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## Preface

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When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He instructed His disciples in this manner: “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a peck-measure, but on the lamp stand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:14-16). The conduct of Christians greatly impacts God’s glory. Worldly people do not see God, the resurrected and victorious Lord, or the heavenly life within saints because they lack faith; they only see the conduct of the saints. Based on the conduct of the saints, they determine who God is, whether Christ really has the power to save, and whether the gospel is the truth. God’s name is shamed because most people who claim to be Christians live despicable lives and their conduct is deplorable. The gospel of Christ is scorned as a result—These are disgraceful and heart-aching matters.

We thank the Lord because besides those who cannot glorify Him, bring shame to His name, are no help to others and even cause others to stumble, we see Christians in the church who truly love the Lord piously and keep their bodies holy. These Christians loathe sin and desire holiness. They are vastly different from non-believers in all ways. This kind of believers is a precious jewel in this world: they are Christ’s testimony. We love and respect these believers, and we wish there to be more of them in this world.

Unfortunately, some Christians, though pious, lack wisdom. They have a fervent heart that loves the Lord but they do not know how to conduct themselves. Because of this, sometimes they bring loss and pain to others and even more so, God’s name and His Word are despised and loathed. The enemy has ground to attack, he interferes with the gospel of Christ, brings suffering and loss to them, and brings pain that could have been avoided. The way to conduct us may not seem important, but in reality, our conduct impacts every aspect of our lives.

I have encountered this kind of ignorant believers many times: their piety is lovely but their ignorance is pitiful. To help this kind of believer, in 1931, I wrote a series of articles on what believers should know in regards to conducting themselves and published them in “The Spiritual Food Quarterly.” In recent years, I have received letters from many readers stating that believers need this kind of knowledge and that I should organize the articles into a book. I have not fulfilled the request because I could not finish my writing. In the spring of this year, I completed thirty chapters. All the necessary topics of the general knowledge for Christians’ conduct have been completed. To accommodate the demand of believers, I do not want to postpone publishing this book any further.

When these series of articles were first published with “The Spiritual Food Quarterly,” the title was “General Knowledge for Christians’ Conduct.” Now, to make the title a little more accessible, I have changed the name to *General Knowledge for Christian Conduct*. May God use this book to help those who truly belong to Him. Not only are they His holy and beloved children, but may they

also be wise, knowledgeable, and blameless so they can become an even better testimony for the Lord who died and rose for them.

## Chapter 1 —Visitations

If there is no urgent matter, you ought to visit your friends when they have spare time. Do not visit them too early in the morning; they might not have gotten out of bed. Even if they are already awake, people tend to be busy in the morning. Do not visit them too late at night, as it could detain them from rest. Do not visit them at meal times, lest they be unable to eat at ease. If you know your friends are engaged in business or especially busy, you should avoid visiting them during those hours. In any event, do not cause others to suffer loss or feel distress due to your visit.

For casual visits, if you do not have matters that require lengthy discussion, do not overstay your welcome. That wastes others' time and keeps them from attending to their matters. Unless the host earnestly asks you to stay, your visit should not exceed half an hour. If the host is very busy, you should leave as soon as possible. Never allow your casual talk to detain others from their important business because that is against the principle of loving others. At times, when the conversation needs to be prolonged, you should ask whether the host has other matters to attend to. If the host has nothing urgent at hand and he or she expresses the willingness to converse further, then you may continue. On the other hand, if the host has matters to attend to, he or she should honestly tell the guests and invite them to continue the conversation next time. Do not say, "I am free," pleasing your friends on the surface yet becoming angry afterwards, blaming others for detaining you.

When you converse with someone, if you notice signs of the host being busy or work being placed in front of the host, if others are asking for the host, or if the host is gazing at the clock, you should conclude your visit. For these are silent warnings that tell you it is time to leave.

As you arrive at your friend's door, whether you knock the door or ring the doorbell, do not do so too loudly or hastily. It might cause your friend unnecessary shock and disturbance. On the other hand, you should not do so too softly either because your friend might not be able to hear you and you end up waiting outside for a long time. Also, do not knock or ring unceasingly. Sometimes, after a few knocks or rings, people inside have heard you already, but they are unable to come out immediately. There are also cases when the person who answers the door walks slowly or the person has to pass through a long hallway to get to the door. Under these circumstances, your repetitive knocking would only disturb others. Therefore, it is best to knock a few times, and then wait a while before knocking again.

When you enter other people's homes, you ought to be prudent; it is better to wait for the host to invite you in. When you enter the house, the host may not have necessarily prepared everything. Therefore, you should give the host an opportunity to withdraw or to make preparation.

After you go into the house, you should address and greet whomever you meet, for you do not know how these people are related to the host. I have seen several occasions when people overlook this point, and others are provoked to anger and displeasure.

You should show special respect in greeting the old people you meet in other people's home. A man should treat the young women he encounters in a serious manner. Likewise, a woman should treat the young men she encounters in the same manner.

Do not read documents, letters, diaries, or account books that you find in other people's houses. Even if they are just lying on a table, you should not look through them because that is a very rude thing to do.

There might be paintings, photographs, works of art, or other displays and decorations that you see in other people's houses. Do not pick anything up by yourself, unless the host picks them up first.

Do not look inside other people's houses through the window in the yard.

Do not spit in other people's houses. You should bring your own handkerchief or tissues for sneezing and spitting.

If it is raining or snowing at the time you visit your friend, you should remove the dirt and mud from your shoes before entering the house, so that you will not dirty other people's houses.

When you visit the sick, if the patients have a rather serious illness or if their illness causes them to tire easily, you should not talk to them for a long period of time, so as not to tire them out and worsen their condition. Do not talk about things that are horrifying, worrisome, or resentful. Also, do not whisper amongst yourselves in front of the patients. This may cause them to be suspicious.

Before you visit your friends, you should wash your hands and face and put on clean clothing. Do not eat anything that contains onion, garlic, or other food that has an unpleasant odor. In any event, do not emit any foul odor from your mouth or your body that would make other people uncomfortable.

If you have made an appointment to visit your friends, you should be on time. If you are late due to some unexpected urgent matter, you should offer the host a sincere apology.

When the host asks you to take a seat, you should not take the best seat. If the host invites you to take the best seat, you should always yield them to others. If the host insists on offering you the best seat, then you may take it. However, if there are older or more honorable people among the guests, you should not take the best seats. Instead, you should yield the best seats to them. If other guests who have arrived before you offer you their seat, you should not take it. You should ask them to remain seated and take a vacant seat for yourself.

## Chapter 2—Speech and Conversation

Consider your speech carefully. Do not let your speech cause others to sin: become angry, suffer, or stumble.

Refrain from speaking gibberish. Speak clearly, and choose your words carefully.

Do not speak too quickly, making it hard for others to follow. Do not speak so slowly that it will cause others to lose patience and waste their time.

Do not speak in a pitch that is too high, causing pain to the listener, nor too deep making it too difficult to hear.

When others are busy, make your speech concise, direct, pertinent, clear, and understandable.

Do not interrupt others before they finish speaking. Even more so, it is a very foolish act to judge quickly or answer hastily before the question is finished.

Do not flippantly ask others about their monthly salary, family background, or living standards unless we have intentions of helping them.

Males should not casually inquire the age of females. It is likewise for females. Young people should also treat their peers in the same manner.

When others are unwilling to answer your questions, do not make it difficult for them by repeating the questions again.

Do not tell everything to new acquaintances lest you regret it.

You should not tease others because of their shortcomings or handicaps. It is a destructive act to both parties.

Use simple and easy-to-understand words and vocabulary in conversations.

Do not use unfamiliar and hard-to-understand words and terms. You must realize that speech is simply a form of communication, not a showcase for our talent.

When conversing, in case members of the other party are mentioned, you should address them respectfully with appropriate titles. When referring to your own members of the family, they should be addressed in a humbler way.

Many people always use phrases and titles which are either indecent or expressions that deviate from the truth. Christians should avoid using such expressions.

When conversing, immodest terms or phrases should be avoided.

When conversing, do not loosely boast or compliment others. Only those who are disgraceful and foolish will make compliments loosely to others.

When conversing, do not intentionally speak well of yourself or of your deeds. This is a way of seeking self-humiliation.

When speaking with others, unless it is necessary, do not speak continuously without giving others a chance to speak.

When conversing, pay attention to the listener's attitude. Know when to continue or stop. Many times people talk continuously making unnecessary conversation. The listener is already tired, fed up, and weary; yet, the speaker is still very much excited and unwilling to stop. This is a very annoying matter.

Teasing words and jokes can very easily bring about misunderstandings. They might also bring about contempt and resentment. Therefore, it is best to stay away from those things.

When conversing in a large group, unless for a very particular reason, do not speak in a foreign language to a part of the group.

When speaking in your own tongue, do not mix your speech with foreign terms.

## Chapter 3—Correspondence

Use clean, neat paper and envelopes when writing—this is to spare the reader any unpleasant feelings.

The most important factor in writing letters is for the reader's understanding. Do not use fancy vocabulary or difficult expressions.

Many writers include lengthy, useless greetings and insincere commendations. Christians should avoid such hypocritical habits.

