

Christian Liberty

A Companion Teaching to supplement “Framework of Bible Ordinances”, and “Difficult Passages in Acts, #134”, By James Moriello, Firm Foundation Christian Church, Woonsocket, RI, 2015, Revised 2018

1. The Law of Christ in its technical sense is moral law, creation ordinance, and includes NT commands
2. Our theology cannot contradict itself. Christian liberty does not include freedom to sin by violating moral law or creation ordinance.
3. Let us define Christian liberty (Romans 6:14-23)
 - a. Freedom from sin’s penalty (6:23)
 - b. Freedom from sin’s power (6:22, Cf. Romans 8:1-4)
 - c. Freedom to live righteously and in accord with God’s will (6:18, Cf. Romans 12:1-2)
4. Law of Christ (Galatians 6:2) = Royal Law (James 2:8)
 - a. Binding, as Leviticus 19:18 is a moral law
 - b. Law of Christ adds accountability to the Christian life, and does not remove it
5. We have liberty to observe ceremonial law even though we are not bound by it (Acts 21:20-26; Cf. Romans 14:5-6)
 - a. Love of neighbor, moral law, and royal law, may in some cases even demand its observation (Romans 14:20-21)
6. Application to matters of conscience with regard to royal/moral law
 - a. (1 Corinthians 6:12, context, moral offenses)
 - b. Offense not of our own consciences, but others (1 Corinthians 10:27-33), not seeking excuses for self, but going out of the way for the royal law
7. Receiving the weak in the faith (Romans 14:1)
 - a. “doubtful”, where Scripture is not sufficiently clear, or voluntary observance would be allowable (Romans 14:15, liberty in such matters)

8. Warning against using conscience as an objective standard, Word of God is the standard (2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12)
 - a. Christianity by nature is authoritative and God by nature as authoritarian
 - b. God’s authority, man’s accountability
 - c. Conscience can seem to lie, we are masters of self deception in the flesh
9. Conclusions
 - a. Law of Christian Liberty increases accountability.
 - b. It also raises the bar for Christian disciples.
10. Church Applications
 - a. Cannot go beyond FOBO (Framework of Bible Ordinances), Moral and Creation binding, Ceremonial and civil non-binding
 - b. Weekly communion, no (alcohol) wine at communion
 - c. Governance within biblical guidelines, but liberty to structure outside that framework, so long as we do not call any Bible precept into question in actuality or appearance
11. Individual Applications
 - a. Romans 14:21 applied, kosher laws, Lenten fasting, social drinking
 - b. 1 Corinthians 10:27 applied, regarding unbelievers also
 - c. Leviticus 19:28, tattoos, ceremonial law, submission voluntary
12. A final caveat—overuse of 1 Corinthians 3:16 can lead to misapplication and legalism that takes us beyond the intent of God’s Word (e.g. ballroom dancing)