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Grace Bible Church, NY  
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LIBERTY, LEGALISM & LICENTIOUSNESS  
Selected Scriptures

### Introduction

Thank you for the encouraging words about last week's message. I know it was strong in shining the light of truth on both the causes and cures for the current turmoil in our land. In case you were not here or I was not clear enough, the problem is anti-God, anti-Christian, anti-family Marxists masquerading as the opposite of what they are in reality. There are many Marxist and anarchist groups involved, but two primary ones are Black Lives Matter (BLM) and Antifa. Antifa is supposed to stand for anti-facists, but they use the tactics of Hitler's brownshirt private army and are only anti-facists in the same way the Communists were anti-Nazi. The only black lives that matter to BLM are those they can exploit for their own anarchist's purposes. They do not care about black police officers killed in the line of duty. They do not care about the 95% of black crime victims who are victimized by other people who are black. They do not care about the genocide of abortion in their communities, some of which have more abortions than live births.

The only cure for the current turmoil is repentance and salvation by God's grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Only in Christ are all people joined into one body as brothers and sisters regardless of ethnic or cultural heritage. Only in Christ do people have a changed heart to turn away from sin and humbly embrace forgiveness and reconciliation regardless of sins suffered. Only in Christ is there hope. Those professing Christians who have embraced social justice, critical race theory or intersectionality - that is, they are "woke" - have bought into the lies of a false gospel and are espousing heresy. They need to repent immediately and preach salvation & reconciliation in Jesus Christ.

I also recognize that my sermon could provoke those who are evil, which is why I have changed the location of where I stand to preach. I don't want to be an easy target for a drive-by shooter. You should know that we have men here who are dedicated to providing security for our services so that you are safe.

My sermon this morning is largely taken from one I preached in 2001, and the outline of the last section of it comes from a taped sermon of John MacArthur's entitled "*Making the Hard Decisions Easy*." I remember the night MacArthur preached it in the mid 1980's. It made an impression on me then, and I still think his outline was an excellent way to cover the subject of living in Christian liberty without falling into the traps of either legalism or licentiousness.

If I had to pick one verse to be the theme for this sermon it would be Galatians 5:13-14, "*For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. <sup>14</sup> For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'*" Salvation in Christ sets us free from the bindings of legalism which too often arises from an improper application of law while at the same time keeping us from falling into the sinfulness of licentiousness. I want to look at both of these extremes before setting forth Biblical principles that enable us to live both holy and free.

### Legalism

Legalism can be defined in several different ways, but all of them encompass a misapplication of the law. If you remove context and establish an absolute, you can misapply a law and violate another aspect of the law. For example, Romans 13 establishes the principle that we are to obey governing authority unless of course it violates a command of God. The governing authority makes a law that you must stay

out of a particular area because it is dangerous. You notice a child has wandered into it. What do you do? A legalist would insist that you must stay out of the area no matter what. The proper application of law is to recognize that the safety of the child, which in this case might include the preservation of the child's life, is a greater law, and so you would quickly evaluate the best way to rescue the child and take action even if it means going into the prohibited area. The first type of legalism is removing context from the application of law.

The most serious misapplication of law in legalism is defining salvation in terms of law. This was the two pronged error of the Pharisees and it is still a common erroneous belief. Their first failure was even thinking that they could somehow keep the law and earn their salvation. They had to purposely ignore verses such as Isaiah 64:6, *"For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away."* Their second evil was defining God's law by their own rules in the vain attempt to keep them. Their legalism condemned them.

