

Considerations of Customs

Introduction

- There are matters, customs, practices that aren't central to salvation
 - But we may be confronted with
 - That must be considered in the light of the scriptures
 - Examples
 - Clapping hands
 - Lifting up hands
 - Holy kiss
 - Right hand of fellowship

Considerations of Customs

👉 Prelude

🔴 Hermeneutic

- EPH 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them; 8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

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Prelude

Criteria of individual conscience

- ROM 14:23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.
- That must be respected by others
 - ROM 14:1 Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions.

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Clapping hands

- Used in context of joy and singing

- PSA 47:1 (For the choir director. A Psalm of the sons of Korah.) O Clap your hands, all peoples; Shout to God with the voice of joy.
- PSA 98:8 Let the rivers clap their hands; Let the mountains sing together for joy
- ISA 55:12 "For you will go out with joy, And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

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Clapping hands

- Used in context of derision

- JOB 27:23 "Men will clap their hands at him, And will hiss him from his place.
- LAM 2:15 All who pass along the way Clap their hands in derision at you; They hiss and shake their heads At the daughter of Jerusalem, "Is this the city of which they said, 'The perfection of beauty, A joy to all the earth'?"
- EZE 6:11 ¶ "Thus says the Lord God, 'Clap your hand, stamp your foot, and say,' Alas, because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel, which will fall by sword, famine, and plague!

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Clapping hands

- Used in context of derision

- EZE 21:14 ¶ "You therefore, son of man, prophesy, and clap your hands together; and let the sword be doubled the third time, the sword for the slain. It is the sword for the great one slain, which surrounds them,
- EZE 21:17 "I shall also clap My hands together, and I shall appease My wrath; I, the Lord, have spoken."
- NAH 3:19 There is no relief for your breakdown, Your wound is incurable. All who hear about you Will clap their hands over you, For on whom has not your evil passed continually?

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Clapping hands

Related considerations

Apparently not classed as an instrument

- 2CH 29:25 ¶ He then stationed the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with harps and with lyres, according to the command of David and of Gad the king's seer, and of Nathan the prophet; for the command was from the Lord through His prophets. 26 The Levites stood with the musical instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets.

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Clapping hands

Related considerations

- Apparently not classed as an instrument
 - Clapping was not included as an instrument in 2CH 29:25
 - But was commanded as part of Ps.47
 - Same Holy Spirit gave both commands

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Clapping hands

Two perspectives

- Case can be made that clapping hands was not considered to be a form of music,
 - But an acceptable expression of joy.
- At the same time, it isn't part of the command to Christians
 - Eph.5:16, Col.3:16
- The individual must abide by their conscience, Rom14:23

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Clapping hands

Two perspectives

The command to Christians

- EPH 5:18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;
- COL 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

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- ✦ Joyful noise (KJV), Shout joyfully (NASB)
 - PSA 66:1 To the chief Musician, A Song or Psalm. Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:
 - PSA 81:1 To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of Asaph. Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.
 - PSA 95:1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

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- Joyful noise (KJV), Shout joyfully (NASB)
 - PSA 95:1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. {KJV}
 - PSA 95:1 O come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; Let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. {NASB}

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Joyful noise (KJV), Shout joyfully (NASB)

- PSA 98:4 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.
- PSA 98:6 With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King.
- PSA 100:1 A Psalm of praise. Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.

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Shout joyfully (NASB)

- ISA 52:7 ¶ How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!" 8 Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices, They shout joyfully together; For they will see with their own eyes When the Lord restores Zion. 9 Break forth, shout joyfully together, You waste places of Jerusalem; For the Lord has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem.

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Shout joyfully (NASB)

- ISA 55:11 So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. 12 "For you will go out with joy And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Considerations of Customs

☞ Lifting up hands

- 1TI 2:8 ¶ Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension.
- Is lifting up of hands part of the command,
 - Or an incidental custom?
 - With emphasis on unity?

Considerations of Customs

☞ Lifting up hands

● 1TI 2:8

● Just men?

■ “men” can be given in a general sense

- 1TI 2:1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men,
- COL 3:23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,

Considerations of Customs

☛ Lifting up hands

- What did it mean to “lift up hands”?
 - Over one’s head?
 - Wide to the sides, with palms up?
 - Palm up at waist level?
 - Clasped in front of the face or chest?

Considerations of Customs

☛ Lifting up hands

- What did it mean to “lift up hands”?
 - PSA 141:2 May my prayer be counted as incense before Thee; The lifting up of my hands as the evening offering.
 - LAM 3:41 We lift up our heart and hands Toward God in heaven;

Considerations of Customs

☞ Lifting up hands

● Old Testament usage

- PSA 119:48 And I shall lift up my hands to Your commandments, Which I love; And I will meditate on Your statutes.
- PSA 134:1 (A Song of Ascents.) Behold, bless the Lord, all servants of the Lord, Who serve by night in the house of the Lord! 2 Lift up your hands to the sanctuary And bless the Lord.

Considerations of Customs

☞ Lifting up hands

● Old Testament usage

- LAM 3:39 ¶ Why should any living mortal, or any man, Offer complaint in view of his sins? 40 Let us examine and probe our ways, And let us return to the Lord. 41 We lift up our heart and hands Toward God in heaven;

Considerations of Customs

Lifting up hands

Examples of Moses

- EXO 9:29 Moses said to him, "As soon as I go out of the city, I will spread out my hands to the Lord; the thunder will cease and there will be hail no longer, that you may know that the earth is the Lord's.
- EXO 9:33 So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread out his hands to the Lord; and the thunder and the hail ceased, and rain no longer poured on the earth.

Considerations of Customs

☞ Lifting up hands

● Examples of Moses

- EXO 17:11 So it came about when Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed. 12 But Moses' hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set.

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☞ Lifting up hands

● Related considerations

● Positions of prayer

■ Kneeling

- 1KI 8:54 ¶ When Solomon had finished praying this entire prayer and supplication to the Lord, he arose from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread toward heaven.
- ACT 7:60 And falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" And having said this, he fell asleep.
- LUK 22:41 And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray,

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☞ Lifting up hands

● Related considerations

● Positions of prayer

- It may be possible to lift up one's hands while lying down, kneeling or standing.

Considerations of Customs

☛ Lifting up hands

◆ Related considerations

● Positions of prayer

■ Lying down

- 2KI 20:1 In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him, "Thus says the Lord, 'Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live.'" 2 Then he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, saying,
- Not likely a position that could include lifting up one's hands

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☞ Lifting up hands

● Related considerations

● Positions of prayer

■ Standing, beating one's own chest

- LUK 18:13 "But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!'"

Considerations of Customs

☞ Lifting up hands

◆ Synopsis

- We have authority to lift up hands.
- Do we have authority to bind it on others?

Considerations of Customs

☞ Holy kiss

- A form of greeting
 - ROM 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.
 - 1CO 16:20 All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.
 - 2CO 13:12 Greet one another with a holy kiss.
 - 1TH 5:26 ¶ Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.

Considerations of Customs

- ✦ Extending the right hand of fellowship
 - Acknowledgment of fellowship
 - GAL 2:9 and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

Considerations of Customs

☛ Dancing before the Lord

● Miriam and the women

- EXO 15:20 And Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took the timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dancing. 21 And Miriam answered them, "Sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted; The horse and his rider He has hurled into the sea."

Considerations of Customs

☛ Dancing before the Lord

◆ David

- 2SA 6:16 ¶ Then it happened as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

◆ New Testament

- No mention of dancing

Conclusion