



Christian Liberty (Part I)

Romans 14:13-23

#19 in a series on Romans

Pastor Lyle L. Wahl

March 21, 2010

The Description Of Christian Liberty. March 14

Theme: **Use Your Liberty Constructively—Not Destructively.**

The Dangers Of Christian Liberty.

1. The danger of throwing stumbling blocks.
 - a. Negatively: undiscerning use of liberty can trip and ensnare others. (13)

 - b. Positively: true liberty is driven and limited by love for others. (13-15, 19, 21; cf. 13:8-10; 15:2; 1 Corinthians 8:13; 10:23-24; 14:26; Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 5:2; Colossians 3:14; 1 John 4:7)

2. The danger of liberty becoming sin.
 - a. Using liberty thoughtlessly results in bad press and a poor reputation. (16; cf. 2:23-24; 2 Corinthians 6:3)

 - b. Flaunting liberty turns relationships into a demolition derby. (13-16; 20-21; cf. Matthew 15:11; Mark 7:18-19; Acts 10:15; 11:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:8-13; 10:23-31)

 - c. Indulging liberty at the expense of others is sin. (15, 20-21; cf. 1 Corinthians 8:12)

3. The danger of hardening your conscience.
 - a. Personal conviction is to lead where God's word is silent. (22; cf. 14:5)

 - b. Going against your conscience is dangerous ... and sinful. (22-23; cf. 14:5; 1 Corinthians 8:4-13; Ephesians 4:17-19; 1 Timothy 4:1-2)

Looking ahead:

March 28 The Duties Of Christian Liberty (15:1-13)

In My Life This Week

(As you use this daily guide, write out your observations and responses on a separate piece of paper and save them with this sheet for reference.)

Monday. Read Romans 14:1-23. On March 14 we looked at the description of Christian liberty in the first twelve verses. Paul does not spell out the exact nature of the examples of freedom he presents. In preparation for zeroing in on the dangers of your liberty in Christ this week, remember that when the Bible gives direction by commands of clear principles, we are to obey. There is no liberty to do otherwise. Where the Bible does not give direction by commands or clear principles, there is freedom. Now review the four points from March 14 on how liberty is to be practiced. Have you been aware of these throughout the last week? How have you been doing in light of them?

Tuesday. Always use your liberty constructively—never destructively. Undiscerning use of liberty can trip up or ensnare other believers (verse 13). This can happen even when we are sincerely trying to follow God. One key to preventing this is to make sure our liberty is driven and limited by love for others (see the Biblical references on the outline). Think of some examples from your own experience on both sides of the fence—giving and receiving offense. How could have, how will love for others help you in those and similar situations?

Wednesday. When liberty is not used responsibly there is the danger of it becoming sin.

- Using liberty thoughtlessly results in bad press and a poor reputation.
- Flaunting liberty turns relationships into a demolition derby.
- Indulging liberty at the expense of others is sin.

Remember also that Paul is assuming sincere faith on part of both the one strong and the one weak in faith. *King-pin conqueror* and *professional weaker brother* attitudes and actions are another issue, and clearly are sinful.

Can you see times when your thoughts and actions about your liberty were sinful? Have you cleared that up with God? If you *know* the other person is aware of your sinful action/response, have you cleared that up with him/her?

Thursday. Not using your liberty in Christ responsibly can have the effect of hardening your conscience (see verses 5, 22-23; also see 1 Corinthians 8:4-13). Why is this dangerous? Look at the pictures in Ephesians 4:17-19 and 1 Timothy 4:1-2. While these statements are directed at those who do not have true faith, the principles of how it affects the conscience and behavior apply.

Friday–Saturday. On Sunday we plan to continue examining our liberty in Christ, focusing on some duties. Read 15:1-13 in preparation for our time together.