
All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

Since the opening of Paul's letter, he has dealt with a myriad of sins in the Church at Corinth; there was pride, which led to contentions, envying, strife, there were factions/divisions over preachers, there was sexual immorality in an active member of the church, and then, there were brethren taking each other to court to settle their disputes; going to the unjust when they should have been capable enough to settle every disagreement as brethren and in the spirit of meekness. Last week, in (V9-11), Paul made it crystal clear that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; and that is because the unrighteous are NOT children of God. Children of God are doers of righteousness, NOT doers of unrighteousness!
1 John 2:29, 3:4-10

(6:11): You used to be unrighteous; and such were some of you; but that is no longer who you are in Christ! READ (6:12-Paul speaking of himself)

Paul is now going to deal with Christian Liberty:

Fornication was commonplace in the city of Corinth. Similar to the world today; sexual sins are so common in our society that they are no longer looked upon as sinful, but normal, natural behavior.

In our text, the immorality of Corinth, and the mindset that fornication was normal had infected the church! There were those in the church who thought they were free (or, they had liberty) to engage in fornication as Christians; if it gratified the flesh, it was ok, they had liberty to do it. Satisfying their sexual appetite was to them, no different than satisfying the appetite of their belly with food.

Galatians 5:13, 19, 21B

Paul was teaching them that they were NOT FREE in Christ to sin; God did not save them from their sins for them to go on living in their sins.

Romans 6:16-18; 20-22

Beloved, NEVER try and defend and justify unrighteousness and sinful behavior in your life under the guise of Christian liberty. Sin is sin, if we think to ourselves that we are FREE TO SIN than we are no Christians!

But we do have liberty in Christ, in things that are NOT forbidden in the Word or by the commands of Christ, (in things indifferent), but what the Corinthians were doing here was a gross abuse of Christian liberty.

Something indifferent is something that is neither good nor evil, and yet, even things that are NOT sinful can be made to be sinful.

With this in mind, when Paul wrote: All things are lawful unto me, he was obviously NOT talking about things that are sinful and against the commands of the Word of God; (I.e. V9); but

when he wrote ALL THINGS ARE LAWFUL unto me. he spoke of THINGS that are not sinful or specifically forbidden in the Word.

But even when we do partake of a THING that is not forbidden in the Word of God; the question for each of us is: Is it expedient?

Meaning: Is it helpful & profitable for your soul and for the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ? And then, how does it look? How does it represent Christ IN YOU? But mainly: Does it help or hurt, offend, and wound weaker brothers/sisters in Christ?

So, I might have Christian Liberty to do something, but is it expedient?

Example: There are St. Joseph's altars built every year around New Orleans with an idol/statue of St. Joseph in the middle of it; there are also candles, flowers, and other little figurines in the middle of it. There are cookies, cakes, breads, and lucky beans on the altar. There is no doubt that this is idolatrous/false worship of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Is there anything wrong with you or I eating some cookies or cakes that came from a St. Joseph's Altar?

1 Corinthians 8:1-13, 10:23, Romans 14:13-21

Listen, you might be perfectly fine with partaking of something that is to you indifferent (not sinful), like these examples, (eating food offered to idols), but how is your liberty advancing the Kingdom of Christ? Does my liberty negatively affect weaker brethren? How am I to know?

Examine yourself before you do partake of ANY Christian Liberty; ask yourself, is this advancing the cause of Christ? It THIS liberty of mine cultivating holiness in my life? Is it beneficial, expedient, and profitable to the Kingdom of Christ and to my brethren?

If, after considering all of this, you take your liberty anyway, (not caring that your brother/sister might be offended); NOW you are NOT walking charitably; you are NOT loving your brother. Now, your liberty has become sin. It's lawful, but NOT expedient and not profitable to the Kingdom of Christ or to your brother or sister, who is now wounded/offended.

Romans 15:1-2

V12: Paul then wrote: All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any

It may be a thing lawful to partake of; (not forbidden by God), but Paul, here in (V12B) says, but I will not be brought its power. I will not become a slave to it; I will not allow something that I am free to do TO BECOME an inordinate affection; something excessive, that dominates my life and takes all of my attention away from Christ. I will not allow something that IS LAWFUL and a LIBERTY to become sinful! Here, we must search our hearts as children of God and servants of Christ; do I have any THING in my life that has power over me? Something that consumes me; that I am enslaved to, that I cannot give up?

1 Corinthians 9:27: But I keep under my body, (I

discipline my body, I buffet and disable it) and bring it into subjection (that is, subjection to the Spirit of God and Word of God): lest that by any means, (lest somehow) when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway

Adam Clarke: My body must be the slave of my soul, and not my soul, the slave of my body, which is the case in all of the unregenerate/lost.

Like the Apostle Paul, we should not be enslaved or under the dominion of any earthly pleasure. O how we need our hearts to be WHOLLY devoted to Christ! Psalm 119:10:

With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments

A whole-hearted Christian, before taking part in any earthly liberty, will first carefully consider how it might affect the Kingdom of Christ, and his brethren, whom he may cause to stumble.

6:13A: Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them

God made our bodies with appetites for food; our bodies naturally hunger; we satisfy the hunger of our bodies by feeding them. This is lawful; and so, give thanks to God for it, and eat what you want, says Paul; (you have liberty), but even in THIS lawful thing, govern yourself and your body, that you sin not. For eating can easily become sinful.

1 Corinthians 10:31-33

This brings us to (V13B): Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

Though food is made for the body, and the body for food; the body was not made for fornication. You do not have liberty to commit fornication.

6:14-20, Romans 12:1-2

I've said this before, I will say it again; if you're born again by the Spirit of God, you are NO LONGER of the world, you're a new creature (creation).

You're made for heaven, not for the world; heaven's society and culture are yours in Christ; therefore, you should be continually separating, distancing yourself, and casting the culture and mindset of the world out, with each passing day!

1 Corinthians 15:49: As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly
Ephesians 2:6: God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus

Keep this in mind when you are partaking of your earthly liberties. Are your liberties glorifying to God, or gratifying to the flesh?