The senders should use words that match the receiver's educational level. Do not use cursive handwriting or difficult words to make it difficult for the less educated readers. Those with poor penmanship should refrain from using cursive or simplified handwritings to avoid misunderstanding and confusion to the readers.

Respond quickly if a reply is requested. Even if you are too busy to reply at the time, send a short note to let the sender know his or her letter has been received. Being unresponsive makes the sender worry and wait in vain.

To avoid worrying the senders, inform them immediately upon receipt of money, packages, or books.

Be mindful of the postage. Make sure the required postage is stamped on securely to avoid the receiver having to pay the penalty for insufficient postage.

When writing to someone you are less acquainted with, be sure to include your return address in the letter if you are waiting for a reply. Otherwise, they have no means of responding. Even upon writing to a close friend, the return address should be written clearly on the envelope. It is important to provide a return address if the mail cannot be delivered. Also, it will serve as a good reminder for the receiver if he or she has forgotten your address.

When writing to someone you are less acquainted with, be sure to write your name as you wish to be addressed, such as Mr., Mrs., or Miss. Whatever it may be, let the other party know how you wish to be addressed.

Use registered mail when sending a draft or check. Also, send it with a secure, tightly sealed envelope. Make sure it cannot be easily opened. Do not mail any cash unless it is certified.

Do not correspond too frequently unless needed, so the friendship might not suffer when you are too occupied, or if you are not able to write as frequently.

Save the corresponding letter for reference; it can help in replying to the sender. The questions and issues should be clearly answered.

Keep a record book for your correspondence. It will serve as a good future reference in terms of date, time, person, address, and event.

A frequent sender should obtain the postage reference guide at the local post office. Be careful when reading it, as it will avoid any unnecessary penalty to the receiving party or any loss for you.

Be sure to include a self-stamped return envelope or the required postage when sending for a request of books or anything from anyone.

Never open or read another person's mail without his or her consent.

If you are sending a letter, you must seal it in an envelope and use the appropriate postage fee. You must not slip it in a package, book, newspaper, or photograph. If you are mailing a letter, you should not disguise it in the form of printed matter to receive a less expensive postage fee. This is an act of fraud before the law and an act of theft before God.

If you do not require or desire a reply, do not ask for a reply.

Remember to sign and stamp your own signature at the end of your letter if you have typed it or asked someone to write it on your behalf.

Be sure to send home frequent messages regarding your wellbeing if you are away for school, work, vacation, or business. This will relieve your family of any worry or concern. If you encounter danger such as war, sickness, flood, robbery or any accident and are unharmed, you must carefully consider the situation and notify your home or send a message home to report your safety to avoid unnecessary anxiety and worry.

Upon a safe arrival to your destination, inform your loved ones of your well being. It could also serve as a "thank you" note for their sending you off. You should immediately send a note of thanksgiving for any gift you receive from your loved ones.

As soon as you hear of a friend's trouble, sorrow, illness, or suffering, write as often as possible to comfort and encourage them as much as you can. If they have a material need, you should help them to the best of your ability. This is a labor of love and a Christian's duty.

## Chapter 4—Attending Meetings

Be prompt when attending meetings. Never be late unless you cannot help it.

Calmly sit down and meditate quietly upon arrival to the fellowship hall; do not talk loudly or move about. Before meetings begin, some meeting halls are busy and noisy like a marketplace, which is a sign of deplorable conduct.

You should take the front and inside seats, leaving the back and outside seats empty for the latecomers. It is truly illogical for the attendees to occupy the back and outside seats, causing the latecomers to squeeze by to get to their seats.

Do not leave the meeting hall before the meeting ends unless some unavoidable matter occurs. Take seats closer to the exit if you need to leave early in order to avoid disturbance to the rest of the attendees.

You should not wear expensive or fancy clothing intended to gain others' praises. Neither should you wear dirty or messy clothing to lose respect.

Men should take off their hats before entering the meeting hall; they should only put them back on after they leave.

When entering or exiting the meeting hall, do so quietly and in an orderly manner. Never rush or push others.

If the person sitting next to you do not have a Bible or a hymn book, you should share yours.

After the meeting begins, do not converse with others. Do not read other books. Do not gaze around. Do not read the meeting program while listening to someone's message.

You should never spit inside the meeting hall; neither should you spit outside of the meeting hall. You should bring a handkerchief or tissue for wiping the nose or mouth.

Be submissive to the ushers who are guiding you to your seat.

Do not eat raw onions, garlic, leek or similar pungent foods before meetings lest bad odors come from your mouth and cause others around you to suffer.

Walk as lightly as possible when entering the meeting hall. If you are wearing hard-soled shoes, you need to be extra careful. Also, be careful when laying a book on a desk so as to not make any noise. Keeping a meeting hall quiet is the responsibility of each person who attends the meeting.

It is better not to bring young children to the meeting. If you need to bring them, sit in the back where the exit is. Once children make a noise or cry, you should take them outside the meeting hall quickly.

Take good care of the walls, chairs, Bibles and hymn books of the meeting hall, as you would take care of the objects in your own home. Never damage them or write on them. You should also educate your children so that they will do likewise.

When the road is muddy after rain or snow, you need to rub off the mud from under your shoes before entering into the meeting hall.

Do not allow children to bring food like peanuts, which have shells, into the meeting hall so that they will not make a mess and dirty the floor.

When you open or close the door, do so as lightly as possible; try not to make any noise.

Unless absolutely necessary, do not carry too many purchases in your hands when you are entering the meeting hall.

If something suddenly happens in the meeting hall, like an insane person quarrels and yells noisily, a person suddenly passes out, the electricity suddenly goes out, a stray dog wanders into the congregation, or other accidents happen, people in the meeting must keep quiet and follow orders. Do not stand up and watch, talk to others, or yell. Just let the responsible people take care of the incident; the rest still need to continue attending the meeting.

## Chapter 5 - Punctuality

One must recognize that tardiness is a disgraceful and detestable habit, detrimental to both the person who is late and the other party that is waiting.

When attending meetings and meals or meeting with others--either be it for general discussion or for business--one should attend such an event at the appointed time. It is always better to arrive early with ample time to spare than to be hasty and late.

When meeting someone, do not arrive late, but do not arrive too early either. Arriving too early might take up the host's Time, which might be put to better use.

When meeting someone, should special circumstances arise to hinder you from arriving on time, you should forewarn the other party. However, if an unforeseen circumstance arises and you cannot warn the other party, then upon arrival, you should admit your fault and apologize sincerely to the other party.

When meeting someone, if the other person has left due to your tardiness, you cannot blame the other person; instead, you should acknowledge that it is completely your own fault.

One should purchase an accurate watch, carry and use it wherever he or she goes daily. This is, needless to say, for the financially better off. Even those who are financially less capable, no matter how frugal, should still purchase a watch. In order for a person to be on time, this is a matter that cannot be neglected.

When attending an important meeting, one should leave home slightly earlier, perhaps ten to 20 minutes earlier to prevent any delay that might be caused by unexpected events along the way. Even if you encounter such events, because you leave earlier and take into account this possible time delay, you will still arrive on time. Otherwise, you might be late and miss an important meeting.

One should try his or her best to be punctual and help others to do so.

If you are not sure whether you can attend a certain meeting, it is best not to make empty promises, lest you lose credibility.

To avoid shortchanging others, in order to prevent any delay or impediment to the matters at hand, one should seriously be committed to being punctual for the sake of preserving one's Credibility and trustworthiness,

## Chapter 6—Manners

When interacting with others, Christians should love others and honesty; at the same time manners should also not be ignored. Many honest and pious believers are despised and loathed by others solely because of their lack of manners. This is truly a regretful matter.

Manners should come from a respectful heart, not from intentions of being a sycophant to others.

When you see an elderly person or a respected person whom you know, show respect by taking off your hat and bowing. Do not just nod your head in recognition.

If you are seated and you see an elderly person you recognize is coming over, you should get up and give him or her the better seat. After he or she is seated then you may sit. If he or she is not seated, you should remain standing with him or her. Do not sit and let the elderly person remain standing.

Let the elderly walk ahead of you, enter before you, and get in the car or on the ship before you. When sitting together, let the elderly sit in the better seat. When passing things, drinks or food, first pass to the elderly.

The western greeting is shaking hands, comparable to the Chinese way of bowing to one another. Shake hands with your right hand, never with your left. Take off your gloves before shaking hands. Take off your hat when you see an elderly person, a woman, or respected guest.

Men should let women go first. Men should help women to the fullest of their abilities with respect because women are physically weaker than men.

You should always behave with discipline and respect no matter where you are. You must not be frivolous, unrestrained, or say things that you do not mean, thus inviting scorn from others.

When speaking to others, address them by name before speaking; otherwise, they will not know you are talking to them.

When requesting something from others, always use the word “Please” before your request. Examples would be: “Please have some tea,” “Please tell me,” “Please come,” “Please give this to somebody,” and “Please write to me.” When someone does a favor for you, no matter how big or small, or gives you something, no matter how much or how little, you should say “Thank you.”

When requesting a favor from others, do not use a commanding voice or attitude.

