

## Expediency

### Introduction:

- A. Innovators argue that the New Testament doctrine of expediency justifies their unlawful actions.
- B. Let us examine their claims. - 1 Thessalonians 5:21
- C. How can we tell if a practice is expedient?

### I. What is the meaning of the word?

- A. original: “*sumphero*” (16 New Testament occurrences)
  - 1. lexicons: “to help, be profitable” (Thayer. 597); “to be an advantage, profitable” (Vine. 2:62); “Help, confer a benefit, be advantageous or profitable or useful” (Arndt & Gingrich. 787)
  - 2. renderings in King James Version: “bring together,” “be better,” “be expedient,” “be good,” “be profitable,” “profit”; e.g., Matthew 5:29-30

### II. Two passages teach us how to tell if a practice is expedient for Christians.

- A. 1 Corinthians 6:12
  - 1. This verse relates expediency to Christians and their practices. - cf. v. 11
  - 2. Is “all” unlimited?
    - a. cf. 2 Corinthians 5:18; James 1:13
      - (1) “all things are of God”
      - (2) But temptation is not of God.
      - (3) “All” is unlimited in its context, but it is limited by its context.
    - b. Is there nothing that is unlawful? - Matthew 14:4; 2 Corinthians 12:4; 2 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 3:4
  - 3. “All” pertains to eating of meats, i.e., it is lawful to eat any kind of meat. - verse 13; cf. 1 Timothy 4:4-5
  - 4. First Rule: **Expediency is within the realm of divine law.** - cf. Acts 20:20,26-27
    - a. The end does **NOT** justify the means. - Romans 3:8
    - b. Nothing is spiritually good if it is not authorized. - 2 Timothy 3:16-17; cf. Leviticus 10:1-3
  - 5. Second Rule: **Decisions about expediency involve liberties.** - v. 13; cf. 1 Corinthians 8:8-9
    - a. If something is required by the Lord, it is expedient (profitable), and our only choice is whether to obey or rebel. - John 16:7; 1 John 5:3; Acts 20:20,26-27
    - b. But if something is authorized but non-essential (i.e., a liberty), we have a choice as to whether or not it is expedient (profitable). - v. 13
    - c. Third Rule: **An enslaving practice is not expedient.**

B. 1 Corinthians 10:23-33

1. The Principle Repeated: **Expediency is within the realm of divine law.**
2. Fourth Rule: **The practice must edify.** - v. 23
3. Fifth Rule: **The practice must be to the glory of god.** - v. 31; Matthew 5:16
4. Sixth Rule: **The practice must not give offense** (lead others to sin - Thayer). - v. 32
  - a. This is a simple matter of being concerned about the spiritual welfare of others. - vv. 24,32
  - b. This involves matters that are authorized but non-essential (i.e., liberties). - v. 29
  - c. It involves matters of individual conscience. - vv. 27-31
  - d. It does **NOT** give anyone the right to bind his scruples on others. - Romans 14:21-22

Conclusion:

- A. There are six characteristics whereby we can determine if a practice is expedient or not.  
- Repeat the six rules.
- B. Innovations into the divine pattern violate at least four of these rules.
  1. They are not lawful.
  2. They do not involve liberties.
  3. They do not edify.
  4. They are not to the glory of God.
- C. Let us therefore be content to “do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” - Colossians 3:17