

Liberty

Introduction:

- A. "I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death." (Patrick Henry, speech at the Second Virginia Convention, March 23, 1775)
- B. "Liberty!" is the cry of the day in religion as well. -
*Now I am freed from the law. I am dead to that which once held me fast in its talons. I am free to serve God in a new way, not under a new law, but in a new way! ... He has set no bounds except those of love for Him in his infinite mercy, and for my fellow men in their infinite need. (W. Carl Ketcherside, **Mission Messenger**)*
- C. What does the New Testament teach about liberty?

I. What is liberty?

- A. Definition: "freedom" (Vine. 2:131).
- B. True liberty is in Christ. - John 18:36
- C. It is based on truth. - John 8:31-32
- D. It is also based on law. - Romans 8:2-3
- E. It is obtained by obedience. - Romans 6:17-18 ["The fear of God is the basis of moral self-government, and self-government is the basis of true freedom" (Philip Schaff, **History of the Christian Church**. 8:265).]
- F. To a certain extent there is liberty (freedom of action) within divine law. - 1 Timothy 4:4-5; 1 Corinthians 8:8-9

II. From what do we have liberty?

- A. sin - Romans 6:18
- B. the law of Moses - Galatians 5:1-4
- C. human religious laws - Galatians 2:3-5

III. How is our liberty limited?

- A. Liberty is not license. - Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 2:16
 - 1. definitions
 - a. "license" - "freedom that allows or is used with irresponsibility ... licentiousness" (**Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary**. 487).
 - b. "licentiousness" - "lacking legal or moral restraints"(Ibid); e.g., Ketcherside
 - 2. License is slavery to sin. - 2 Peter 2:18-19; Romans 6:16; e.g., drunkard, dope addict
 - 3. License is tyranny of the strong. - Galatians 2:3-5; e.g., anarchy in government; "Yellow Tag of Quarantine" in **Gospel Advocate**
- B. Liberty is limited by law. - James 1:25; 2:12
- C. Matters of liberty within law are non-essentials (allowed but not required) - 1 Corinthians 8:4-9; e.g., time of assembly, class arrangement, multiple containers

- D. Just because something is a liberty does not necessarily mean we should practice it.
1. We must not cause another to violate his conscience. - 1 Corinthians 8:9-13; 10:25-30,32; but, Galatians 2:3-5
 2. We must edify others. - 1 Corinthians 10:23
 3. We must seek the good of others. - 1 Corinthians 10:24,33
 4. We must do all to the glory of God. - 1 Corinthians 10:31

Conclusion:

A. Christian:

1. Stand fast in the liberty you have in Christ. - Galatians 5:1a
2. But, do NOT
 - a. mistake liberty for license - 1 Peter 2:16
 - b. or abuse liberty. - 1 Corinthians 8:9

B. Sinner, come to Christ for true liberty. - John 8:36