

I. The Composition of Christian Liberty (Par. 1)

-Under the Gospel: Negatively: *“The liberty Christ has purchased for believers under the gospel is found in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God (Rom. 8:1), and the severity and curse of the law (Gal. 3:13). It also includes their deliverance from this present evil age (Gal. 1:4), bondage to Satan (Heb. 2:14), the dominion of sin (Rom.6:14), the suffering of afflictions (Rom. 8:28), the fear and sting of death (1 Cor. 15:55-57), the victory of the grave (1 Cor. 15:54-57), and everlasting damnation” (1 Thess. 1:10). Positively: *“In addition, it includes their free access to God (Eph. 2:18) and their obedience to Him (Rom. 6:16), not from slavish fear but from a childlike love and willing mind” (Rom. 8:15).**

-Under the Law: *“All these liberties were also enjoyed in their essence by believers under the law (Ps. 51:11; 119:45; Rom. 4; Heb. 11). But under the New Testament the liberty of Christians is further expanded. They are free from the yoke of the ceremonial law to which the Jewish congregation was subjected (Acts 15:10); they have greater confidence of access to the throne of grace (Heb. 10:19-22); and they have a fuller supply of God’s free Spirit than believers under the law usually experienced (John 7:37-39).”*

II. The Corollary of Christian Liberty (Par. 2): Liberty of Conscience

-Its Foundational Principle: *“God alone is Lord of the conscience.” (Rom. 14:4; James 4:12)*

-Its Basic Implication: *“He has left it free from human doctrines and commandments that are in any way contrary to His Word or not contained in it.” (Matt. 15:1-9)*

-Its Practical Denial: *“So, believing such doctrines, or obeying such commands out of conscience, is a betrayal of true liberty of conscience. Requiring implicit faith or absolute and blind obedience destroys liberty of conscience and reason as well.”*

III. The Corruption of Christian Liberty (Par. 3)

-Its Essence: *“Those who use Christian liberty as an excuse to practice any sin or nurture any sinful desire...” (Jude 4)*

-Its Fruits: *“...and they completely destroy the purpose of Christian liberty. This purpose is that we, having been delivered from the hands of all our enemies, may serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our lives.” (Luke 1:74, 75; Gal. 5:13)*

Practical Observations