When conversing with another, sit properly, show discipline and respect. Do not be rude. This is especially important in front of older people and women.

Do not interrupt when others are talking. Do not start your criticism before someone has finished speaking.

When seating others, offer others the honored seats. You should sit in the mediocre seats, and do likewise when you are visiting others. When others seat you in the honored seat, you should yield to them the honored seat. If they persist, then you can sit. But if there are elderly people or well-respected guests, you must never sit in seats better than theirs.

Recognize that the honored seats are ones facing the front of the house. The seats on either side are the next honored but the seats on the left have higher honor than the seats on the right.

When others are conversing, do not walk between them. You should go behind and around them. If you must walk between them, say, "Excuse me."

If you are in a car or riding a horse and you need to ask for direction or other matters, you should get out of the car or dismount before making any inquiry.

When making inquiries, the facial expression and tone of voice should be gentle. You should also greet them with words like "Excuse me," "May I ask . . .?" Whether or not the person is able to assist you, you should express your thanks by saying "Thank you," or "Sorry for bothering you."

When others inquire of you about something, you should clearly advise them if you know. If you do not, tell them gently that you do not know. Do not make them feel bad by showing them an unsympathetic face and speaking to them in a harsh voice.

Christians should forsake the use of courteous words or actions that are pretentious. Examples would be to ask others to stay for a meal when you have not prepared the food, to ask someone to visit you when you do not want him to; do not say, "I have long admired your name" when you have never heard of him. Christians should forsake all pretentious mannerisms.

One should practice proper manners a little at a time in one's daily life. That is the reason good manners should be emphasized among father and son, husband and wife, brothers, sisters, friends, schoolmates, and co-workers. That way, at important gatherings or while meeting with honored guests, we conduct ourselves appropriately and do not lack proper manners.

Proper manners should be taught to children when young. This way, they can naturally become persons with good manners when they grow up.

## Chapter 7 - Hygiene

Wash your hands, your face, your body, and your clothing frequently. These do not only have a great impact concerning your health, but can also influence how others perceive you?looking up or down at you. Moreover, an unclean person can also affect another person? mental health. Sometimes, the odors emanating from this unclean person can cause others to suffer from headaches.

Always rinse your mouth and brush your teeth. Otherwise, bad odors can come out of your mouth when you are talking to another person, causing another to suffer. If this other person leaves because of your bad breath, you will feel uneasy. If this other person does not leave, his nose suffers.

Do not spit on the street. Always carry tissue and use it for such purposes.

Do not smoke because smoking deteriorates your health. One who smokes also has bad breath. One also impairs the clean and fresh air around, causing oneself and others to suffer.

No matter where you are, do not haphazardly dispose of broken items, fruit peels, or unclean water.

Do not relieve yourself outside the designated area. Even if it is within the designated area, keep the area clean.

Do not use another person's musical instrument when another person has placed that instrument in his or her mouth.

If you have an eye infection, do not use another person's soap or towel located near their sink.

If you have sickness in the liver, do not use another person's cup or rice bowl.

Towels in public bathrooms are the most dangerous. Do not use them to wipe your eyes.

The cups we use in our house to serve our guests ought to be kept clean to avoid the spread of germs.

When you or a member of your family has a contagious disease, do not go to another person's house unless absolutely necessary.

You need to keep your home and workplace clean and neat. The bed, floors, tables, and windows need to be neat. Not only does this affect your health, it also affects your alertness. This also has a big impact as far as whether or not others respect you.

No matter if you are to live in or visit another place, you ought to make that place cleaner and

neater because of your presence. This will benefit you and others.

## Chapter 8—Clothing and Appearance

Be aware of what you wear because some people will judge your personality and moral life according to your appearance.

Do not let others take more notice of your clothing than of you.

Do not allow God's name to be blasphemed, do not let others sin or stumble, do not allow yourself to grow cold and go backwards on God's holy path because of your clothing and appearance.

Clothing and appearance should not be fancy or bizarre to gain others' praise and envy, and should not be unclean and disordered to bring contempt and scorn from others.

Button your clothing properly; tie your shoelaces; set your hat straight.

Wash your clothes frequently so that no one will look down on you because of your dirty clothing; moreover, do not cause others to suffer from the bad odor emanating from your dirty clothing. Water is easily accessible, so washing your clothes is a very easy task.

Many trendy women like to wear flimsy clothing so that their body is exposed; their arms and legs are also shown. This easily causes temptation for others, and it is God-hated. One should not simulate these people.

There should be an obvious distinction between male and female clothing. Men should not wear women's clothes; women should not wear men's. God detests this kind of indistinction.

Do not pursue fancy clothes in order to win other's praise and envy. Rather, the most beautiful clothing and appearance are our holiness and incorruptible manner of life.

Do not wear bizarre clothing intentionally to attract other's attention.

Be aware of your financial situation before you purchase clothing. For those who are not wealthy, do not purchase expensive clothing; and absolutely do not purchase clothing by borrowing money. Wearing old clothes is not a shameful matter; you just need to mend the broken spots and have the old clothes washed clean. Pious and moral persons should absolutely never belittle those who wear old clothing. Now concerning those mean and haughty people who flatter the rich and despise the poor: if they look down upon us, what do we lose?

## Chapter 11 — Funerals and Weddings

When attending funerals or weddings of relative or friends, Christians should act according to the Bible, which teaches us to "rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with those who mourn." They should not act like unbelievers who give a false performance, or put on a false act for their own ends.

When attending weddings or funerals of relative or friends, Christians may participate freely, as long as their actions are not contrary to their beliefs. However, there are certain principles that must never be overlooked: first, whatever you do, consider the glory of God; second, whatever you do, consider the benefit to others; third, whatever you do, consider your beliefs and your performance.

When going to others' homes to congratulate, never cause unhappiness due to your words or actions.

When going to others' homes to offer condolences, do not talk or act in jest, making light of other's sorrow. Although, when someone dies in a believer's family, it is not as hopeless as for an unbeliever family, departing is always a sorrowful event.

When going to others' homes to congratulate on a happy event, remember the teaching to "rejoice with those who rejoice." When going to others' homes to offer condolences, remember the teaching to "mourn with those who mourn."

When attending a happy event, the gift you give, whether monetary or material should be something the receiver can use and something you can afford. In this way, the recipient can use the gift and it falls within your financial capabilities. Never borrow money to buy a gift.

A wedding gift should have a red ribbon attached to it, on which is written the recipient's name and the name of the giver (using appropriate titles according to the relationship of both parties). It is permissible to write the name of the article on the ribbon.

If you are giving money, enclose the money in a red envelope in which is written "Congratulations," then the giver's name. It is allowable to write the amount of money.

When attending a sorrowful event, the gift you give, whether monetary or material should follow the same rules. Many Chinese give inappropriate gifts because they worshipped idols for a long time and followed old customs. Christians should be very careful not to follow the customs of those who worship false idols, such as giving gifts to the dead, or using inappropriate sayings, banners, or ribbons.

It is permissible to save banners or scrolls but attention should be paid to the wording. If the deceased was a Christian, it is suitable to write, "Rest in Peace." You are not speaking to the deceased but speaking for the deceased. Sending wreaths is a form of worshipping false gods (Acts 14:13). Christians should not follow this practice.

When attending a sorrowful event, never bow to the deceased's coffin or portrait because this practice originated from worshiping the dead. Those who worship false gods believe that post-death, a person becomes a saint or ghost and can be worshipped by humans. Therefore, they place certain items beside the coffin to worship the dead person. Even after the deceased has been buried and a tombstone is set up, they continue to worship him. As we do not believe that the dead will become saints or should be worshipped by the living, we should not bow to the dead or their portraits. If bowing to the deceased shows respect, how can he appreciate the honor as he is already dead?

In not following the practice of worshiping the dead, we may incur displeasure among relatives or friends. However, we must be firm in our beliefs, no matter how others may feel.

When attending a funeral, do not wear bright colored clothes. Many nonbelievers, when attending a funeral, shed fake tears in order to show feelings for the deceased. This is a shameful practice. Christian must never act in such a way.

When giving gifts for funerals or weddings, in big cities where there are banks, giving a money order is acceptable. For weddings, a gift certificate from a department store is welcomed, allowing the recipient to buy something they like.

When attending a wedding or funeral, if your host needs any help, offer to help them. Christians should always lend a hand when and where help is needed.

In celebrating weddings, both Chinese and foreigners have some unacceptable customs, such as throwing rice, teasing the newlywed, making jokes, and so on. Christians should strictly avoid such practices.

When going to someone's home for weddings or funerals, do not stay too long. It may be that your host is already very tired with having so much to do. If you stay too long, they have to entertain you and cannot get any rest. Christians should always be considerate of others.

When attending weddings or funerals, if it is possible, do not take children as this causes more trouble to your host. It is especially important not to take children to a funeral.

When attending weddings or funerals, if you feel the host has not attended to you, do not blame them. Remember that they have many things to do and many guests to welcome. Although they are doing their best, some things may be overlooked. It may be hard for those who have not been in a similar situation to understand. Christians should always think first of others and learn how to forgive. Picking on others' shortcomings is demeaning. Christians should never act in this way.

