More Than A List Of Rules

(by David Maxson)

***“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”*** (**1 Corinthians 10:31**). Christianity is the thinking man's religion. Most world religions are simple and straightforward. Follow the rules. Don't ask questions. Just do what you are told.

Christianity is not so simple. There are rules to follow, yes, but there's so much more that regulates our behavior. Even when we have a right to do something, there are still principles that might limit what we choose to do:

1. Will this a be a stumbling block? ***“But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak”*** *(****1 Corinthians 8:9****).*

2. Will this offend and draw attention away from the gospel? **“*If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ”*** *(****1 Corinthians 9:12****).*

3. Will this action suggest I approve of evil? **“*Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons”*** *(****1 Corinthians 10:20****).*

4. Will this glorify God? ***“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”*** *(****1 Corinthians 10:31****).*

These questions can be frustrating and complicated, but our faith is not simple for a reason. God is not just looking for those who can simply follow a list of rules. He's seeking those who have a desire to please Him in all things.

Father, give us a heart to not only obey your commandments but to seek and to discern what is pleasing to You in every decision we make.

7 Habits of Highly Effective Families

(by Ron Drumm)

The title above comes from a series of books written by Stephen Covey. The following spiritual habits for godly families do not come from Stephen Covey's book, but instead they come from a much better book, the Bible -- God's book!

The seven Biblical habits of highly effective families are: serve God together; train eyes and hearts to be pure; enjoy your family relationships; respect one another; keep family life safe and a blessing to all; teach the gift of work; and practice contentment. If families develop and practice the above habits they will be fruitful and blessed by God.

**1. Serve God together**: Joshua expressed this important habit clearly, ***"But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"*** (**Joshua 24:15**). Our children need to see their parents worshiping and serving God daily, and gathering with the church when it meets for worship.

**2. Train eyes and hearts to be pure**: The psalmist wrote, ***"I will walk within my house with a perfect heart, I will set nothing wicked before my eyes"*** (**Psalm 101:2-3**). *"Watch your eyes, watch your eyes what they see, for there is a Father above looking down in tender love, watch your eyes what they see"* -- this children's song challenges us to purity of behavior.

**3. Enjoy your family relationships**: The family is a gift from God. Another Psalm declares, ***"Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord"*** (**Psalm 127:3**). The family is a relationship of fun and joy practiced every day to the glory of God.

**4. Respect one another**: Every relationship of the family involves respect and love. Wives are to respect their husbands and husbands are to love and cherish their wives. Children are to honor their parents (**Colossians 3:18-21**).

**5. Keep family life safe**: Family life is a safe haven for every member, a place where one finds protection and love. Notice the virtuous wife understood this lifestyle (**Proverbs 31:11,12,27**).

**6. Teach the gift of work**: ***"Every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor -- it is the gift of God"*** (**Ecclesiastes 3:12,13**). It should always be the routine of a family to be active in training children to be workers in every aspect of life.

**7. Practice contentment**: The family is a place of satisfaction. Needs are to be met and all blessings are understood to have come from God. Contentment is something we must learn (**Philippians 4:11**) especially in the home, or we will never truly be happy.

May our families be blessed by God as they practice good, spiritual habits!