

Think It Over: This section is about turning what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions, and scriptures are designed to help you take your own next step. If you are leading a group through this guide, don't feel like you have to answer every question. Pick out those questions that will stir up conversation and action among your group.

- Why is it that some of the tastiest foods are the highest in calories? Why couldn't a loaded cheese burger be as healthy as broccoli? It's just not fair! How do you balance healthy food with the tasty food? And don't tell me healthy food is tasty food - especially anything with kale in it! How does 1 Corinthians 10:23 speak to what we consume? How does The Option Matrix apply?
- Walk through each point and passage in What is the wisest thing for me to do section. Alcohol seems to be a matter of conscience - do you agree? Marijuana or any kind of drug can be a matter of conscience or can jump up to commandments or conviction - how/why does that happen? What are the implications as an individual Christ follower or a group of Christ followers? Why is the Bottom Line crucial in these discussions? What **Next Steps** could ensure your Scriptural insights are not shaped by your desire for certain conclusions?
- There is another layer to this discussion which comes out of Romans 13:1-7. How is the establishment of any government related to God? (see Romans 13:1) How is a Christian to respond to the laws and leadership of government?
- What attitude is a Christian showing toward God when he or she rebels against the government? (see Romans 13:2) What consequences will those who rebel against the government bring upon themselves? (see verse 13:2)
- What can a Christian do to maintain a good relationship with the government? (13:3-4) For what reason are government officials in power? (13:4) What motivation does the Christian have to submit to the government? (13:5)
- What are governmental authorities? (13:6) How should a Christian respond to the tax laws and requirements of the government? (13:6-7) In addition to tax revenues, what does a Christian owe to his or her government? (13:7)

Next Steps: How would God want us to act if government leaders were openly persecuting Christians? Under what circumstances should Christians disobey the clear commands of government authorities? What is a Christian's responsibility toward maintaining a good government? What positive support should Christians give to government leaders? Which government official could you write to or talk to this week and express your concerns and even thanks? How and when could you pray for national, state, and local public officials-especially with the upcoming elections?

Changing Your Mind: ²³"I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but not everything is constructive. 1 Corinthians 10:23 NIV page 798

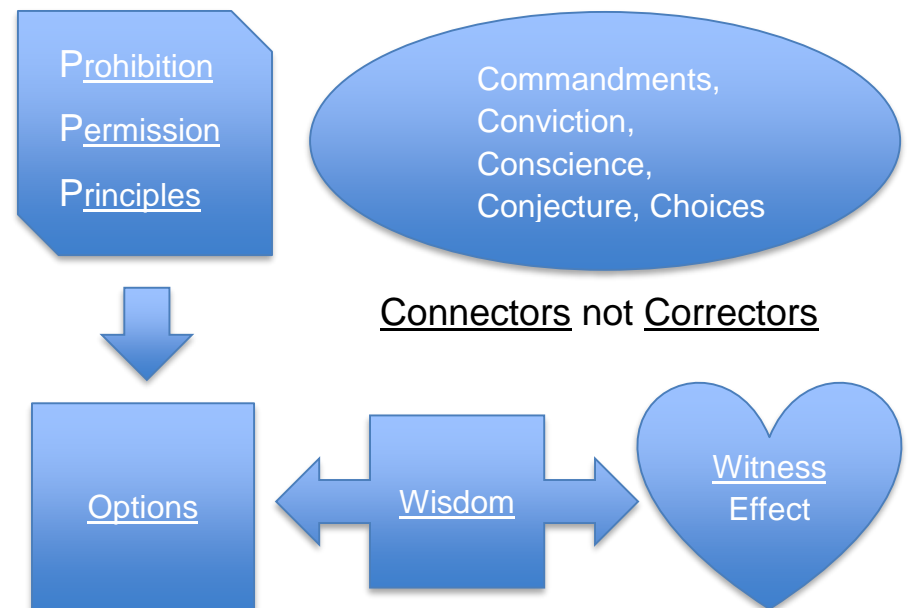


If you missed a message, visit www.scc.website or request a CD at Guest Services.



➤ What are my options in the area of _____?

The Option Matrix



What is the wisest thing for me to do?

➤ The Bible and Alcohol

○ It can be good for you physically.

²³Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses. 1 Timothy 5:23 NIV page 831

○ It can be seen as a gift from God.

¹Praise the LORD, my soul. LORD my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty. ¹⁴He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for people to cultivate— bringing forth food from the earth: ¹⁵wine that gladdens human hearts, oil to make their faces shine, and bread that sustains their hearts. Psalm 104:1, 14–15 NIV page 418

⁷Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for God has already approved what you do.

Ecclesiastes 9:7 NIV page 466

¹⁰“Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now.” John 2:10 NIV page 740 (see verses 6-9)

³³For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ ³⁴The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ Luke 7:33-34 NIV page 721

²⁵I want you to know, I will not drink this wine again until that day when I drink it in God’s kingdom and the wine is new.” Mark 14:25 ERV

○ It can be extremely dangerous for you.

²⁹Who has anguish? Who has sorrow? Who is always fighting? Who is always complaining? Who has unnecessary bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? ³⁰It is the one who spends long hours in the taverns, trying out new drinks. ³¹Don’t gaze at the wine, seeing how red it is, how it sparkles in the cup, how smoothly it goes down. ³²For in the end it bites like a poisonous snake; it stings like a viper. ³³You will see hallucinations, and you will say crazy things. ³⁴You will stagger like a sailor tossed at sea, clinging to a swaying mast. ³⁵And you will say, “They hit me, but I didn’t feel it. I didn’t even know it when they beat me up. When will I wake up so I can look for another drink?”

Proverbs 23:29–35 NLT

○ It can be exceptionally hazardous for others.

¹³So let’s stop condemning each other. Decide instead to live in such a way that you will not cause another believer to stumble and fall. ²⁰Don’t tear apart the work of God over what you eat. Remember, all foods are acceptable, but it is wrong to eat something if it makes another person stumble. ²¹It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything else if it might cause another believer to stumble.

Romans 14:13, 20-21 NLT

➤ The Bible and Marijuana

²⁹Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

Genesis 1:29 NIV page 2

¹“Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. ²So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted... ⁵So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience.

Romans 13:1-2, 5 NLT

¹⁹Don’t you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 NLT

Bottom Line:

Go to the Bible and then
go with the Bible.

Resources for this message include a message by James Emery White at Mecklenburg Community Church and devotional thoughts from Time of Grace.

To help you turn what God is saying to you into action steps, consider using the Think It Over section on the back.