

## Discussion Pointers

I found a description of Christlib on a web site once when I was doing research for this site. It said that Christlib was the most civil place on the Internet, or something like that. Well I'm not sure I agreed with them, but it made me really proud to be a member of Christlib. Now that I am the current volunteer list manager, I want to do the best job I can of keeping Christlib's reputation intact.

To that end, I'm recording some suggestions here as to what rules of conduct I think the members of Christlib expect. Last time I checked almost all the members were human and therefore subject to lapses in judgment but, for the most part, they do try to maintain a high standard.

## Etiquette

Most Christlibbers are veterans of Internet discussion forums and are familiar with the Standard Netiquette for Email Lists. In addition to that, however, they expect people to behave with honesty, humility and helpfulness, among other things. Most are Christians and look to the Bible for guidance in all things including rules of discussion. [See the page on List Netiquette.](#)

There is just one thing I personally want to add to the standard netiquette. I have noticed that participants of online forums will not trust you as much if you are constantly tooting your own horn. Behavior like that is a sign of insecurity, or whatever, but it also has an element of dishonesty about it. Maybe it's the written and impersonal nature of online forums but participants can't rely on what you say about yourself to add weight to your arguments. If you want your argument to have weight, then you should design your argument to stand up on it's own. Whether we all like it or not qualifying yourself just doesn't work here. You will gain the respect of your peers here by succeeding in presenting good arguments.

## Argument

Christlib participants are generally intelligent, knowledgeable and well spoken. And they know it. :) They expect you to have a good reason for holding the opinion you are posting and if you don't give your reason, you are very likely to be asked for it. Be prepared to back up your opinions with reason, logic and facts. If you find that people are persistently questioning your opinion and you don't know why, it's probably because you have not backed it up with anything. How can you expect anything less on a Christian libertarian forum? Reason and the bible are currency here. Don't expect anything less to be accepted easily.

## Flame Wars

Flame wars can sometimes be incredibly funny and interesting to read after the fact, but when they happen in your thread when you are in the middle of an interesting discussion they are just plain ugly and intolerable. Flame wars on Christlib are usually never more than a wisp of warm smoke but it does happen. I don't think flame wars are the fault of the first person to post something impolite. It's the person who publicly posts an impolite response to the first that's at fault. I was taught as a child to ignore insults because that's the Christian way. Now I know better. It was later in life that I learned that it was pointless to turn the other cheek unless the offender knew they had hurt you. The bible says we should turn the other cheek, but it also says we should go to our brother privately and show them their error. I believe honesty demands that I inform someone privately if they have offended me and then I can turn the other cheek. I certainly can't expect them to apologize, but at the very least I must be honest about what it was that affected me. The key word here is "privately". If I did the same thing publicly in a forum then I would be initiating a flame war. That's how it happens.

## Mechanics

If you are replying to the digest, you have to set the subject line to the correct thread. For all posts use standard bottom posting. That is, you should quote enough of that to which you are replying and post your response under it. Other rules are in the Email List Netiquette.

[Bill](#)