The most common practice of legalism is extending rules from God's law that are used to define righteous living. Those doing this do not believe they are saved by keeping the rules they make, but they do believe that they are holier than others because they follow these rules. The following is an extreme example found in the by-laws of a church in the section concerning *"Rules & Discipline."*

After condemning most forms of public entertainment, it continues. *"Inasmuch as our automobiles, as well as all our possessions, are gifts from God, they should be in keeping with Biblical modesty and separation, and the use of them should always glorify God. The more expensive cars, cars with contrasting colors, sports cars as well as sports features on regular cars, and all striped tires, shall be avoided. The appearance and use of all our vehicles shall be consistent with these principles and regulations."*

*"Because of the effectiveness of the radio to propagate evil and increase endtime deception, thereby destroying true spirituality in the home and church, its use is not permitted. Because of the evils of television, those who are responsible for the sale or use of the same forfeit their membership. Video cassette recorder (VCR) entertainment systems shall not be used. We likewise sense the dangers of the news media such as daily papers and magazines in the home. Ps. 101:3; Ps. 1:2"*

It also states, *"We believe that acappella singing is the form that most accurately represents New Testament principles. Because of the highly emotional appeal of stringed instruments, and their prominent place in modern sensual music, they are not permitted for actual use or in our recorded selections. Electronic keyboard instruments which can automatically simulate the rhythm and tempo of secular music are also objectionable, and are not permitted. We also sense the possible conditioning effect of the traditional keyboard instruments. Acappella singing and recorded selections that reflect the emphasis of modern 'gospel song' performers with their entertaining appeal should be eliminated."*

This is an extreme example, but once the line is crossed of replacing God's Word with man's standards, then the error is present and all that is left is measuring the degree of error. Jesus gave a very serious warning in Matthew 17:9 and Mark 7:7 saying *"But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men."*

### **Licentiousness**

This word is from a Latin root and means *"lacking legal or moral restraints,"* or *"marked by disregard for strict rules of correctness."* It used to primarily refer to the rules of grammar or literary style, but it gained a greater connotation of being unprincipled in sexual matters. I am using the word to refer to those who believe that because they are *"not under the law, but grace,"* that they can do whatever they want as they are *"led by the spirit."* If they were led by the Spirit of God, then there would not be much of a problem since the Holy Spirit will always lead in conformity to God's word, but this is really just using (blaming) the Holy Spirit as an excuse to do what they want. Many are very close

to being antinomian - without law - since disregard for law can be strong, but in general, they actually fail in a similar way as the legalist except for having very different set of rules for what they believe is and is not acceptable.

A favorite verse for the licentious is Galatians 5:1, "*It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.*" They miss the fact that Paul was talking about the Mosaic Law and how the Judaizers sought to apply it. Another favorite passage is 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 in which Paul said he would "*become all things to all men, so that I may be all means save some.*" If they actually did that like Paul, that would be wonderful, but in reality it is usually just the excuse to "go native."

Another favorite idea among the licentious is that they "*can handle it*" tying that to 1 Corinthians 10:13 that God will not allow them to be tempted beyond what they are able. However, too often they do not follow the general advice of scripture to avoid temptation nor do they use God's ways of escape to flee it when it comes.

The result of these failures is a life that is little different from the society in which they live. Instead of being a living sacrifice who is being conformed to the image of Christ through the renewing of their minds, they are being conformed to the image of the world (Romans 12:1-2, 8:29). The licentious are in many ways the opposite of the legalist, but both fail for the same reason. They are following their own wisdom instead of the Word of God.

### **Old Testament Biblical Law**

The commands of God are not optional, but you have to make sure the law given is actually for you before you place yourself under its yoke. Such is the case with the Mosaic code which was specific to the Jewish people in how they would be set apart from all other people and how God was to be worshiped under the sacrificial system. All those ceremonial laws have been replaced in our own dispensation by grace. We are no longer under a sacrificial system nor do we have a theocratic government.

The Law was given as a tutor to teach us our need for God's grace and bring us to Christ (Galatians 3:24). It could not justify, but it will bring a person to a knowledge of their sin (Romans 3:20; 7:7). The law was a shadow of what was to come (Colossians 2:17), that is, the sacrifices were a shadow of Jesus' final sacrifice (Hebrews 10:1-14).

Jesus Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes (Romans 10:4). Those who do not believe will still be judged by the law and their works. That will be either the Law of Moses or the Law of conscience (Romans 2).

