exhaustion is it for a wise and righteous cause, even the cause of Christ (2 Cor. 12:15)?

**13. The Distraction Test** (1 Cor. 7:35)

Would doing this distract me from serving the Lord? Would it hinder me from pleasing the Lord (1 Cor. 7:32)?

**14. The Stumblingblock Test** (1 Cor. 8:13; 10:32; Rom. 14:21).

Will doing this cause another person to stumble? Would it in any way hinder another believer's growth? Would it in any way hinder an unsaved person from coming to know Christ as Saviour?

**15. The Missionary Test** (1 Cor. 9:19-22; 10:33; cf. 2 Tim. 2:10).

Will my actions contribute toward and encourage others to come to know Christ as Saviour? Will it in any way hinder or detract from Christ and His gospel? Will it help others to know the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour?

**16. The Idolatry Test** (1 Cor. 10:7,14; 1 John 5:21)

In doing this am I allowing something or someone to be more important to me than God?

**17. The Edification Test** (1 Cor. 10:23; 14:26).

Will this edify and build up a fellow believer? Would my actions encourage another's growth in the Lord?

**18. The Selfishness Test** (1 Cor. 10:24; 13:5).

Am I doing this to please and serve myself or others? Am I living to myself or to the Lord (Rom. 14:7; 2 Cor. 5:15)?

**19. The Glory of God Test** (1 Cor. 10:31).

Can I do it to the glory of God? In doing this am I showing forth a clear picture of my God and WHO HE IS?

**20. The "Follow Me" Test** (1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 4:9).

Would I want others to follow me in this? Would I want other believers to imitate me in this? Could I recommend this course of action to them?

**21. The Association Test** (1 Cor. 15:33; cf. 2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Pet. 4:4).

In doing this will I be brought into a compromising association with bad company (evil companionships) which will have a spoiling and corrupting influence upon my character and morals?

**22. The "Labor in the Lord" Test** (1 Cor. 15:58; cf. 2 Cor. 9:8).

Would this in any way keep me from abounding in the work of the Lord? Would it keep me from serving the Lord with ardent zeal and zip?

**23. The Temporal/Eternal Test** (2 Cor. 4:18; Col. 3:1-2).

Am I basing my decision on temporal or eternal realities? Am I seeing the short view or the long view? Am I making this evaluation based on time or eternity? Am I seeing it as God would see it?

**24. The Judgment Seat Test** (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12).

Would this bring shame to me (cause me to be ashamed) at the Judgment Seat of Christ?

**25. The Motivation Test** (2 Cor. 5:14).

Am I motivated by the love of Christ or by the lust of the flesh?

**26. The New Creature Test** (2 Cor. 5:17).

Are these things part of my old life (are they part of the "old things" which have passed away) or part of my new life in Christ?

**27. The Ambassador Test** (2 Cor. 5:20).

In doing this am I representing My Saviour in a clear and unmistakable way?

**28. The Holiness Test** (2 Cor. 7:1; 2 Tim. 2:21).

Would doing this in any way cause me to compromise personal holiness? Would it hinder me in any way from being a clean and set apart vessel for the Lord's use?

**29. The Mental Test** (2 Cor. 10:5; cf. 11:3).

Will doing this help me to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ or will it put me in the place where my mind is bombarded with high things that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God?

**30. The "Pleasing Who?" Test (Gal. 1:10).**

In doing this am I seeking to please God or man?

**31. The "Reap What Is Sown" Test (Gal. 6:7).**

Am I prepared to reap the consequences of this action?

**32. The Holy Spirit Test (Eph. 4:30;cf. 1 Thess. 5:19).**

Does it grieve (sadden, pain) the Holy Spirit of God? Would doing this in any way quench or hinder the Holy Spirit's working in my life?

**33. The Saint Test (Eph. 5:3)—the child of God test (Eph. 5:1), the new creature test (2 Cor. 5:17), the citizen of heaven.**

Am I acting in a way that is appropriate and fitting to WHO I AM in Christ Jesus? Is that what a child of God would do? Is this what a saint would do? Is this what a new creature in Christ would do? Etc.

**34. The Divine Approval Test (Eph. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:9).**

Is it well pleasing to the Lord? If I do this will I have God's smile of approval and His "Well Done!""? (cf. Matt. 25:21,23)

**35. The Time Test (Eph. 5:16).**

Is this the best use of time? Is it the best way to buy up the opportunities God has given to me?

**36. The Submission Test (Eph. 5:21)**

In doing this am I in submission to those authorities whom God has placed over me?

**37. The Armor of God Test (Eph. 6:10-18).**

Will doing this make me more vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy?

