

When Liberty Brings About Complacency

I. Introduction: Might the liberties we have in Christ make it too easy for some to get slack, lazy, and ultimately die spiritually? Do we consider how that our example of handling our liberties could cause some to be lost?

A. Faithful saints generally understand that we have much freedom in Christ (**Matthew 11:28-30, James 1:25, James 2:12, and I John 5:2-3**).

1. We don't want to ever let that go (**Galatians 5:1**).
2. However, what about when that liberty is exercised without thought towards what could happen to others from our choices (**I Corinthians 8:11-12**)?

B. What if a Christian understands liberty to mean that there is a box they check when the minimal actions to get to Heaven are completed? Is that really a Scriptural thought process (**Titus 3:8 and Titus 3:14**)?

1. Would you call a tree fruitful if it has existed for fifteen years, was fruitful for a period of time, but now has nothing on it (**Matthew 3:10**)?
2. What if that unfruitful tree is given another opportunity, but remains unfruitful (**Luke 13:6-9**)?

II. Body: **I Corinthians 6:12** and **I Corinthians 10:23-24**

A. The impact of my actions on others matters (**I Corinthians 8:9**).

1. If my liberty causes an offense to a saint, then I am doing evil (**Romans 14:20**).
2. I have to consider how I handle my liberties and how such impacts others (**Romans 14:15-16**)?

B. As an illustration, think about the lawfulness of "going off" because of sin (**John 2:12-17**; cf. **I Peter 2:21-23**).

1. If I made a weapon and physically acted like Jesus did in the temple towards religious charlatans; what would the law in our country do to me? Does it matter (**I Peter 2:13-16**)?
2. Though we might understand lawful righteous indignation (**Jeremiah 15:16-17**), don't we need to consider the understanding of others who could be lost by our actions too (**Romans 14:13**)? So, "going off" would not often be expedient or edifying.
3. Yet, we are not just talking about the impact of our actions on others. Our faith is not just about what others see. Ultimately, we are to please God. Though there is much liberty in Christ, pleasing God is always our main objective (**I Thessalonians 4:1-2**). So, we must question if our actions are expedient from this standpoint too.

C. Though I might not "have to" do something, what about when I take the minimal approach [do as little as I can]? Is that beneficial growth (**II Peter 1:3-10**)? **Did you notice the word "abound"?*

1. What about priorities, even in areas of liberty (**Luke 10:38-42**)?

2. Our actions [or lack thereof] is a testimony of our faith (**James 2:18**).
3. What about lawfully doing more than asked (**Philemon 1:20-21**)?
4. What does it mean to be zealous (**Titus 2:11-14**)?
 - a. Defined: “One burning with zeal, a zealot; used of God as jealous of any rival and sternly vindicating his control; most eagerly desirous of, zealous for, a thing to acquire a thing, (zealous of); to defend and uphold a thing, vehemently contending for a thing” (Strong’s # 2207).
 - b. Making sure it is of God, not of yourself (**Romans 10:1-3**).
 - c. How zealous are we in comparison to false religious bodies?

D. Maybe some need to consider a personality change. Think about this. Consider the personality of Paul (**Acts 22:3** and **Galatians 1:13-14**).

1. He was, before being in Christ, a mission-minded man (**Acts 26:9**).
2. So, for Paul to be zealous wasn’t nearly as challenging as those who just want to “be chill” all of the time (**Jeremiah 48:11**).
3. Examine your whole life, for the carnal can be revealing (**Luke 16:10-11**).
 - a. You’ve got to know yourself (**II Corinthians 13:5**).
 - b. Know what areas of your thinking can be harmful to you spiritually (i.e. **Revelation 3:14-19**).
4. If you’re just “chill’n”, wake up (**Ephesians 5:14-17**).

III. Conclusion: So, understand that we [saints] have much liberty in Christ. Also understand that in that liberty we [saints] are still expected to always abound in His work (**I Corinthians 15:58**) and to be fruitful (**John 15:1-8**).