

20 10 19

Liberty – Pt 3 Let not our liberty cause our brethren to sin.

This is our third study on the topic of liberty. We previously established– (1) The children of God have liberty in Christ, (2) where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, (3) our liberty is freedom from the yoke of the law, and (4) use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh. In this study we establish – (1) False brethren can be threatened by our liberty in Christ, (2) our liberty can become a stumblingblock to the weak, and (3) our liberty is not measured by another man's conscience.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded

1. False brethren are threatened by our liberty in Christ.

"But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage" (Gal.2: 3 & 4).

Circumcision is synonymous with the law. The law is bondage, whereas liberty is freedom from the law. When a person brings you into bondage to the law they walk not uprightly according to the gospel and in Paul's time were "false brethren" who were brought in unawares – "stealth-like" by other believers to spy out their liberty.

2. Let not our liberty become a stumblingblock to the weak.

"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak" (1 Cor.8: 9).

3. Measure not our liberty by another man's conscience.

"Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?" (1 Cor.10: 29).

Additional information

How we use the liberty we have in Christ is a window to our heart. I.e.– if we use our liberty for an occasion to the flesh (last week), or our liberty causes a weaker brother to stumble, we "sin against Christ" (1Cor.8: 12).

Illustration to help apply our teaching to our life

Imagine you are attending a pot-luck dinner at a Jewish observant family and the plate you bring is pork ribs. You eat the pork and then one of the house guests is emboldened to eat and through thy knowledge their weak conscience is wounded.

Question to think about.

How do we not let our liberty become a stumblingblock and offend our weak brother whilst not allowing their conscience to become the yard-stick for our liberty?

Our answer from the scriptures.

Paul in his example on the topic of eating meat –

Established the liberty he has in Christ – i.e. whether we eat meat or not. His response – "All things are pure" (Rom.14: 20). He then affirms that it is evil for that man to eat and cause offence to his brother. He then gives up his liberty – "It is good neither to eat flesh...or any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth..." (verse 21). In doing so he fulfils the law of Christ by bearing their burdens. He does so when he walks in the Spirit, lives in the Spirit and is led of the Spirit, for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Let not our liberty cause our brethren to stumble.