

SEVEN RULES TO FOLLOW

*“You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness, but **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ...**” 2Pe.3:17-18*

*“Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us **press on to maturity ...**” Heb.6:1*

To grow and mature we need to follow some Bible-based rules.

Rules offer the following:

- They provide guidelines.
- They delineate between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.
- They enable one to reach the desired goal. Gal.6:16

Following rules takes discipline and diligence. 2Ti.2:1

“...discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” 1Ti.4:7

The following rules are gleaned from the Bible: Christians would do well to heed.

RULE #1: BE CAREFUL WHAT AND HOW YOU SPEAK

Don't tell all you know.

“A prudent man conceals knowledge, but the heart of fools proclaim folly.” Pro.12:23

Don't be hasty with words.

“Do you see a man who is hasty in words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.” Pro.29:20

Learn to control the “door of the mouth.”

“Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.” Psa.141:3

Speak with grace, kindness. “... Seasoned as with salt.” Col.4:6

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” Pro. 25:11

“By forbearance a ruler is persuaded, a soft tongue breaks bones.” Pro.25:15

Say what you mean and mean what you say.

“Speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor.” Eph.4:25

Refrain from participating in gossip; refuse to listen or to pass it on.

“He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy conceals the matter.” Pro.11:13

RULE #2: DON'T BE OVERLY DISTURBED BY WHAT OTHERS SAY

People will find fault—there is no stopping them.

Fault-finders need no ammunition: they manufacture own. Psa.64:1-6

Rumors don't need the support of facts—only suspicions.

One can't escape criticism—even by doing nothing.

Do what is right: let God judge. 1Co.4:3-4

RULE #3: GIVE CREDIT WHEN DUE

Be free and impartial in praise. 1Ti.5:21

Appreciate the efforts of others. Phi.4:14ff

Don't take credit for another's efforts. Gal.6:4

Note: 2Co.8:1-4, 9:1-2

RULE #4: DON'T BE ANXIOUS TO RECEIVE YOUR 'DUE'

Praise is most uncertain, fickle, and often unfairly distributed.

Don't do good just for the praise. Mat.6:1

Do what is right because it is right. 1Co.4:5

"Much good is done when no one worries about who gets the credit."

RULE #5: BE INTERESTED IN OTHERS, NOT JUST SELF

A life too small to include others, is too small to include the Lord.*

"But through love serve one another." Gal.5:13

Be interested, but not meddling. "... attend to your own business ..." 1Th.4:11

Be a joy to be around by sharing others' grief and happiness. Rom.12:15. Gal.6:2

RULE #6: PRESERVE AN OPEN MIND

Be quick to hear, slow to speak. Jam.1:19

Don't condemn, sentence, and execute judgment before hearing.

"He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him." Pro.18:13

Maintaining an "open mind" does not mean, however, it's never made up.

2Ti.3:14, Rom.14:5

RULE #7: DON'T BE CONTENTIOUS, ARGUMENTIVE

"No one is so ignorant as the one who refuses to be taught."

No one is so blind as one who refuses to see. Joh.9:40

Know the difference between contending for the faith and being contentious.

Jde.3

Be kind and gentle in dealing with those who are in opposition. 2Ti.2:24-26

Be firm in dealings with others. 1Co.16:13

SUMMATION:

By following the Lord's rules, you will grow in grace and knowledge.



* **TEST:** How to tell if you (or someone else) is self-centered: There will be an abundance of personal pronouns and a lack of references to others.