## Chapter 13—Respecting Public Property

You should take care of public property and someone else's property as if it is your own. Not only should you not damage it, you should also make an effort to protect and cherish it.

When you read books or newspapers in a library, you must not damage or tear the pages. Use caution when you open a book or turn over a page. You must not moisten your fingers to turn over a page. This will ruin the paper and spread diseases.

You must not write anything in books or newspapers designated for public use. Neither should you cut anything out of them.

After finishing perusing the books or newspapers, do not throw them around as you please, but put them back in their proper places.

When you use the Bible or hymnbook of a meeting place, you should take better care of them than your own books. You must not write in them, damage them, or let children play with them.

When you visit a famous scenic spot, do not carve; write names or anything on the walls or pillars. Many tourist spots have been marred with this type of graffiti. Although you cannot prevent other people from doing so, you must not do it yourself.

Do not trample on plants that belong to the public. You absolutely should not trample on even one blade of grass or one flower. You may think that since there are so many flowers, picking one does not matter. But if everyone thinks the same, no flowers will be left.

When you visit a zoo, do not throw stones to attack or frighten the animals.

Do not touch any fragile item or any item you should not touch in a public place.

Do not spoil or damage any tool, wall or display item on a train, bus, boat, or in a hotel. You should respect these places as your own property.

## Chapter 14—Following Rules

A good Christian should not only follow God's commands, but also the laws or regulations of the surroundings. (However, a Christian should not follow a law or regulation if it is in direct conflict with God's commands.) In a country, you should be a law-abiding citizen. In school, you should be a student who respects the school rules. In a store, you should be a person who goes by the store regulations. In a factory you should be a worker who keeps to the factory ordinances. Observe the rules and regulations of any organization you serve in. Furthermore, when you travel, adhere to travel rules; when you visit, follow the visitation rules. Even if you are just taking a bus or ferry, abide by the regulations of the bus or ferry.

Regardless of where you go, read through the rules carefully so that you know what to follow.

If you are not aware of the rules and therefore violate them unintentionally and interfere, do not get angry but confess your mistake and follow the rules immediately.

If someone violates a rule and does not get penalized and no one interferes, do not follow him. Do not forget you are a disciple of Christ. A Christian follows rules not because he is afraid of punishment or the consequences, but because he wants to be pure and loved by God and to manifest a good testimony for the Lord in the world.

Follow the rules yourself and help others to do likewise.

Do not violate a rule because you think the rule is not important or irrelevant. Remember: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Luke 16:10). We should do whatever we ought to do, regardless of how big or small the task is. We should carry out tasks according to whether we should or should not as set by the rules.

There are tourist places where you have to buy a ticket before you can go in. Some people go in for free because their relatives or friends work there and take them in. One not only violates the regulations of that place, but also commits a theft. A Christian must not do this.

Some people get free tickets, free rides or upgrades to more luxurious seats, which they do not deserve, because they know someone working in the train station or bus company. This not only violates train regulations but also constitutes a theft. A Christian must not do this.

When mailing letters, some people label their letters with a 'printed matter' designation to save postage. Some lie about the content of the package to save postage. This violates the post office's rules and is also considered a theft. Christians absolutely should not take part in such acts.

There are public places with different doors for entrance and exit; you should go in through the entrance and come out through the exit. Some places have prescribed routes and you must follow.

Walk, ride a bicycle, or drive a car on the left side of the street. (There are foreign countries that are exceptions to this rule.)

When you are getting on or off a ferry or a bus, going in or coming out of a crowded place, proceed in order and do not fight to be first.

Do not talk with the driver when you take a bus or train.

When you take a bus to travel, do not occupy more than one seat, unless there are many empty seats.

Do not talk loudly in a library.

When you visit someone in a hospital, observe the visitation hours unless in an emergency.

Do not talk loudly in a hospital ward.

Turn on the headlights when you drive a car at night. Use lights when you ride a bicycle.

If you are at a train or bus station that requires a ticket to get on the train or bus, make sure you buy a ticket before you get on.

Do not violate a rule because of greed, laziness, or ignorance.

## Chapter 15—Borrowing From Others

Do not borrow unless it is absolutely necessary.

When you do borrow, you must return the item by the due date. Do not return it past the due date; otherwise, you will lose your credibility. If you really cannot return the item by the due date, you must explain the reason to the lender and ask for his or her pardon. Do not just put the matter aside because it is unreasonable to do so.

Whenever you borrow others' money or goods, you must be mindful to not forget about it but return it as soon as possible. Often, honest people forget about the money or goods they have borrowed. They do not have the intention to shortchange others; they simply forget. But those who do not know them will think they are dishonest and despise them. Actually, they deserve to be treated like this. Although they do not have the intention, they still shortchange the lenders.

If the lender asks you to return the money or item you have borrowed, do not get angry or hold a grudge against him or her. You should remember the favor the lender has done for you when he or she lent you the money or item. It is reasonable for him or her to ask for the return. Some people borrow money or goods but never return them. When the lender asks for the return, they grow angry and accuse the lender of being unkind to them. Repaying kindness with evil is despicable.

When you borrow items or books, be especially careful of them. In fact, take better care of them than your own. If an item is damaged, you must purchase a new item to replace it. It is extremely unreasonable to damage or soil the items you borrow.

If the item you borrowed is already damaged, you should repair the damage, if possible, before returning it to the owner.

If someone refuses to lend you money or an item, you must not blame or get mad at that person. You ought to remember that lending to you is a favor and not a responsibility of the owner.

When you ask someone to lend you money, books, or goods, do not forget to pay the postage or exchange fees. You must not expect the lender to take on these fees for you.

Many people are careless in borrowing. They not only lose their credibility, they also shortchange someone and bring shame to God's name. You should be careful and not repeat their failures.

When you return money or goods, it is best to return it to the lender yourself. Do not ask someone else to return it for you. If, for some reason, the lender did not receive the return and you think you have returned it, then it is considered as you had never returned it. If the lender asks you about it, you still have a chance to clarify the matter and pay back. If the lender does not ask you about it, it is equivalent to you never having returned it.

If the lender, out of his love, sincerely tells you that you do not need to return the money or item, you should accept his love but remember his kindness.

## Chapter 16—Lending to Others

Do not refuse to lend to others; refusing to lend renders you selfish. On the other hand, do not lend without caution; otherwise, you may harm someone.

Do not lend money to lazy people who do not work.

Do not lend money to people with substance abuse.

Do not lend money to dishonest people.

Do not lend money to people for speculative investments.

Do not lend money to people for luxuries, such as fancy fashions and extravagant banquets.

If anyone has an emergency, and if you have the means, do not refuse lending to him. Helping others is a Christian's responsibility; furthermore, you may have an emergency someday.

Do not refuse lending money to anyone who is in hardship, poverty, or helplessness; do not expect him to repay you or charge him interest.

Explain the reason honestly to the borrower if you feel it is inappropriate to borrow. Advise him in the right way; do not lie or use excuses, for this is not done out of love.

If your borrower falls into financial hardship and cannot repay you, do not pursue him to recover the debt. On the contrary, release the debt according to the situation.

Do not lend money that someone has entrusted to you for safekeeping because it is not your money, and you do not have any authority to use the money. If you lend the money and the owner wants have to his money back, you will be in big trouble because you cannot give him his money. Your credibility will be greatly harmed.

Do not lend anything someone has entrusted to you for safekeeping.

It is very foolish to insult someone who has borrowed from you.

## Chapter 17—Inviting Others for a Meal

If you want to invite others for a meal, set the date, time, and place. Allow a few days of prior notice for your guests. You may invite them verbally, or send out an invitation or a note.

Prior to the gathering, the host should remember the date, time, place, number of attendees, and plan everything in advance so that nothing is overlooked to avoid mishaps. On the day of the gathering, the host should be there early to greet the guests. Do not let the guests come and find that the host has not arrived. If many guests are invited, the host should ask a couple of people to help in advance so the host does not feel overwhelmed and the guests do not feel inconvenienced.

After the guests arrive, the host should talk to each guest, not just to a few selected guests. Even though the host cannot carry on a long conversation, he should talk briefly with each guest so no guest feels left out. This is particularly true if elderly people are among those invited. The host should greet each of them warmly.

If there are guests who do not know each other, the host should introduce them. Give their names, maybe a brief description of their occupation, or their relationship to the host. Avoid getting into details and saying boastful things.

The old practice where guests insist on others having certain seats is very meaningless. The best way is to let the host assign seats and the guests to follow the set seating. Another way is to have cards with guests' names placed on the table designating where guests are to be seated. The guests should sit where assigned.

After all the guests are seated, the host or someone he designates can lead everyone in saying grace. When the host picks up his eating utensils, everyone can start eating.

The host is not to leave until the guests are gone. If there is a special circumstance and the host must leave, the host should give the guests a reasonable explanation and ask them to excuse him. The host should hurry back after his matter has been taken care of.

While eating, the host should pay attention to the needs of his guests and also take the opportunity to converse with them. He should converse with each guest, not just one or two guests.

The old practice of using one's own chopsticks to get food for others is unsanitary and makes some people uncomfortable. It is best to avoid this bad practice. If there are elderly people, blind people, or children who need assistance, a separate pair of chopsticks should be used.

