

What's "Essential" and What's "Negotiable"?

Part One: Separate all the items that follow into two categories based on these definitions:

- **Essential.** These items (commands, practices, customs) are essential to every church in every place in every age. [Mark these E on the list.]
- **Negotiable.** These items (commands, practices, customs) may or may not be valid for the church in any given place or time. [Mark these N on the list.]

- _____ Greet one another with a holy kiss.
- _____ Do not go to court to settle issues between Christians.
- _____ Women in the assembly should be veiled when praying or speaking.
- _____ Sing without musical accompaniment.
- _____ Use only real wine and unleavened bread for the Lord's Supper.
- _____ Use only grape juice for the Lord's Supper.
- _____ Women are not to teach men.
- _____ Women are not to wear braided hair, gold, or pearls.
- _____ Men are not to have long hair.
- _____ Slavery is permissible if you treat slaves well.
- _____ Remain single.
- _____ Lift your hands when you pray.
- _____ People who don't work don't eat.
- _____ Say "In Jesus' name" at the end of prayers.
- _____ Give at least ten percent of your income/goods/crops to God.

Part Two: Reflect on the process by which you distinguished the "essential" from the "negotiable" items and answer the following questions.

- **What principle or principles governed your decisions on what was "essential" or "negotiable"?**
- **Did you use the same principle(s) for every decision?**
- **If not, how did your decision-making process change?**