The Christian is under grace, not the Mosaic law, but that does not give you freedom to sin (Romans 6:14). It does mean that you do not have to keep the Mosaic commandments (Romans 7:4-6). Those that do strive to keep the Mosaic law place themselves back under its yoke and are not under grace (Galatians 5:1-4). Christians have freedom to keep or not to keep the various cultural aspects of the law as desired (Colossians 2:16; Romans 14:5-6), but God does not require it.

Though Christians are not bound by the Mosaic Law, it is still very helpful to us because it both reveals the character and moral will of God while also giving greater detail to understand commands given in the New Testament. An example of this are the general commands in the New Testament prohibiting sexual sins which are given a more detailed explanation in Leviticus 18 while also revealing that God pronounces particular sexual acts to be lewdness and others, such as homosexuality and bestiality, to be abominations. Old Testament laws that reveal God's will on an issue are binding on Christians because of our own pursuit of holiness and abhorrence of sin because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We do not follow such laws to become righteous, but rather because we are righteous in Christ and seek to be slaves to righteousness instead of sin (Romans 6).

## **New Testament Law**

The Christian is under grace, but that does not mean we are without law. The Christian is under New Testament law, or the Law of Christ as stated in Galatians 6:2 and 1 Corinthians 9:21. James 2:8 calls it the “royal law.” This “law of Christ” is explained in both Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14 to primarily be the great commandment to love God with all your heart, soul and might and your neighbor as yourself. However, there are many other commandments throughout the New Testament that the believer is obligated to obey. To willingly disobey them, whether by design or neglect, is to demonstrate that the individual has a false profession of faith in Christ. Other commandments in the New Testament include:

The Great Commission - Matthew 28:18-20

Love one another - John 13:34

Be holy - 1 Peter 1:16

Set aside sin and worldliness and pursue godliness - Colossians 3

Sexual purity - 1 Thess. 4:2-8

The many “one another commands” throughout the epistles.

Obedience to these commands is not an option for the Christian, but keeping them does not earn you favor with God. These are the commands of how our Lord wants us to behave, and because a Christian is a new creation in Christ, they become the desires of all true believers. We obey out of our love for Jesus and not in any effort to become righteous to earn salvation or God’s favor.

## **Biblical Principles**

Laws have principles that arise from them. For example, the command not to steal is also a principle against taking that which belongs to someone else without their permission. There is no specific command in the New Testament about copying computer files, but there is the New Testament principle that we are not to steal (Ephesians 4:28), and that would include intellectual property. We do not violate the copyright. We pay the user fees. Another example, the New Testament does not specifically address internet pornography, but the principle of not lusting after women in Matthew 5:28 makes it clear that pornography is wrong since its very purpose is to titillate.

Biblical principles are the application of Biblical law into areas not specifically addressed but to which the purpose of the law applies. Where there is not a law or principle addressing an issue, there is freedom, however, there are still additional factors that must be considered.

## **Cultural Customs**

Cultural customs vary from place to place and are often a source of conflict. Romans 14, 1 Corinthians 8 & 10:14-33 all address the “stronger” and “weaker” brother in such conflicts and how to work such things out. Those strong faith in these passages refers to those with a conviction that they have freedom to do a certain thing that is not prohibited in the Scriptures. Those with weak faith believe that particular thing would be questionable or wrong. Summarizing the principles in these passages:

1) Those with stronger faith must love their fellow Christians enough to limit the practice of their freedom so as not to cause those weaker in faith to do something that is against their conscience and thus stumble into sin. The strong must exercise caution and be sensitive to those around them. They may need to ask questions such as, “*do you mind if I . . .*” or “*I am thinking about doing X, would that bother you?*” Flaunting your freedom or practicing it without concern for others is selfish and sinful.

2) Those stronger in faith must also not look down on those weaker in faith as less spiritual or even like they are missing all the joy of freedom in Christ. There is not room in the body of Christ for spiritual pride. We are whatever we are by the grace of God. We seek to be used by the Lord according to our gifts to build one another up in Him. Keep people focused on God’s Word and let the Holy Spirit change the conscience. That is where real freedom lies anyway.