After the meal, the host should prepare tea, games, or some fellowship. When the guests thank the host, the host should thank them for coming.

The host should ensure that the guests are happy. Do not say anything that causes unpleasantness. If the guests are engaged in a conflicting conversation or some other type of unpleasant situation, the host should alleviate them of that situation quickly. Do not be a bystander.

Wine is not good for a man's heart or health. Do not serve wine but serve tea, soda, fruit juice, or punch instead. Do not feel that you will offend others by doing this.

Smoking is not good for a man's heart or health. Even though Christians cannot prevent someone from smoking, do not prepare cigars or cigarettes. Do not feel you will offend someone by doing this.

It is good to have a time of fellowship after the meal if possible. Read a Bible passage, have the host or someone the host has requested in advance share with others some words of encouragement. Then ask an individual to lead them in prayer. This type of gathering is beneficial to both the physical and spiritual well-being of the guests and is something we should encourage. The fellowship time should not be too long—between ten to 30 minutes is appropriate.

## Chapter 18—Being Invited to a Meal

Having been invited to a meal you cannot attend, notify the host as soon as possible so that he does not need to prepare your portion. If you agree to go, you must attend. Do not be a no-show or arrive late.

Many Chinese like to attend the engagements late, and this is very despicable. It is an act of unfaithfulness and causes harm to others. Christians must strive to rid themselves of this habit.

When you attend a gathering at another's house, do not just think of being served. Find an opportunity to serve others: an example would be to greet the guests.

When being seated, stand behind the seat assigned to you by the host. Sit down when everyone else at your table sits; do not sit before others do.

After being seated and saying grace, do not start before others: start with everyone.

Do not pick the best part or the larger pieces from a dish. Start with a small piece.

Do not use your own chopsticks or utensils to go through a dish or bowl to find your favorite. After you pick up a piece of food, do not put it back down and then pick up another piece because of your distaste for the first piece. Do not pick and choose all the best pieces for yourself. This is very selfish and shows your lack of manners.

If you need someone to pass you something, add the word "Please" before your request. After your request has been fulfilled, say "Thank you."

Do not eat too much of your favorite dishes, for you should be considerate of others as they may like it as well. An exception would be if the host especially prepares something for you because you cannot eat the same food as others.

Find an opportunity to converse with others while eating. Do not be silent and just concentrate on your food, but do not say so much that others do not even have a chance to speak.

While eating, do not talk about unpleasant things; avoid mentioning disgusting things that might ruin others' appetites.

Do not put too much food into your mouth all at once. Do not talk if you have food in your mouth.

Do not chew with your mouth open; do not make a noise while you eat.

If the host prepares two sets of eating utensils, remember which set you will use to pick up food and which set you will use for eating. You might feel this inconvenient, but you should do this

for the benefit of others. We know this practice has been proven to prevent us from catching viruses and diseases from others.

Do not put your elbows on the table while eating because this might cause inconvenience to others.

Assist the elderly, children, or disabled who are seated with you or near you.

Cover your mouth and nose if you cough or sneeze.

Do not cause inconvenience to the host by bringing small children unless the host has invited them. If you cannot leave your children at home, you can decline the invitation.

If the host was not hospitable or you felt unsatisfied in some way, you should forgive him. He is not obligated to invite you. He does not intend to cause you discomfort or make you feel mistreated. It is only that he is unable to manage everything perfectly. Consider the time when you are also in this situation.

If you arrive late and others are already seated, do not become angry with the host—you should apologize for your tardiness.

After eating or before you leave, do not forget to thank the host.

## Chapter 19 — Western Dinner Manners

When eating a Western style meal, if one does not know the rules of etiquette or how to use the proper cutlery, it is best to take note of how the host and other guests are acting and slowly follow their actions. It often happens that some people, although they are unfamiliar with the rules of etiquette, fail to watch how others act, unconsciously making many strange mistakes. Such a person will be made a laughing stock.

When entering the banquet room, stand away from the table and wait to be seated by the host. When your host shows you your seat, walk over to the table and stand behind the assigned chair. Wait until all the guests have been assigned seat. Then everyone will sit down at the same time. After being seated, do not start conversation. Quietly wait until the host, or appointed guest, gives the blessing. After the blessing, you may take up the napkin, which is on your left side, open it, and spread it across your chest so that food or water will not be spilled on your clothing. The napkin may also be used to wipe your mouth, but never use it to blow your nose or spit on. When the meal is over, neatly fold the napkin and lay it down on the table. The rules for the paper and cloth napkins are the same.

Use the largest spoon for drinking soup, which is in front of you, putting the spoon slowly into your mouth. Do not make a noise from your mouth while drinking soup. To Westerners, this would be a very bad manner. When there is only a little soup left, you may raise the side of the bowl that is nearest to you, leaving the outer side on the table, and using your spoon, finish the soup. Never lift the soup bowl from the table, and never drink directly from the soup bowl. Always use your spoon. If your host serves soup in a cup, then you should lift the cup and drink the soup. After the soup, the large plate that is placed before you is for meat, vegetables, or rice. According to your appetite, you may help yourself to the above. Wait until everyone has filled their plate, and then begin to eat together with others.

The small plate on your left-hand side is for bread, butter, and jam. When the bread is passed to you, you may take one or two slices and put them on your plate. When butter or jam is passed to you, use the knife or spoon provided, help yourself putting the knife or spoon back to its original place. Never use the serving knife or spoon to spread butter or jam on your bread. Use your own small knife. If a small knife has not been placed on the table, you may use your meat knife to spread butter or jam on your bread. Use your hand to pick up bread and place it in your mouth. It is not necessary to use a fork. A fork is used to put food in your mouth, comparable to Chinese chopsticks. A knife is used to cut meat. If nothing on your plate needs to be cut, just leave the knife aside. Never use a knife to put food in your mouth. This is considered very rude.

Europeans, when dining, use their right hand for the knife, left hand for the fork. With the knife, they put the meat, vegetable, and rice onto the fork, and then raising the fork with the left hand, put the food in their mouth. Americans, when dining, usually use the right hand for the knife and the left hand for the fork, cut the meat or other foods which need cutting. They lay down the knife beside the plate, pick up the fork with the right hand, and put the food in their mouths. Either of these ways of eating can be used.

When putting food on your plate, unless there is a special reason, you should finish what is on your plate. When you are through eating, place the knife, and fork on your plate. Then, the waiter will know that you are through eating and remove your plate.

Sometimes, several knives, forks, and spoons are placed on the table: one for soup, one for fish, one for meat and vegetables, and one for dessert. If you do not know which ones to use, take note of how your host or other guests act, and follow accordingly

The waiter always serves food from the left side. If he approaches you from the right side, you should realize that he is serving the guest on your right. Do not reach out to take food. When he approaches you from your left side, you may help yourself to the food.

When another guest passes you some food, reach out and take it and say, "Thank you." If he or she passes you meat, bread, jam, butter, and such, you should take the container, holding it in your left hand. With your right hand, take what you need, and place it on your own plate. Never let others hold the container. After you help yourself, don't forget to pass the container to the guest on your side.

If you wish to take something, which is beyond your reach, ask someone else to pass it to you. Do not forget to say, "Please," and after he or she passes the item to you, do not forget to say, "Thank you."

When you finish using a teaspoon, remove it from the cup at once, and place it on the saucer when a cup is set on the table, regardless of whether it is full or empty. Never leave a spoon in it.

When eating fruit, a bowl may be sent before you—this is for washing your fingers. After eating the fruit, you may rinse your fingers in the water, and then dry them with your napkin. Never drink water from the bowl. The water in the tall glass is for drinking.

Do not make a noise with your mouth when eating.

When dining, your seat should be close to the table. Do not put your elbows on the table, so as not to inconvenience others.

If there are bones, skins, shells or other non-edible things, place them on a plate. Never leave them on the tablecloth, and do not throw them on the floor.

Be careful when eating. Do not spill food or soup on the table, thus soiling the tablecloth.

## Chapter 20—Gift-Giving and Receiving

Do not give many gifts to the wealthy because they already have an abundance; instead, one should give gifts to those who lack because they are the very ones in need of help. In Proverbs 22:16, it says: “He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.” The people of this world are selfish and only desire to give gifts to the affluent, refusing to give gifts to the poor. God detests this kind of sycophant behavior. Christians should give timely help to those in urgent need and not give additionally or surplus to those who are rich.

When helping the poor, you must not give haughtily and hope to receive credit. You should aspire to give with respect and lovingkindness.

Do not send your servant or messenger to deliver your gifts to the poor lest the recipient have no tip for your servant.

Those in poor circumstances need not devise a method of repayment upon receiving a gift, and those who give it must not hope for a reward in return. If you insist on repaying, not only will you have difficulty, you will also make the giver feel uneasy and uncomfortable; you should have a thankful heart of appreciation.

Besides giving to the poor, Christians can give gifts to families and friends. But they should do it out of love and not out of falsehood or flattery. Even more so, one should never harbor any thought or intention of using others to scheme for one’s own benefit and advantage.

