

The Sin of Denying Liberty, God's Perfect Law

“But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.” - James 1:25

Intro

In order to understand and grasp the gravity of the sin of denying liberty, God's perfect law, one must first understand the nature of liberty; it is a commonly misused and misunderstood word, and yet it is described by God Himself as His law, and a perfect one at that. As always with the nature of faith, growth and strength come by the Spirit as we commune with God through his Word and the Church; the deeper we are illuminated by the Spirit with understanding of our sinfulness, as informed by His Word, the more God's love for us through Christ grows in and transforms us. In order to understand the sin of denying God's perfect law of liberty, we first need to biblically understand liberty.

The Meaning of Liberty

In James 1:25, God describes His perfect law as the law of liberty (eleutherias); as seen in Strong's Bible concordance: “true liberty is living as we should not as we please” (G1657). Living “as we should” means living according to the boundaries established for humans by God through law, both natural and moral (Romans 1:26-27, Romans 2:12-16, etc.); liberty is inherently bounded and defined by laws. To live at liberty is to live in harmony with God and our neighbor, the two greatest commandments (Matthew 22:36-40), which is inherently defined by God's laws as to how we ought to act towards Him and our neighbors. Living in liberty means living in obedience to God in all that He asks; to live at liberty is to live in accordance with the bounding laws of liberty, which are set by God. Liberty and law are synonymous. God has given both positive and negative laws (“do” honor your parents, “don't” commit murder) which define our liberty with Him and our neighbors. Such laws also establish our duties to one another; “don't murder” carries with it a duty to stop our neighbors from murdering and being murdered. Any action, thought, or feeling not addressed by God's laws and the resulting duties are left to discretion and choice between man, God, and our neighbors; liberty is obeying God's given laws, fulfilling our duties, and operating freely in everything else; how perfect and beautiful is liberty!

“And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts. (laws)” - Psalms 119:45

Liberty is not to be confused with freedom, though it often is; a fish out of water is not living at liberty, because it has exited the environment that bounds and defines its

operation. The fish is “free” to jump out of the water onto land, but in doing so it has lost liberty and will subsequently die if not returned to the environment with natural laws that God created to bound the fish’s existence; in jumping out of the water, the fish is no longer living “as it should” but only “as it pleases” (in a temporal, nonmoral sense). So too, humans “shall surely die” (Genesis 2:17) as a result of forsaking God’s perfect law of liberty to live as we please (morally speaking, but with temporal consequences too). True and perfect liberty can only be fully experienced through saving faith in Jesus Christ; until then, the soul remains condemned under the law for having violated God’s law of liberty. We are not born free in liberty to obey God and live in harmony with Him and our neighbors, but rather we’re born slaves to sin and the flesh; since every human born since Adam is born with a sin nature, void of the Spirit, we are all born the equivalent of moral fish out of water on land with no body of water in sight to return to; we are all born having forsaken liberty, in bondage and slavery to sin. The only hope for us humans born like spiritual fish out of water is to be returned to the water of eternal life, which is Jesus Christ (John 4:14, 7:37-39); salvation by faith in Jesus Christ gives us the freedom we need from the condemnation of the law, and new hearts to love and obey the law, which is to say, to love liberty and obey its boundaries! To complete the analogy, a morally regenerate fish loves the water of eternal life and has no desire to ever depart from it again; a regenerate Christian is a true lover of liberty, God’s perfect law!

“Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” - Romans 8:21

Liberty For All

As the Word informs us, not all fish will be returned to the eternal waters of liberty in Christ, but that doesn’t mean God’s plan for those fish is to let them flop around in anarchy and chaos, wreaking havoc in spiritual death while living on earth, stenching up God’s creation (if you’ve ever been to a beach full of dead fish, you understand the unpleasant prospect of this analogy). While only a Christian can truly experience God’s perfect law of liberty in the spiritual realm, our God is a good and gracious God, and has instituted His law of liberty for all of mankind; this is both inherently reasoned through the application of God’s law to all of mankind, as He is the supreme and only authority over His creation, and is directly stated as such in Romans 13, 1 Peter 2, and other passages. Since liberty is defined by the boundaries of law, and God’s laws exist for all of creation regardless of whether or not His created beings obey Him in it or not, His law of liberty stands for all created beings; God desires obedience from His creation, and blesses His creation with institutions under His authority to demand and coerce such obedience. Christ Himself affirms this in His last words recorded in the book of Matthew:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

As Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2 make it expressly clear, God has instituted “governing authorities” under His authority who “bear the sword” (a.k.a government and law enforcement) for the purposes of upholding His laws over all of mankind, not just the elect; and, since liberty is defined by the boundaries of the law, the governing authorities have been tasked with defending God’s perfect law of liberty for all of mankind. Civilly and temporally speaking, God instituted government to guarantee freedom for humanity to live in liberty amongst our neighbors; where Christ sets us free to find spiritual liberty, government, under Christ, is to set us free to live in liberty by guarding it with the sword.

“Understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine,” - 1 Timothy 1:9-10

To steal or murder, whether saved or unsaved, is to rob someone of God’s perfect law of liberty for them; to steal or deny someone their God given right to liberty is a great evil and sin, unjustly oppressing and robbing them of what God has given to them (Leviticus 19:13); the authorities are to be a terror to evil doers and “bad conduct”, and stealing liberty from our neighbors is evil on which God’s wrath is to come. Their possessions and life are theirs, given to them by God, and except in the form of just taxation (key word “just”), and except where voluntarily forfeited or removed as punishment for wrongdoing, the individual is free to operate in liberty with their possessions and life before God and their neighbors. Hence, it is hopefully astoundingly clear that God’s Word is the ultimate root and source of truth for the “inalienable” rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (“happiness” originally understood to be the Greek word “eudaimonia”, meaning a life well lived in virtue and excellence, or “human flourishing”, Pg. 158, Slaying Leviathan - Glenn S. Sunshine); they are rights given by God to mankind, and therefore no man has any right to be denied them by another man, except by voluntary sacrifice or legal punishment for wrongdoing, for which civil authorities are ordained and instituted by God for.

Just and properly instituted governing authorities and law enforcement, which are a terror to evil doers and bad conduct, exist to defend and protect “civil” liberties; though temporal, non-spiritual obedience to God’s laws does nothing to commend any man to

God for salvation, such obedience is none-the-less the “common grace” of God for all man, and demanded through His institution of governing authorities. That is to say, God Himself, in love and care for His creation, desires that His beaches are not filled with dying fish flopping about; it is the State’s job to throw them back into the waters of obedience to civil liberty. Such civil liberty not only serves to guard and coerce communities into some semblance of decency and civilized behaviour to advance God’s Kingdom here on earth, but it is also a primary pipeline to discovery of God’s other Kingdom institution of liberty, the Church.

Jurisdictions of Liberty: Civil, State, Family & Conscience

Where the governing authorities are God’s earthly institute of His Kingdom for matters of enforcing civil liberty, the Church is God’s earthly institution of His kingdom for matters of spiritual liberty. Each institution is given specific tasks and areas of authority, otherwise known as “jurisdictions”; court cases, imprisonment, fines, arrests, etc. are within the jurisdiction of the governing authorities (whom we’ll call “the State” from now on), and Church ordinances, Church discipline, teaching and expositing the Word, etc., are within the jurisdiction of the Church. Though many modern Bible teachers like to speak of them as mutually exclusive and that neither should inform or interact with the other, such is not the case; if a church were to decide that child sacrifice is now a good thing and in style again, certainly this would be a matter for the State to address, and anyone that thinks the State can appropriately determine “good conduct” from “bad conduct” without being informed by the Church hasn’t thought through the meaning of Romans 13. Obviously, members of society and the Church rightfully participate in both institutions; they cannot be considered mutually exclusive. The lines of jurisdiction have been debated and not always clear for much of history, but the Word is very clear that both are instituted by God for a symbiotic relationship in understanding, proclaiming, enforcing, and defending liberty.

God’s Church is the primary source of understanding and truth of the meaning of His perfect law of liberty, both spiritually and civilly; hence why the saints are expected not to be in lawsuits with one another and are to know how to judge angels someday (1 Corinthians 6:1-8). Not only does the Church have jurisdiction over spiritual liberty, it has the task of evangelizing the world as to the full meaning of liberty; there may not be a more evangelistic tool for the Church than properly expositing, preaching, and proclaiming the meaning of God’s perfect law of liberty to the world through the biblical application of it to civil law and government, who are authorities under the reign of Christ. Proclaiming liberty was literally a task of Israel in the year of jubilee (Leviticus 25:10); Jesus is the ultimate man of liberty, His disciples were the first of us to study and learn from Him, and not surprisingly, to the best of our knowledge many them were

martyred by government officials: Paul and Peter by Nero, Thomas allegedly by soldiers whom belong to the State, Phillip by a Roman governor for converting his wife, James by King Herod, and Jesus of course by His people, the ultimate rebellion of humanity through governance of “we the people” (described in the Word as mob rule (Matthew 27:20-23) at the demands of the people whom denied Him as their King).