3) The weak in faith are defined throughout Romans 14 and in 1 Corinthians 8 & 10 as those that could be encouraged into a practice for which they do not have freedom of faith to do. If the practice of someone with freedom of faith would **not** entice them to the same practice, then they are not weak in faith. They are already convinced for themselves in what they should and should not do and are in no danger of stumbling. To be blunt, legalists cannot claim to be weak in faith in order to stifle the freedom of those who are strong in faith.

4) The weak in faith cannot judge or condemn those who have stronger faith to practice whatever is at issue. That is sin. The weaker may need to express themselves to those with stronger faith about their thoughts and feelings about the issue, but they then must leave it to that person to respond in love. They may request. They may plead. They may not demand.

5) Jesus had His greatest conflicts with the Pharisees, a group that originally wanted to provide themselves additional protections against breaking God word by imposing on themselves their own standards of conduct. Tragically, those standards soon replaced God's word and they consistently condemned Jesus for breaking their standards. There are modern counterparts, as demonstrated in the "*Rules & Discipline*" of the church I mentioned earlier. Christians, whether strong or weak in faith, are not to allow their consciences to be enslaved by such men. The faith you have, you are to have as your own conviction before God (Romans 14:22). To refrain from a practice for fear that someone will condemn you for it shows the degree to which you have allowed yourself to be enslaved, and to the degree that you are enslaved, you are no longer operating on faith, but on law, and whatever is not of faith, is sin (Romans 14:23).

### **Practical Tips on the Use of Freedom**

The following outline is originally from John MacArthur's sermon as mentioned earlier. There are ten principles to consider when trying to determine if you have freedom concerning a particular practice. The principles are universal, but the particular application you will have may differ from someone else on a particular issue due directly to your own maturity and strength of faith. These principles also help clarify whether you should or should not do something even if you believe you do have freedom in that area. Remember, the strong in faith will self limit their freedom out of love for those weak in faith.

**1) The Principle of Expedience.** Will it be spiritually profitable? 1 Corinthians 6:12, "*All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.*" That is, all things that are not specifically addressed in the Bible as being unlawful, are lawful. Profitable in this verse means, "*to my advantage.*" Will your doing this enhance your spiritual life? Will it cultivate godliness?

**2) The Principle of Edification.** Will it build you up? Will it put you or others on the path to greater spirituality? 1 Corinthians 10:23, "*All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify.*" It is the same basic idea as the first principle, but it places the focus on edification, which is the word οἰκοδομέω / oikodomeō, which means "*to build a house.*" Will it add to your life things that increase the spiritual stability, strength and maturity of you or someone else. 1 Corinthians 14:26 states, "*Let all things be done for edification.*" It is not enough to just refrain from doing something that would tear you or others down, as Christians, we are to be about the business of building up others and being built up ourselves.

**3) The Principle of Excess.** Will it slow you down in the race of life? Will it hinder you in your Christian walk? Hebrews 11 is the chapter describing those who lived by faith and are the great cloud of witness. Hebrews 12:1-2 then states, "*Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and*

*let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

Note from verse 1 that you are to lay aside both that which encumbers you and that which is sin in order to run the race. The word for race here is ἀγών / agōn from which we get our word agony. This refers to the grueling, tough, life of faith that we are called to live in the power of Christ. It cannot be run if you are in sin or weighed down, encumbered by things that may be good, but are not the best. To run the race of the life of faith it will take determination, discipline, and perseverance.

What is this weight, this encumbrance? The word here is ὄγκος / ogkos meaning “bulk” or “mass.” It is not sin, but it is something that hinders you from running as you should. Imagine the fellow who is about to run a marathon. If in his training he is gluttonous, and gets drunk, his sin will keep him from running well. But what if he trains well, but then puts on a heavy pair of jeans, a flannel shirt, an overcoat, and then straps on his hiking boots to run the race. That is not sin, but it is not the way you run a race either. Those are all hindrances to running.