One should choose practical presents bearing in mind the receiver’s need. Do not give silk to those who like cotton. Likewise, do not give indigestible food to those with stomach ailments.

Buying gift certificates from big department stores is a good idea for gifts. This will give the receiver freedom to choose the item they want and need.

It is another good idea to obtain cashier checks or savings bonds for gifts. They can readily and easily be exchanged for cash. The savings bonds will even accumulate interest if they are not exchanged.

Appreciate the gifts you receive; acknowledge your receipt as well as your appreciation. Whether the gift was sent via mail or delivered, send a thank-you note of appreciation for the generous gift immediately.

You should tip the servant if the giver’s servant delivered the gifts to you. This is a token for his labor and what the servant hopes for.

Even if you should receive tiny gifts or a gift that is not suitable for your use, you should not be dissatisfied but have a thankful heart. The gift was given to you out of love, not out of responsibility or duty. It may be that the gift does not satisfy you, but the thought should.

Though the gift itself may be light, the intention of the giver is weighty. As in the Chinese idioms: “A small gift that has come a long way may be light, but its affection is great and immense” and “There are great thoughts, immense love, and many affections in sending even a small gift far away.”

Do not accept any gift from strangers, unfamiliar or suspicious characters, or any such people. They may use that as bait to achieve their ill intention.

If an unknown, selfish person who has no reason to give you a gift gives you a gift, repay it as soon as possible. It may be very difficult to refuse them later when they have any request of you. If you are unable to return their favor, it is best that you should not accept their gifts.

Christians cannot accept any gift that is a bribe because it is a sin against God.

Do not accept any gift that is questionable or illegal. If you do so, you will be a partaker of that sin.

When you receive a gift, if you detect intentions other than goodness, you must not accept it.

Young ladies should not readily accept gifts from untrustworthy men. They may have objectionable intentions towards you, and it may become a snare for you.

Do not accept gifts from a wicked person, lest you become involved with them and their bad deeds.

You should receive kind gifts from those who offer them out of love. Do not refuse them, for you must not reject their lovingkindness.

## Chapter 23 — Being Mindful of Others

Treat others as you would have them treat you. Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you. It is very important that when communicating or working with others, always think of others' interests.

Do not visit people early in the morning in case they have not yet risen from bed; in the case that they may have risen; the morning is always a busy time. Do not visit during meal times, thus preventing them from taking their meal undisturbed. Do not visit people too late at night, in case they have already retired. When visiting, do not stay too long, thus preventing others from taking care of their own matters. If you need to talk longer, ask the person you are visiting if they are busy. If he seems busy, you should leave at once. If he tells you that he is not busy and invites you to stay awhile, you may stay longer. No matter where, whether in a private or public place, if you know someone is sleeping, you should be quiet. Do not speak loudly or sing songs. Walk quietly so that others can rest, especially if there is someone who is ill.

Be especially considerate of people who are very busy or in poor health. Do not make too much idle talk, wasting their precious time or giving them no time to rest. Because you are not busy, do not think that others have nothing to do. Because you do not feel tired, do not think others are not tired.

Except for unavoidable reasons, or for close friends and relatives, do not ask others to take things for you (especially large, heavy or valuable things). If they do not take them, they feel badly in refusing. If they take the things, they could be a real problem. If something unforeseen happens or an article is lost, they might feel obliged to replace it. Nowadays, there are post offices everywhere. Sending a package is easy. It's better to pay for mailing than to put someone in a predicament.

When others are eating, do not talk about something that saddens others or something distasteful, making others lose their appetite.

If you see that someone has a problem or some difficulty, do your best to help him or her if you are able. Do not be a bystander.

When traveling on bus or train, give your seat to the elderly, females, handicapped, or weaker persons.

If you see blind people, deaf people, cripples, or others with disabilities who need help, you should help them as much as possible.

Do not speak of sad or frightening things in front of people who are ill, thus upsetting and saddening them.

If someone asks you a question or asks for directions, answer them to the best of your ability and as clearly as possible.

Before attending a meeting or talking to someone, do not eat raw onions, garlic, or other foods that have a strong odor.

When asking someone to do you a favor, consider whether it would cause others difficulty or inconvenience. If such is the case, it is best not to ask for help to avoid discomfort and loss to others.

When someone asks you to buy something for them, and asks you the price you paid, you should tell him honestly. If he repays you, accept the money. We often see someone buying something for others, but when asked the price, is unwilling to tell and is unwilling to accept the money offered. Please consider how uncomfortable it makes the other person. This behavior could be unconsciously taken as a hint, "Next time do not ask me to buy anything for you." Although that was not your intention, he will never again ask you to buy something. It should be known, giving a gift is one thing, asking someone to buy something for you is another matter. Giving a gift is your idea. Purchasing for others is doing them a favor. If you are buying something at other's request, and give it as a gift, that puts the requester in a predicament.

When asking others to buy things for you, you should give them the money in advance to avoid the predicament of them not having enough money to pay for it. If he has the money to pay for you and is willing to do so, repay him as soon as you receive the purchases. Do not delay. First, the other person may need the money but does not like to ask for it. Second, you may forget to repay, hurting your credibility.

Sometimes when others buy something for you out of courtesy, they may refuse to take your money. However, you must reimburse them.

When asking someone to do you a favor or buy something for you, you should be responsible for his or her transportation. As they are already doing you a favor, you cannot expect them to spend their money for your business.

If you are making a long trip to buy something for others, or attending some business for them, you may, but not necessarily, take their money for traveling expenses. However, if you happened to be going that way to attend the business of your own, you should not take their money.

Do not borrow necessities from others unless they have a surplus and only borrow for a short period of time. Never borrow a fan from someone who has only one fan. Never borrow an umbrella from someone who has only one umbrella. Never borrow a raincoat from someone who has only one raincoat. Never borrow a handbag from someone who has only one handbag. Never borrow a fur coat from someone who has only one fur coat. Never borrow a Bible from someone who has only one Bible. He only has one and may have to use it at some time. Lending items to you will be a problem to him.

If you ask someone a question, which he seems unwilling to answer, do not repeat the question over and over, thus embarrassing him or her. Do not make fun of others' disabilities: blindness,

lameness, deafness, mental retardation, unclear skin, disfiguring ailments such as being hunchbacked, or handlessness. This type of jest saddens people.

If someone accidentally spoils something that belongs to you, by right, he should replace it. However, if he is financially unable to do so, do not ask him to replace it. Even if he feels indebted and insists on replacing it, you should not accept his offer. When such a situation arises, you should put yourself in another's place. If you were him, how would you feel? How would you like to be treated?

If you spoil others' possession, you must try to replace it. If you really do not have the means to do so, and the owner does not want you to replace them, you may accept his generosity, but never forget his kindness to you. If the owner does not excuse you, you should try to replace the item and not blame others for not forgiving you. Remember, not asking you to replace the item was the owner's kindness. Replacing the item is your duty. It is your fault that you spoiled the item.

Sometimes, others may be forgetful of their manners. Do not blame them. Some may be lacking in manners, others may be busy, and seeing a large group of people, they may get confused. They are not being rude to you on purpose. Remember that you yourself may have some shortcomings, too.

However, if someone acts coldly to you, do not blame him or her. It is better to examine your own shortcomings.

## Chapter 25 – Hospitality

The Bible teaches us that hospitality is the duty of every Christian. “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares” (Hebrews 13:2).

To be hospitable is a good act. However this world is full of wickedness so if you do not know anything about people, do not lightly receive them. Otherwise, you may become the victim of cheating or being used. Not only will you suffer loss, but also you may get involved in evil doings and eventually someone may get hurt.

When welcoming guests to your house, make them feel at home, treat them as you would one of your own family. Give them the love that you give your own family members. Avoid unnecessary politeness. In this way, they will feel comfortable and happy.

If a visitor arrives at your home after a long trip, after a short welcome, take him to the room you have prepared. Show him where the bathroom is, then leave him alone to rest. Do not take up his time in chatting, and do not stay too long. After a tiresome journey, he needs some rest.

While a visitor is staying at your home, unless his purpose was to have a long talk with you, do not stay around all the time and keep on talking. You have work to do and he has affairs to take care of. Talking will interfere with the job both parties have to carry out.

While a visitor is staying in your home, do not prepare meals as for a banquet or a party. Receiving a visitor and giving a party are different. Giving a party is an occasional event. Welcoming a guest is another thing. He may stay a few days or even longer, so you cannot prepare a banquet every meal. Not only would it be difficult for the host, the guest would not dare stay with you again.

When welcoming guests into your home, note whether the living conditions or food is appropriate. Ask them if there are certain foods they cannot eat. If you do not ask, the guest may not want to mention it.

Ask your guest whether he has any laundry. Don't forget to prepare hot water for baths.

If your guest is not acquainted with your family, introduce him to each family member.

Always knock on the door before entering your guest's room, or ask if you may enter. Do not let your children go into your guest's room so as not to distract him. He may be working or sleeping.

Treat your guests just as you would like to be treated if you were a visitor in other's home.