In light of this discussion on liberty, it should come as no surprise and not be taken lightly that Christ and His chosen disciples took the Gospel message directly to government officials; a message that directly topples and inverts the natural inclinations and understanding of power hungry, factious human governments to limited purposes as defined and instituted by God Himself to protect His law of liberty (the “just” taxes previously mentioned are understood to be only those which enable government to fulfill its instituted purposes). God the Father didn’t send His Son and His disciples into the world only to evangelize street corners with the Gospel message for personal salvation; He sent them usher in the redemption of every earthly institution under the authority of Christ, of which government is directly instituted by God for Godly purposes. This is why we are commanded to pray for kings and rulers in high places, that they (and all people) may be “Godly and dignified” (1 Timothy 2).

When the Church is tasked with being a “city on a hill”, and the “light” and “salt” of the earth, it is tasked with understanding, proclaiming, enforcing, and defending God’s perfect law of liberty; the Church is to be Christ’s bastion of liberty on earth, and where the Church has not understanding, it will fail in proclaiming, enforcing, and defending. Liberty is a law for all of creation, every Godly institution within it, and the Church, moved by the Spirit of God, is instituted to be the earthly authority on all matters of liberty; the Church is to operate within its own jurisdiction of authority on liberty, it is rightly to inform the state and family of their jurisdictions of liberty and how they ought to operate in them, and if necessary, the Church is to forcefully (direct or indirect) restore such institutions to their Godly purposes (see 2 Kings 11 where God’s people are charged with treason (or “insurrection” if you’ve kept up with modern politics) as they forcefully oust the tyrant Athaliah and restore just government. Indirect force would be use of government to stop homosexual couples from adopting and raising children, which is a perversion and destruction of both natural and moral laws for the jurisdiction of family). There is, however, one final jurisdiction of liberty over which no earthly institution has authority, but over which the Church is still responsible for understanding, informing, and defending its boundaries; that jurisdiction is: conscience.

Understanding Conscience

A person's conscience is synonymous with what people call a "moral compass"; the conscience can be a tricky subject because of the nature of the conscience, as well as what God's Word says about it. Some may think that the conscience is only God's moral law which is written on our hearts, but God's Word makes it clear that it is more than that (Romans 2:15); it is the internal dialogue, or moral compass, that each of us has within us on a daily basis. The nature of the conscience is that even though a person may be thinking, feeling or seeking to do something that is right and moral before God, a person's conscience may be telling them otherwise.

The Bible highlights this reality when it comes to eating meat and drinking wine; even though either activity can be done to the Glory of God in Christ, not every believer, especially not the Jews who came from obedience to ceremonial laws, had their moral compass tuned yet to this truth. So, though a thing may be morally and civilly lawful, a person's conscience may not yet agree with it; in such a case, God makes it explicitly clear that to disobey one's conscience is to defile one's conscience (1 Corinthians 8:7,11); in acting against conscience, one has not acted within their current faith, and therefore commits sin (Romans 14:23, James 4:17). So, while God's boundaries of liberty in civil and spiritual law may leave much up to the individual in freedom to use, the conscience adds another jurisdiction of liberty over which only the Lord has authority, and which is between the individual and the Lord only, except wherein personal use of liberty becomes a matter of division within the Church as addressed by the Word, which will be examined next.

There are several passages in the New Testament which are key to understanding conscience and liberty; the importance of reading them all within context and in comparison with one another, as well as by true illumination of the Spirit, cannot be stressed enough. Reading any of them in isolation without being informed by the others leads to misguided and misunderstood application of liberty to conscience; this reality is frequently the cause of much division amongst the members of the Church, which is exactly what the passages were written to fight against (Romans 14:3-4, Colossians 2:16). The four primary chapters of the New Testament which deal with liberty and conscience are: 1 Corinthians 8, 1 Corinthians 10, Romans 14, and Colossians 2. For the sake of further discussion on liberty and with brevity in mind, we'll examine sections to understand a few key points about God's commands for us in dealing with liberty and conscience.