**4) The Principle of Enslavement.** Will it bring you into bondage? 1 Corinthians 6:12 *“All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.”* Never allow a non-moral thing to become your master.

Let me give you some simple tests for whether you are being mastered by something. First, if you cannot easily set it aside for a day or two, then you are probably enslaved to it. Another test is whether your mind is pre-occupied by it. If so, then you are probably enslaved to it. The occupation of our minds is supposed to be God and that which is related to Him.

**5) The Principle of Equivocation (lie/falsify).** Will it hypocritically cover your sin? You claim to be doing it in the name of freedom, but the reality is that you are pandering to your own evil. 1 Peter 2:16 *“[Act] as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but [use it] as bondslaves of God.”* The freedom you are claiming is being used to cover your lust and evil desire.

An example. The claim is made that you are free to see a particular movie, and perhaps you do have that freedom, but what is actually happening is the freedom is used to pander to your own evil heart. Be honest with yourself. Is it really something that profits you spiritually, something that builds you up? Is it something that hinders you in running the race of faith? Does it enslave you? Does it cloak your evil desire? Examine your heart and look at your motive.

**6) The Principle of Encroachment** (encroaching on the sovereignty of Christ). Romans 13:14. Will it violate the Lordship of Christ in your life? I believe everyone here would agree with these two statements. 1) Every Christian should live in submission to the Lordship of Christ. 2) Not all of us agree 100% on what the Lord would have us to do. Some think something is a sin while others think the same thing is not sinful. What each individual does or does not do should be because each sincerely believes it is what the Lord would want. Ask yourself first if it is something you believe the Lord actually would or would not want? The answer to that should be controlling. If you are unsure or are challenged on it, then you need to search the Scriptures to discern the will of the Lord on the issues. We are to pursue truth, not opinion. The issue is the Lord’s will, not your own.

Truth is also what trains your conscience, and that is important. The adage that you should never violate your conscience is not quite accurate because your conscience on a matter could be good or evil. It is whatever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23), not conscience. Your conscience is a good guide only to the degree it is trained in God’s truth because the conscience is only a reflection of what you believe. The greater your knowledge of God’s word and commitment to following by the power of the Holy Spirit, the better your conscience will be. Ignorance of God’s word and commitment to self instead of

God's will develop an evil and possibly even seared conscience. We are now seeing many self-professing Christians who are "woke" exhibit consciences that have turned away from truth to embrace the devil's lies and slander. They are violating this principle of encroachment because the will of the Lord Jesus Christ is not primary in their lives. Sadly, this is made worse by many pastors and Bible teachers even up to the seminary level that are demonstrating their inability to discern God's will because they cannot or refuse to interpret the Scriptures in their grammatical and historical contexts. They are out to tickle the ears of men according to their own desires instead of proclaiming what the Lord has actually said and revealed.

**7) The Principle of Example.** Will it help other Christians by its example? 1 Corinthians 8:9, *"But take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak."* The weak are those that might be tempted to do what you are doing but they do not have the freedom of conscience to do so. Don't cause your brother to stumble into sin. I talked about this earlier.

**8) The Principle of Evangelism.** Will it lead others to Christ? 1 Corinthians 10:25-33. A little background first about pagan worship which included animal sacrifice. Excess meat from the sacrifices that the pagan priests could not eat was sold out the back door - the "temple butcher shop." A strong believer has no problems with the idolatry associated with it because he knows idols are nothing (1 Corinthians 8:4). However, someone else who is not as strong in faith, perhaps just coming out of such idolatry himself, could not in good conscience eat such meat or he might feel he was again participating in that idolatry. Paul gives this principle, <sup>25</sup> *"Eat anything that is sold in the meat market, without asking questions for conscience' sake; <sup>26</sup> for the earth is the Lord's, and all it contains."* In other words, don't question the butcher. Simply view it as God providing.