## Chapter 26 – Being a Good Guest

Except for close friends or relatives, never ask others if you may stay in their home. You know that you are trustworthy; however, others may not know you well. If you ask them, they may feel embarrassed to refuse, although they cannot receive you. If they receive you, they may feel uneasy because they do not know whether you are reliable, thus creating a dilemma.

Fortunately, there are hotels everywhere. Although some hotels may not be ideal, it is better to stand a little hardship than to put others in a difficult position. Do not stay with those who have a very small living space or financial difficulties. Such persons are already burdened and you should not add to their difficulties. If for some special reason you are obliged to stay with such friends or relatives, try not to inconvenience them too much. Also, you should recompense them, so that they are rewarded for their trouble.

If you are going to visit friends or relatives, you should tell them beforehand the day and time of your arrival. This way, they can be prepared. Arriving unexpectedly can cause others great inconvenience.

When visiting friends or relatives, you should first ask them if it is convenient because you do not know if they are in a situation where they cannot receive guests.

When visiting others, always be considerate of your host and his family members. If your host is busy, do not waste his time in idle conversation. If someone in your host's home is ill, you should be very quiet, not speak, laugh, or sing loudly. If there is a sad situation in your host's family, you should express sympathy and do your utmost to comfort him. If your host needs help with something, do your best to help him. If your host or someone in his family is asleep, be quiet in your actions, do not speak or laugh loudly, sing songs, or play music, disturbing others' rests.

If your host falls short in his welcome, you should be considerate of him. Do not think that he has nothing else to do except for waiting on you. He has a lot to think about or things to attend to. There is a limit to one's physical and mental abilities. With too many things to attend to, it is hard to avoid misunderstandings.

When visiting others, if you see that your host is very busy and if you are not otherwise occupied, you should help him, relieving him of some of his tasks. If your host has no servant, you should help with some of the daily chores. Do not wait for someone to attend to your needs. That is selfish and proud.

When visiting others, everything should be for the family's benefit and gain. Do not do anything to make the family suffer pain or loss.

When visiting others, show respect for elders, and show love for your host's children. When speaking with women, be especially polite, using serious language. To the servant of the house, be kind and generous. When visiting others, unless invited by your host, do not interfere in family matters.

When leaving, money should be left for the servants. The amount depends on the situation of both parties and the length of time you stayed. The money should be given to the host who will divide it among the servants.

After leaving another's home, you should write a letter of thanks and tell them you have arrived safely at your destination.

## Chapter 27—Seeing Relatives or Friends Off

When seeing relatives or friends off, do not engage them in a long conversation unless it is absolutely necessary. Do not linger around because they may have matters to attend to before they leave. Their dilemma is: if they converse with you, they do not have time; if they do not converse with you, they feel guilty. If you cannot assist them then do not give them additional burdens. If there are matters of importance to discuss, be brief and concise. Save as much time as possible.

If you want to invite them for a bon voyage meal, it would be most advantageous if they were not busy and happy to accept. But if they are busy and have to decline, do not insist. And do not be offended by this: you are not leaving so you are not busy, so be considerate to those who are. You may think it does not take long to have a meal but you need to consider that he may have other relatives or friends who also want to invite him. It may only take at most two hours to have a meal with one family, but if five or six different families all want to have a meal with him, he will spend his entire day eating. When, then, is he going to run his errands? Inviting others to a meal is supposed to be a good thing; however, if this causes them to suffer, then this is not loving them—it is hurting them.

When seeing relatives or friends off, do not ask them to deliver things for you unless you absolutely have to. It is extremely convenient to have packages delivered expeditiously. Because you want to save money on postage and spare the chore of wrapping and mailing, you are creating a lot of burdens to those who are traveling. There are items, if no one is going there, you would never consider delivering. Because someone is going there, you have now thought of this relative and that friend; you want to give gifts to this family; you want to give food to that family. You are taking advantage of a free delivery person. Indeed it is convenient for you but have you considered how long and far his journey is and how tired and frustrated he may be?

When seeing relatives or friends off, try not to give them food in boxes or baskets. If they cannot finish the food, it is hard to carry the boxes and baskets along; they feel guilty if they decline. Sometimes this becomes a burden. Sometimes they have no other way but to let you down and give away your food to strangers on the road. If you must give them something out of love, give them something practical and easy to carry. If they are close relatives or friends, brothers or sisters in the Lord, be practical. Give them money so they can buy whatever they need. But do consider the individual before doing this so you can avoid any misunderstanding. If the traveler really needs food, you might give him some staples such as bread, pre-cooked meat, cooked eggs, and fruit. Just give him enough for the road but not too much so as to create a burden.

When seeing relatives or friends off, do not keep on talking with them prior to their boarding the ship or getting onto the bus unless they have something urgent to say to you. Let them have opportunities to talk with other relatives or friends, especially those close to them and those in their household.

When seeing relatives or friends off, forgive them if they do not treat you properly or if they forget their manners. When someone is about to leave, he has much to attend to. It is hard not to be occupied and worried. On top of that, he has to rush to catch his transportation. You are not the only one who is seeing him off. No matter how experienced he is, it is difficult to avoid oversights.

When seeing relatives or friends off, whether inviting them to a meal, giving them gifts, or seeing them off at the bus stop or on the dock, you must be sincere. Do not do it unwillingly. Do not do it to save face—even though you really do not want to do it or you really cannot do it. Unbelievers like to do it to save face. God's children should always act with sincerity.

When seeing relatives or friends off, whether at home, on the road, at the bus stop or on the dock, always pay attention and see if you can assist them. Strive to assist them in things like purchasing the ticket, carrying things, taking care of the luggage, taking care of children, and finding seats. Find an opportunity to assist them and serve them. Assisting others is not limited to seeing off relatives or friends. Jesus' disciples should always strive to assist others no matter where they are and what the occasion is.

## Chapter 28 —Speaking in Public

Speaking in public is a very important matter. Many people, although they are very knowledgeable and capable, when they are before a group of people, dare not open their mouths to speak. Or even if they do open their mouths, they cannot express themselves properly, making it difficult for listeners to get a clear idea of what they are talking about. It is a pity that although they may have something important to talk about, they are unable to express themselves clearly.

Being a good speaker is a talent. However, practice makes perfect. Although not everyone can make long and interesting speeches, through serious practice, everyone can express their innermost thoughts. This kind of practice should be gradual. When there is an opportunity to talk to a small group, you should muster the courage to speak.

When speaking to others, first, the content is most important. Second, the language should be clear and easy to understand. Third, an appropriate manner is necessary no matter how eloquent a speaker may be. If the purpose of the talk is unclear, it may be better not to open his mouth. On the other hand, a clear purpose lacking understandable language may cause listeners to still be at a loss to grasp the full meaning. Thus, these two aspects plus an appropriate manner would be ideal.

When speaking in public, consider the listener's level, and then decide on the content and depth of your talk. If it is too deep, some listeners may not fully grasp the meaning. If it is not deep enough, others may find it boring. The reaction of the listeners may not always be the same; in which case, it is better to satisfy the majority.

When speaking in public, do not use words or sentences which are difficult for listeners to understand. However do not overuse slang or colloquialisms. Use simple language, which others can easily understand.

When speaking in public, the pitch of your voice should be according to the number of listeners and the size of the place. Most important, it should be loud enough for all those present to be able to hear. We often see someone speaking to hundreds of listeners in a voice so low that only the few that are closest to him can hear. Others cannot hear a word he said. This is a serious fault to the speaker. However, do not speak too loudly, making listeners uncomfortable.

When speaking in public, the tempo of speech should be considered. If the tempo is too fast, listeners may not be able to follow, and if too slow, listeners may become impatient.

When speaking in public, take note of listeners' interests, deciding whether to continue or stop. We often see speakers who go on and on although what they say is very uninteresting or something the listeners do not need, often making the listeners close their eyes and take a nap. The speaker, still full of enthusiasm, goes on and on. This is a very annoying habit.

When speaking in public, your language and attitude should be humble. However, false modesty is unnecessary such as, “I’m not a good speaker,” “I’m not qualified to speak,” “I’m not prepared,” “Please forgive me.” Such talk is bothersome and a waste of time.

When speaking in public, never exaggerate your own attributes or good points. This would be shameful behavior.

For those who are afraid to speak in public, when the occasion arises, they should be encouraged to do so. Those who enjoy speaking should be discreet. If it is not necessary to speak, do not do so.

When speaking to others, do not lightly criticize, talk about others’ private affairs, talk lightly about other’s bad habits, and lightly praise another person.

When speaking, remember where you are and what you are talking about. Do not stray away from your topic. We often see someone who, when talking about a certain topic, unconsciously begins to make a speech and some, when giving a testimony, turn it into a long and tedious sermon. None of the above is suitable.

When speaking, face the listeners. Do not look down at the floor. Do not look at what you are holding in your hand or the text, which is on the table. If the listeners are not all on the same side, move your head and body continuously, facing the listeners on every side, so that they will feel that you are speaking to each and every one of them.

When speaking, your words should be clear so that listeners may understand every word and every sentence. When speaking, do not start the sentence loudly and finish it softly, and do not use incomplete sentences.

When speaking, never use curse words or dirty and insulting words.