First, we must understand that it is made abundantly clear in scripture that no man's liberty ought to be determined by another man's conscience; Colossians 2:16, Romans

14:10-13, and 1 Corinthians 10:28-30 are verses within these passages where this is most explicitly made clear:

“Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.” - Colossians 2:16

“Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” So then each of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.” - Romans 14:10-13

“But if someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience— I do not mean your conscience, but his. **For why should my liberty be determined by someone else's conscience? If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks?**” 1 Corinthians 10:28-30

The last passage from 1 Corinthians is where Paul states this most directly; he says that even when we abstain from eating meat in front of an unbeliever who has offered the meat to an idol, we are not abstaining because our conscience sees anything wrong with the meat (because we know that idols are false God's and that the meat is God's meat, 1 Corinthians 8:4-6), but because we want to inform their conscience of the guilt it should have for worshipping false gods. In doing so our conscience has not changed; we know that before God we are free to eat the meat without concern, but in love towards our neighbor we refrain so that their conscience may be convicted of guilt for the sin of unbelief.

Not only this, but Paul states directly that our liberty should not be dictated by someone else's conscience; when he says “someone else”, he does not mean only unbelievers but all persons. This is confirmed when we look at the other passages relating to liberty amongst Christians, and his final words in the verse in Corinthians which say: “why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks”; multiple times in the passages contextualized about believers, we read about not judging one another and doing all that we do to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31, Romans 14:5-9). No matter what we do in liberty, as long as it's done in thankfulness and glory to God, then it is lawful,

whether in front of unbelievers or believers; the only time in which our liberty is to be voluntarily limited is if the use of it would not be glorifying to God

Since God gives us complete and utter liberty through His perfect law, the only times in which we would not be glorifying God in use of liberty is if our use of liberty harms our neighbors. Again, in such a case, it is not that our liberty is being dictated by someone else's conscience, because our conscience and understanding of liberty remains the same and is only set on us by God, but for the sake of love we are abstaining from use of the liberty. If our use of liberty is done in pride and arrogance so as to flaunt it (1 Corinthians 8:1-3), if it's used selfishly when we should be loving our neighbors by abstaining so that their consciences are convicted (1 Corinthians 10:28), or if our use of our liberty would cause a weaker believing brother or sister to stumble (Romans 14:13), then we have used our liberty in a manner that is not glorifying to God because it was not used in love towards our neighbors. Such being the case, in none of those instances if our conscience or understanding of liberty being dictated to us by our loving consideration of our neighbor; though we may abstain from various liberties while we are around our neighbors, believing or unbelieving, our conscience remains clean before the Lord as we operate in liberty in all other circumstances through faith that is between us and the Lord (Romans 14:22).

The second thing we need to understand is the contextualization of what it means to be a stumbling block to our brothers and sisters; in regards to properly understanding liberty, everything hangs on this. Getting this wrong is what results in a great deal of the modern division within the Church over matters of liberty, and is what has resulted in a great deal of sin and lack of love shown towards our own brothers and sisters in the faith, especially as it relates to present day issues of masks, social distancing, and registration for attendance within churches due to Covid-19. As has already been discussed, liberty and law are synonymous; we can't understand what it means to live in harmony with God and our neighbors if we don't understand God's design for such living as bounded and given to us in His laws. What we have to understand about these passages regarding liberty in conscience is that Paul is addressing the results of a complete overturn of the laws and customs that the Jews in God's nation of Israel had been operating under for thousands of years. Israel had been operating under the ceremonial laws and sacrificial system of the old covenant, which expressly dealt with things that God deemed clean or unclean, holy or common:

“And the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying, “Drink no wine or strong drink, you or your sons with you, when you go into the tent of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean, and you are to

teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the Lord has spoken to them by Moses.” - Leviticus 10:8-11

In Romans 14:13-23, Paul makes it explicitly clear that he is referring to matters of conscience as being contextualized by what is understood to be clean or unclean in relation to God’s laws for His people under the old covenant. Again, in 1 Corinthians 10, just before Paul discusses conscience, he is discussing idolatry and how the people “... sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.”, which is quote from Exodus 32 where God’s people have a festival as they indulge in unclean, immoral behaviour and idolatry as Aaaron made the golden calf for them to worship while Moses was on the mountain with the Lord. What we have to understand about all of these passages regarding liberty and conscience is that they are addressing the massive instatement of God’s perfect law of liberty through Christ; where under the old covenant God’s people were bound by all sorts of temporal ceremonial and sacrificial laws regarding observance of days, eating, drinking, etc., Christ came to fulfill these laws, as discussed in Hebrews 9 & 10, but especially Hebrews 9:10: “but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.”