Verse 27 sets a scene of two Christians who have an unbelieving friend in common and the unbeliever invites them to a meal. <sup>27</sup> *"If one of the unbelievers invites you, and you wish to go, eat anything that is set before you, without asking questions for conscience' sake."* Here again is the same principle of don't ask as in verse 25.

In verse 28 we find that someone volunteers that it was meat offered to an idol, *"hey, isn't that a great roast. I got a great deal on it at the temple butcher shop."* The strong Christian has a dilemma for the weak Christian is thinking if not saying "I can't eat that." What to do? <sup>28</sup> *"But if anyone should say to you, 'This is meat sacrificed to idols,' do not eat [it,] for the sake of the one who informed [you,] and for conscience' sake; <sup>29</sup> I mean not your own conscience, but the other [man's]; for why is my freedom judged by another's conscience? <sup>30</sup> If I partake with thankfulness, why am I slandered concerning that for which I give thanks? <sup>31</sup> Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. <sup>32</sup> Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; <sup>33</sup> just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the [profit] of the many, that they may be saved."*

The dilemma is that if they don't eat it, then the unbeliever could be offended, but the stronger brother will offend the weaker brother if he eats it, and the weak brother will sin if he eats because it would violate his faith. What do you do? Paul's answer, don't eat it! Why? For the sake of both the weaker brother and the unbeliever. It is better to offend the unbeliever than a weaker brother. If the unbeliever sees you offending the weaker brother, then the unbeliever would have to conclude that the love of Christians for one another is shallow and it would be better to remain an unbeliever that be hooked up with such people. But if the unbeliever sees the love for one another, it will be attractive. The stronger brother should simply explain the situation to the unbeliever - i.e. *"my brother here cannot eat such meat in good conscience and I do not want to offend him, so I will need to refrain as well, please pass the beans."*

**9) The Principle of Emulation.** Will it be consistent with Christ likeness? The acronym WWJD (What Would Jesus Do?) expresses this well. This will help in many, many areas. 1 John 2:5-6, *“but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: <sup>6</sup> the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.”* Romans 8:29 adds that true Christians are predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son. We are to be like Jesus, so ask that questions of yourself. What would Jesus do?

**10) The Principle of Exaltation.** Will it glorify God? 1 Corinthians 10:31, *“Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”* Will it exalt God, lift up His holy name, and honor Him? Will it adorn the doctrine of God in your life? Will the Lord be glorified, and honored and praised? If the answer is yes, there is freedom to pursue it. If the answer is no, then don't do it.

These are the “Es” of decision making concerning questionable areas, and they are also a great grid to help you think through how to use your freedom in Christ in the pursuit of holiness without falling into the traps of either legalism or licentiousness.

Sermon Notes - June 14, 2020  
*LIBERTY, LEGALISM & LICENTIOUSNESS* - Selected Scriptures

### **Introduction**

Black Lives Matter (BLM) and Antifa are anti-God, anti-Christian, anti-family \_\_\_\_\_ organizations  
The only cure for the current turmoil is repentance & \_\_\_\_\_ by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ  
Gal. 5:13-14. Salvation in Christ sets you free to pursue \_\_\_\_\_ & avoid both legalism and licentiousness

**Legalism** - all forms encompass a \_\_\_\_\_ of the Law

- A) Removing \_\_\_\_\_ to establish an absolute can misapply the law and violate other laws
- B) Salvation is \_\_\_\_\_ by keeping the law - as defined by the individual / group (Pharisees)
- C) Righteousness is defined by the \_\_\_\_\_ of the individual / group

Once the line is crossed of replacing God's Word with man's standard, it is only a matter of \_\_\_\_\_ (Mk 7:7)

**Licentiousness** - Using God's \_\_\_\_\_ as justification for them to do what they desire

Many make false claims and use (blame) the Holy Spirit as an \_\_\_\_\_ for their actions

Galatians 5:1 - is actually about the \_\_\_\_\_ Law and its use by the Judaizers

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 - they do not do what Paul did, but they use this as an excuse to "\_\_\_\_\_."