Some people, when speaking, fidget with a book or pen in their hand. Some keep touching their clothes or buttons. Those are bad habits and should be corrected.

When speaking, do not be too stiff, standing there looking like a puppet; however, you cannot be too relaxed, making the listeners look down on you.

When you are speaking to others, do not exaggerate. Exaggerating is a bad habit. Do not talk about things you are not really sure of yourself or you may have heard secondhand.

Do not tell something to many people that should only be heard by one or two people. Also, do not speak to many people about something that only concerns a few. This would be wasting other’s time and be a bother to them.

When speaking, grasp the important points of your speech. Do not ramble out on getting farther and farther away from your topic, leaving the listeners at a loss to grasp what you are talking about. This is a bad habit.

## Chapter 29—Respecting the Elderly

In the Old Testament, God gives His people a law to respect elderly. The erudite would agree that this is reasonable, something that we all ought to do. In Leviticus 19:32, it reads: “Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and thou shalt fear thy God: I am Jehovah.”

When you are seated and you see an older person that you recognize coming your way, you should immediately get up and let him have the honored seat. After he is seated then you may sit.

If you see an older person without a seat, let him have yours. Do not let him remain standing while you are sitting. This is not restricted just to someone you know. You should yield your seat for the elderly on the bus, the ship, or in any other public place.

While walking, entering or leaving a place, getting on or off a bus or ship, let the elderly go first. If there are special circumstances and you must go first, ask him to excuse you before you go.

If you see an older person getting on or off a bus or ship, walking up or down the stairs or steps and they need assistance, you should assist them.

If you are with older persons and they are carrying heavy items, you should carry the items for them. But for those who do not know you, be a little more cautious because they might misunderstand your intention and think you are trying to steal their things.

When riding in a rickshaw, let the rickshaw of the older person go before yours. On one hand, you are showing respect; on the other, you can watch out for them.

Some elderly people get very longwinded because they are not well educated, their memories are fading, or other factors. Be patient with them. If you cannot, try to avoid them. But never get angry or be rude.

Do not speak in a loud voice or with a harsh attitude toward older people. Speak a little louder only if they have a hearing problem.

When you are conversing or having a meal with an older person, unless you are the host and he is the guest or there are special circumstances, let the older person have the honored seat. When photos are taken and some need to stand and some need to sit, young people should stand and the elderly should sit. If everyone sits or everyone stands, let the elderly people sit or stand in the front.

Acquaint yourself with the elderly, in conversation or service: be humble, show respect and be kind. It does not matter if you know them or not; it does not matter if they are poor or rich, male or female, educated or uneducated, having status or no status. It is easy to tell if a person is knowledgeable and intelligent by the way he treats the elderly.

When you see an older person you recognize, show respect by taking off your hat and bowing. Do not just nod your head as if he is your peer.

Whether you are at your home, at someone else's home, at school, at the hospital, in a shop, on the street, on the bus, on the ship, in a public place or anywhere else, strive to assist and serve the elderly. The older they are, the more you should pay attention.

Do not fight to speak first; do not fight to go first.

Do not allow young children, especially yours, to be disrespectful toward older people. Teach them to treat older people with respect. Children who are disrespectful are detestable.

Christians normally address one another as "Brother" or "Sister." But younger Christians should not address elderly Christians as "Brother" or "Sister" either in letters or in conversations. Even though we are brothers and sisters in the Lord, their age is closer to that of your parents or grandparents; you do not call your parents "Brother" or "Sister," so you should not address the elderly as "Brother" or "Sister."

## Chapter 30 — Caring for Children

Do not allow children to do whatever they want. Scold and restrict them when needed. Many children who have been spoiled by their parents when young, grow up to be despicable beyond correction.

Do not scold children in front of others, lowering their self-esteem. Also, do not praise children in front of others, making them haughty.

Do not give children too much food, thus upsetting their digestion and promoting bad eating habits.

Do not take out your own unhappy feelings on children. This is very harmful to a child.

Do not coax children and do not agree lightly to their demands. If you agree to the demand, carry it out; otherwise, you will lose their credibility and the children will do the same to others.

Do not allow children to ask other people for money, food, or any other articles.

Do not allow children to beat or curse other children or take away anything that belongs to other children.

Do not allow children to be disrespectful to the elderly.

Do not allow children to torture or kill small living creatures, encouraging cruelty. Even pests or insects and mice should only be killed outright, not tortured.

Do not allow children to destroy public property or other people's things.

Do not allow children to make undesirable friends or have communication with bad adults.

Do not allow children to read literature harmful to their beliefs and principles.

Do not allow children to watch bad movies, listen to bad songs or performances, or play games that involve gambling.

Do not allow children to tell lies, steal, or use bad language.

Do not give children a bad impression in word or deed, thus setting a bad example

Do not forget to teach children to fear the Lord, learn to pray, and read the Bible.

If your children get into quarrels with other children, never take your children's side. You should find out the cause of the quarrel. If your children are at fault, they should be corrected

and told to apologize to others. If the other children are at fault, teach your children to forgive others.

If you see that someone else's children need help, you should offer to help them, just as you would your own children. However, be careful not to give a wrong impression or create misunderstanding.

Never give children toys or food that may be dangerous, such as articles made of glass, brass, or iron, unclean food and on the like which could cause harm. And never give such articles to other people's children.

When visiting others, do not lightly give children money. It is a Chinese custom to give children money when visiting friends or relatives (especially at New Year's). This habit should be corrected. The reason is that it promotes greed in children, so that when they have visitors, they will be expecting money from them.

Before giving food to other people's children, you should first ask for the parent's approval. If they say no, do not give the food to the children. Parents know their children's condition best. They should give the reason for refusing and still thank the host.

Many Chinese easily give food to other's children. The parents may find it embarrassing to refuse. Although the food may not be harmful, it might hurt the child's health. If they decline the offer it embarrasses the giver. Such actions should be discouraged.

Do not say or do anything that is not honest before other's children. Do not use insincere flattery. Do not lightly make promises. If you make promises, keep your promises. Do not leave a bad impression on other's children by your insincere words or actions, so that they get the habit of being insincere.

Do not be too harsh toward other's children. Making them fear you may cause hate, but do not be too lax with them, that they look down on you, insulting you.

Do not try to find out from children their family's confidential affairs; this is an act of cheating or stealing.

Do not abuse or mistreat other people's children. This is a despicable habit.

Do not talk to children about ghosts or devils, thus frightening them.

Do not talk to other's children about their parents' or elders' shortcomings in a way so as to make children look down on their family and refuse to obey them.

## Chapter 32 — Credibility

Credibility is a very precious asset when dealing with others. A Christian must have credibility in order to glorify the Lord and receive the strength to help others. No matter how capable you are, if you do not have credibility, you will lose the trust of others.

Not only will lie or cheating others, taking advantage of others for selfish reason, or such sinful actions spoil our credibility. Even talking without considering others' reactions or doing a careless job can spoil our credibility. So, in order to keep our credibility, we must be very careful to avoid doing anything in word or action, even petty things that occur in our everyday life that would cause others to doubt our credibility.

Do not take anything that does not belong to you, no matter whether it is public or private property. If it is not yours, do not take any part of it

When doing something for others, whether private or public, do not secretly take some money for yourself. If you do so, not only are you sinning against the Lord and harming your own character, but also destroying your credibility in society. Sooner or later, you will be punished.

Unless there is no other means, do not borrow money from others. If you do, pay it back as soon as possible, otherwise you may forget. If you take too long to repay, no matter whether you are putting off repaying or you forget to do so, either way, you will lose your credibility.

Unless for unavoidable reasons, when you buy something, do not owe money. If you owe someone, pay him or her back as soon as possible.

If you are taking care of someone else's money, never use a penny of it or lend it to someone else. In case the owner asks for his money back and you have not replaced it, you will lose your credibility. If you keep something for someone else, never make use of it or lend it to someone else; you or the other person could damage the item, or the owner asked for the item back, and you are unable to return it. In this way, you will lose your credibility.

If you keep accounts for someone else or for the public, do not do anything underhandedly or through carelessness, make mistakes. This is a sure way to lose your credibility.

Do not spread news that is just hearsay, or something you yourself are not sure of.

Do not make light promises. If you do, carry out your promise. If it really could not be carried out, say you are sorry and ask for forgiveness.

Never lie to others. Lying spoils credibility. If telling the truth may cause you some trouble, you must not avoid it. In the end, the honest person will win.

When talking, do not exaggerate; do not promise something you are unable to do. Do not exaggerate other's weaknesses or strong points. In this way, it is easy to lose credibility.

If others ask you to do something in their place, first consider whether you are able to undertake it. If you think you cannot handle it, tell them so at once. If you accept, then do your utmost to fulfill the task. Never lightly accept, and then disappear because you cannot handle it. This is very important to your credibility!

If you did something wrong, said something wrong, or committed a sin, and was criticized by others, never try to find a way to get out of the situation. It is not a disgrace to admit your mistakes. To do something wrong, then to cover it up is not only shameful, but will result in losing credibility.

No matter when and where you are and what you are undertaking, be honest and true to others. It would be better to be cheated by others than to cheat others. Never put on a fake appearance. This is the most important aspect of credibility.