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INSIGHTS FOR HOLY LIVING

I THESSALONIANS 4:1-8

PART THREE: CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

What is the difference between legalism and Christian Liberty?

Let's define some terms:

- Legalism Galatians 2:16.
- Libertine I John 2:1-17; 3:3.
- Externalism Mt. 6:2-4; 23:5-6.

The first century church was faced with this conflict. On one hand was the devout Jew who was strict in his observance of the Law. To the Jew the O.T. Law regulated every part of their lives:

- calendar
- diet
- dress materials
- house construction
- finances
- agriculture
- commerce
- marriage
- worship
- family
- purification

The pagans/gentiles:

- zippo

1. 4:1 = We must be pleasing God by our *conduct*.

2. 4:2 = We must live according to His *commands*.

- The word command is a military word for orders passed down.

3. 4:3 = We must see our *calling* is to do God's will

- In 1 Th 4:3 its be pure.
- In 1 Th 5:18 its be thankful.
- In Ephesians 5:18 its be full of the Spirit.
- In 1 Peter 2:13-15 its be submissive to authority.
- In 1 Peter 4;19; 5:10 its be ready to suffer.
- In 2 Peter 3:9 its be saved.

4. 4:4 = We must be *committed* to avoiding sin, or personal holiness.

When we come to this area of personal holiness many people cry liberty. Let's stop and examine just what is Christian Liberty. Our journey will make four stops:

POINT ONE: WE ARE NOT UNDER LAW BUT GRACE

Romans 6:14 ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. (KJV)

WHAT CHRISTIAN LIBERTY DOESN'T MEAN.

1. "Freedom from the Law certainly does not mean that the principles of righteousness revealed in the OT law are now nullified."¹
2. It does not mean that the Ten Commandments have no application to our present lives.
3. It does not mean that we can subjugate God's holy standards to personal preference.
4. It obviously does not mean we are free from any moral requirements.

WHAT DOES CHRISTIAN LIBERTY MEAN?

- We are free from the bonds of sin.
- We are free from the Jewish rituals, Feasts, clean and unclean animals, new moons, Sabbaths and all.
- We don't need to offer sacrifices to come to God.
- Our diets are no longer regulated by Leviticus and Exodus.
- We also are not bound by Gentile customs, religion and superstition.

POINT TWO: OUR SPIRITUAL LIVES ARE PRIMARILY INTERNAL NOT EXTERNAL.

Romans 8:4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (KJV)

- God's grace is working in us to accomplish His purposes.
- God's Spirit is our source of life, strength and direction.

POINT THREE: GRACE BECOMES OUR TEACHER.

Titus 2:12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; (KJV)

What is the first lesson grace teaches us?

DENY THE FLESH