1 Corinthians 10:13 - they actually can't "handle it" for they \_\_\_\_\_ avoid the temptations or flee them

Following their own wisdom instead of God's, their lives match \_\_\_\_\_ instead of godliness

### **Old Testament Biblical Law**

The Law is a \_\_\_\_\_ (Gal. 3:24), to make aware of our sin (Rom. 3:20; 7:7), & a shadow of the future (Col 2)

Jesus Christ was the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 10:4)

The Christian is under grace, not the Mosaic law, but that does not give you freedom to \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 6:14)

The Mosaic Law helps Christians by revealing God's \_\_\_\_\_ and explaining New Testament commands

### **New Testament Law**

The Christian is under the Law of \_\_\_\_\_ (Gal. 6:2, 1 Cor. 9:21), the royal law (James 2:8) to love (Gal 5:14)

The believer is obligated to \_\_\_\_\_ the commands in the NT & willing disobedience is serious

NT commands are for new creatures in Christ and \_\_\_\_\_ Him - keeping them does not earn salvation

### **Biblical Principles**

Biblical commands include both the specific and the \_\_\_\_\_ arising from the specific (Ex. theft / lust)

There is freedom where there is not a law or principle, but \_\_\_\_\_ factors must be considered

### **Cultural Customs** - Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8 & 10:14-33

1. The stronger in faith are to \_\_\_\_\_ their freedom out of love for the weaker in faith
2. The stronger in faith are not to look down on the weaker in faith - there is no room for \_\_\_\_\_ in Christians
3. Those \_\_\_\_\_ by the practice of the strong in faith are not weak in faith & cannot restrict the strong

4. The weak in faith cannot condemn or judge the strong in faith - they can ask & plead, but not \_\_\_\_\_
5. Jesus' greatest conflict with the Pharisees who sought to impose \_\_\_\_\_ standards on Him

### Practical Tips on the Use of Freedom

- 1) **Principle of Expedience** - 1 Corinthians 6:12. Will it be spiritually \_\_\_\_\_?
- 2) **Principle of Edification** - 1 Corinthians 10:23; 14:26. Will it \_\_\_\_\_ others / yourself spiritually?
- 3) **Principle of Excess** - Hebrews 12:1-2. Will it \_\_\_\_\_ you down in the Christian race of life?  
Lay aside both sin and \_\_\_\_\_ in order to run the race
- 4) **Principle of Enslavement** - 1 Corinthians 6:12. Will it bring you into \_\_\_\_\_? Can you set it aside?
- 5) **Principle of Equivocation (lie/falsify)** - 1 Peter 2:16. Will it \_\_\_\_\_ cover your sin?
- 6) **Principle of Encroachment** - Romans 13:14. Will it violate the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ in your life?  
Every Christian should live in \_\_\_\_\_ to Christ, but we do not agree on what the Lord wants  
Our priority is to submit to \_\_\_\_\_ for it trains the conscience  
"Woke" Christians exhibit consciences that have \_\_\_\_\_ from truth to the devil's lies
- 7) **Principle of Example** - 1 Corinthians 8:9. Will it \_\_\_\_\_ other Christians by its example?
- 8) **Principle of Evangelism** - 1 Corinthians 10:25-33. Will it \_\_\_\_\_ others to Christ?  
It is better show love to the \_\_\_\_\_ brother and risk offending the non-Christian - love is attractive
- 9) **Principle of Emulation** - 1 John 2:5-6. Will it be consistent with Christ \_\_\_\_\_ through you?
- 10) **Principle of Exaltation** - 1 Corinthians 10:3. Will it \_\_\_\_\_ God?
- These principles will help you be both free & \_\_\_\_\_ without falling into either legalism or licentiousness

### KIDS KORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help.

**Young Children** - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down all the verses mentioned in the sermon and look them up. 2) Count how many times the word "Christian" is used. Talk with your parents about how God wants Christians to live in holiness and freedom without being legalistic or licentious.

### THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. What is your reaction to the continued riots and protests this week? Why are these things happening? What is the cure for the current turmoil and strife? What is at the heart of all legalism? Why is context important for the application of any law? Why is a legalistic approach to salvation so dangerous? Why is a legalistic approach to holiness so divisive? Why did Jesus have such severe conflict with the Pharisees? What is licentiousness and what are the differences and similarities of it with anti-nomianism? What is the purpose of the Law to mankind? How is the Law helpful to Christians? What is the "law of Christ?" What are some of the commands that are binding on Christians? How is a specific command extended by principle? Give an example? What are the responsibilities of someone who is stronger in faith toward someone who is weaker in faith and vice versa? Explain each of the following principles and their application in determining the boundaries of freedom in the pursuit of holiness? Expedience - 1 Cor. 6:12. Edification - 1 Cor. 10:23. Excess - Hebrews 12:1-2. Enslavement - 1 Cor. 6:12. Equivocation - 1 Peter 2:16. Example - 1 Cor. 8:9. Evangelism - 1 Cor. 10:25-33. Emulation - 1 John 2:5-6. Exaltation - 1 Cor. 10:31.

Sermon Notes - June 14, 2020  
*LIBERTY, LEGALISM & LICENTIOUSNESS* - Selected Scriptures

**Introduction**

**Legalism** - all forms encompass a misapplication of the Law

- A) Removing context to establish an absolute can misapply the law and violate other laws
- B) Salvation is earned by keeping the law - as defined by the individual / group (Pharisees)
- C) Righteousness is defined by the rules of the individual / group

**Licentiousness** - Using God's grace as justification for them to do what they desire

Galatians 5:1 -

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 -

1 Corinthians 10:13 -

Following their own wisdom instead of God's, their lives match society instead of godliness

**Old Testament Biblical Law**

Purpose of the Law

The Law and the Christian

The usefulness of the Mosaic Law to Christians

**New Testament Law**

The Law of Christ

Christian obligation to NT law

**Biblical Principles**

Biblical law and principle

**Cultural Customs** - Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8 & 10:14-33

1. The stronger in faith are to self limit their freedom out of love for the weaker in faith
2. The stronger in faith are not to look down on the weaker in faith - there is no room for pride in Christians
3. Those not enticed by the practice of the strong in faith are not weak in faith & cannot restrict the strong
4. The weak in faith cannot condemn or judge the strong in faith - they can ask & plead, but not demand

5. Jesus' greatest conflict with the Pharisees who sought to impose their standards on Him

### **Practical Tips on the Use of Freedom**

1) **Principle of Expedience** - 1 Corinthians 6:12. Will it be spiritually profitable?

2) **Principle of Edification** - 1 Corinthians 10:23; 14:26. Will it build up others / yourself spiritually?

3) **Principle of Excess** - Hebrews 12:1-2. Will it slow you down in the Christian race of life?

Encumbrances

4) **Principle of Enslavement** - 1 Corinthians 6:12. Will it bring you into bondage? Can you set it aside?

5) **Principle of Equivocation (lie/falsify)** - 1 Peter 2:16. Will it hypocritically cover your sin?

6) **Principle of Encroachment** - Romans 13:14. Will it violate the Lordship of Christ in your life?

Submission to Christ

The priority of truth

“Woke” Christians exhibit consciences that have turned from truth to the devil’s lies

7) **Principle of Example** - 1 Corinthians 8:9. Will it help other Christians by its example?

8) **Principle of Evangelism** - 1 Corinthians 10:25-33. Will it lead others to Christ?

The necessity of loving the weaker brother

9) **Principle of Emulation** - 1 John 2:5-6. Will it be consistent with Christ living through you?

10) **Principle of Exaltation** - 1 Corinthians 10:3. Will it glorify God?

These principles will help you be both free & holy without falling into either legalism or licentiousness

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