The advent of Christ is the reformation spoken of in Hebrews 9:10 as made expressly clear in the following verses (11-14). What Paul is dealing with and addressing in his letters is the fact that jews, under their understanding of the old covenant, were conditioned to the definition of liberty that was bounded by all of the old ceremonial and sacrificial laws, but that in Christ these boundaries of liberty had been removed or changed; with Christ came the new covenant which loosened the barriers that defined liberty for God’s people in many ways. As one can imagine, after thousands of years of understanding the practice of relating to God through the ceremonial, sacrificial, and civil laws that God has for His people, it was a very difficult and hard change for the conscience of many who were used to the old covenant liberty. So, when Paul is addressing being a stumbling block to our brothers and sisters, he is expressly dealing with matters that are related to liberty and conscience and the observance of laws from the old covenant that no longer apply under the new covenant and the liberty that comes with it; this is why we see all of these passages and others contextualized by eating, drinking, observance of days, washing of hands, etc. Paul is specifically addressing liberty as it relates to the old and new defining laws of liberty for God’s people.

It is imperative to have this understanding of liberty and the context of what Paul is addressing in regards to the law under the old and new covenant, because it clarifies to us the meaning of a verse in Romans 14, which can be used wildly out of context to wreak havoc and cause division throughout the Church; verse 21 reads: “It is good not

to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.” The key word of contention here is: “anything”. Without the understanding of the difference in liberty and law which Paul is tackling in his discussions, many read this verse as if “anything that you might do in liberty could be a stumbling block before a brother so you ought to consider not doing it”. In addition, when combined with a misunderstanding of 1 Corinthians 8:13, where Paul says “Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.”, the image that one may get of a Christian’s use of liberty is that all believers ought to be vegetarian shut-ins who abstain from liberty un-unequivocally at the whims of supposed weaker Christian’s consciences. Without proper understanding, it sounds like Paul is saying any action of liberty ever, such as driving a gasoline powered vehicle or wearing a black shirt to Church, can be a matter of a stumbling block to a weaker Christian’s conscience, and therefore, lest the strong Christian ever be seen operating in liberty and be a stumbling block to their brother or sister, they should never do “anything” which could be stated as an offense to a weaker Christian’s conscience. Let it be understood now and forever more that this is not the meaning of Paul’s discussion on liberty, consciences, and stumbling blocks.

In today’s society, and even within the Church, where green technology and the earth have become idols, it is not a matter of weak or strong conscience that a “weaker” Christian could claim offense to a “stronger” Christian’s use of a gasoline lawn mower or gasoline vehicle over one which is battery powered; in such a case, the “stronger” Christian in liberty cannot be faulted for being a stumbling block to the “weaker” Christian for driving such a gasoline car by them; such an example is not a matter of strong or weak conscience in regards to God’s laws under the old and new covenants. The same goes for wearing a mask to church; wearing a mask to the gathering of the Church is no rightful matter of old vs new covenant liberty, and falls no more into a matter of strong or weak conscience than does driving a gasoline powered vehicle over an electric vehicle. It is rightfully a matter of liberty, but not a matter of sin and stumbling blocks. Not all choices and matters of liberty are rightly defined and contextualized by the specific matters of law and conscience which Paul is addressing in his discussions.

The conscience of a weak Christian is not a license to the Church to impose additional laws and restrictions on God’s people which He has not Himself placed on them under His perfect law of liberty; this is true both because Paul wrote explicitly to address and condemn the despising and judgement which brothers and sisters were bringing on one another over “opinions” regarding liberty (Romans 14:1-12), but also because not all choices and actions in liberty are rightly handled as matters of sin against conscience. Paul did not give these instructions as a means for weaker Christians to grab hold of congregations and alter the form and function of the Church at their convictions and

commands. Paul did instruct more mature Christians on what love is and what it means to act in love towards weaker Christians in regards to past laws of God, as opposed to conceit and being puffed up with knowledge in new liberty, but he is not giving the weaker Christians the right to dictate and dominate the strength and faith of the Church. If that would be the case, the church would never grow in light and salt and displays of faith, because the weaker would only ever be pulling down the stronger, which is not the meaning of Paul's Words.