**38. The Excellence Test (Phil. 1:10).**

It may be acceptable and permissible to do this, and it may even be a good thing to do, but is it really the BEST THING?

**39. The Magnification Test (Phil. 1:20).**

By my doing this will Christ be magnified?

**40. The Gospel Test** (Phil. 1:27).

Would my actions in any way detract from or cloud or confuse the message of good news which I want others to know and believe?

**41. The Dung Test** (Phil. 3:7-8).

Am I willing to sacrifice and forego certain things that are important to me for the sake of Christ?

**42. The Joy Test** (Phil. 4:4).

Is my joy in the Lord or is it in something or someone else? If I were not to do this, would I lose my joy? Am I seeking joy, happiness and satisfaction from the wrong source?

**43. The Contentment Test** (Phil. 4:11; 1 Tim. 6:6,8).

If I were not to do this or have this, could I still be content and satisfied?

**44. The Pure Thinking Test** (Phil. 4:8).

Will this contribute to pure, wholesome, healthy thinking or will it encourage me to become occupied with mental garbage?

**45. The Preeminence Test** (Col. 1:18).

In doing this will the Lord Jesus be given first place in my life?

**46. The Name of Christ Test** (Col. 3:17).

Can I do it in the Name of the Lord Jesus with thanksgiving? Would He want to identify His Name with what I am doing?

**47. The Servant of Christ Test** (Col. 3:23-24).

Can I do it heartily (with all my soul) as unto the Lord?

**48. The Good Testimony Test** (Col. 4:5).

Will it present a clear testimony to those outside of Christ?

**49. The Prayer Test** (1 Thess. 5:17; Luke 18:1)

Would this in any way hinder my prayer life or make prayer more difficult for me?

**50. The Thanksgiving Test** (1 Thess. 5:18; Eph. 5:20).

Can I do it with thanksgiving? Can I thank God with a clear conscience?

**51. The Appearance Test** (1 Thess. 5:22).

Would what I do assume any appearance of evil? Would my actions be misinterpreted or seen in a negative light?

**52. The Modesty Test** (1 Tim. 2:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:3-4).

Would doing this draw attention to me or to Christ in me? Would I be displaying SELF or the SAVIOUR?

**53. The "Blameless" Test** (1 Tim. 3:1).

Would doing this give anyone an occasion to point the finger at me and blame me for conduct that is out of harmony with my professed faith in Christ? (See Daniel's worthy example in Daniel 6:4).

**54. The Example Test** (1 Tim. 4:12).

By doing this would I be a good example of what a believer ought to be?

**55. The Entanglement Test** (2 Tim. 2:4).

Would doing this get me caught or tangled up "with the affairs of this life" to the neglect of my primary duty which is to please Christ?

**56. The Pleasure-Loving Test** (2 Tim. 3:4).

Am I doing this because I love pleasure more than I love God? Am I delighting myself in other things or other persons more than I am the Lord (Psalm 37:4)?

**57. The Second Coming Test** (2 Tim. 4:8; 1 John 2:28).

Would I want the Lord to come when I am doing this? Would I want the Lord to find me in this place, involved in this activity when He comes?

**58. The Adorning Test** (Titus 2:10).

Will this activity adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour? In doing this will the truths and principles of God's Word be beautified in my life?

**59. The "Denying Ungodliness" Test** (Tit. 2:12; cf. 1 Pet. 2:11).

In making this decision am I saying "NO" in strong, clear and unmistakable terms to ungodliness and worldly lusts?

**60. The Hindrance Test** (Heb. 12:1-2)

Will doing this in any way hinder me from running the race? Would it weigh me down so that I cannot run as I should?

**61. The Reproach of Christ Test** (Heb. 13:13; cf. 11:26).

In making this decision what is more important to me (what do I place more value on)—the approval of men or the reproach of Christ?

**62. The Temptation Test** (James 1:13-16).

Does it make resistance to temptation easier or harder?

**63. The "Near to God" Test** (James 4:8; cf. Heb. 10:38).

Does it draw me nearer to or remove me farther from Christ?

**64. The Growth Test** (1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; cf. Heb. 6:1-3).

Will doing this in any way hinder or stifle my growth in Christ? Will it contribute to my growth in Christ?

**65. The Fellowship Test** (1 John 1:3-4).

Would doing this in any way rob me of the joy of having fellowship with Christ?

**66. The Worldliness Test** (1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4).

Am I seeking to do this thing INDEPENDENTLY of God (leaving Him out)?

**67. The "First Love" Test** (Rev. 2:4).

Will doing this make it abundantly clear that Jesus Christ is my first love?

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