Only in the case of visible, obvious sinful lack of love towards brothers or sisters within the gathering of the Church which regard true matters of old vs. new covenant liberty could a brother or sister be approached and addressed for sinning against the body for acting in liberty; if a brother decided to show up and start eating steak in his seat in the middle of the gathered congregation, there may be a genuine offense of liberty occurring. If the aforementioned scenario of a debate over gasoline and battery powered vehicles were to occur within the body and a brother or sister, allegedly being the weaker Christian, claimed the other was being a stumbling block, the Church leadership ought to rebuke the one claiming to be the weaker member of the body for being a true source of division, explain to them the true meaning and nature of liberty, tell them to get over the fact that their brother has a different opinion, and instruct them to glorify God quietly in their heart with their choices; the same goes for mask wearing.

“But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” - Corinthians-2 3:16-17

Defending Liberty: Duty vs. Conscience

Now of course, an astute reader of the passages under examination may acknowledge what has been stated about matters of weak conscience and liberty, but still point 1 Corinthians 10:23-24, which says: “All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up. Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.” This passage may be used by some to say that, while many matters of liberty are not rightfully contextualized by matters of old covenant conscience, believers still ought to consider forsaking any liberties which could be perceived as offensive. While it may seem well-meaning to teach such a thing, using this verse to teach it takes the verse out of context, perverts the meaning of liberty, and provides a false defense for arguing against methods of duty; this verse is immediately contextualized by matters of eating meat from markets that was offered to idols, and its true meaning, consistent with the other passages, is to affirm that strong Christians, though strong in liberty, clean in conscience, and able to thankfully partake in all that God has given us, are absolutely to forsake matters of old covenant liberty in the

presence of weaker Christians, because that is the loving thing to do and will build the fellow Christian up. The false conclusion made by using the verse out of context, that any matter of liberty should be put away if it may be perceived as offensive, actually serves well to shine light on the proper truths of Christian duty, which propels us into understanding the idea of liberty to a much greater depth; what we see is that the many things lawful under liberty are given by God for the intended use of building up and serving our brothers, sisters, and neighbors, which is our duty.

By saying “all things are lawful, but not all things are helpful”, it is simultaneously stated that aside from those things which aren’t helpful and don’t help build the body, such as speaking in tongues without interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:5,23-25), there are a great many things which are lawful and, when used in liberty, do build up the body when used in its presence; anything covered under liberty which was not a concern of God’s law under the old covenant, or which is not specifically addressed in the wisdom of scripture, now become tools for building up of the body of Christ into understanding forgiveness of sin, freedom from the condemnation of law, and God’s perfect law of liberty for humanity. If God hasn’t said “don’t use this, or do this, or do that”, then we may use this or that, and do this or do that to accomplish His other commands for us, so long as they’re done out of duty, to His glory, in God glorifying love to our neighbors, and in preservation of His law of liberty for the saints and their neighbors.

Speaking in tongues without a translator is specifically addressed as not building up the body because it is unintelligible and makes the Church appear “out of our minds” to unbelievers. It is therefore highly appropriate that Church leaders, acting in duty and concern over what biblically builds up the body and displays the Gospel message at their church, manage and address such behavior; such are the explicit duties of leaders in a church to make sure that all things are done “decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:26-40). By such duties, it is also highly appropriate that leaders stop and bring order to unorderly and uncoordinated dancing of believers during worship gatherings; Psalm 149:3 and Psalm 150:4 both describe worshipping the Lord with dancing, so while it may be fitting to include dancing in organized worship, it is unbiblical if done on an individual basis that contributes to disorder, confusion, and distraction from teaching and worship. Unintelligible speech or disorderly, confused worship acts within God’s sanctuaries do not glorify God because they actually hinder the understanding of the Gospel through confusion, run counter to God’s Word, and are false displays of loving faith amongst believers, especially in regards to speaking in tongues without translation when believers rightful sign is prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:22); such behavior causes confusion and bewilderment amongst unbelievers entering the body (1 Corinthians 14:23), to whom displays of interpreted speaking in tongues are to be proper sign (1 Corinthians 14:22). If creating unintelligible displays of faith and confused understanding

be a great concern of scripture, on such premises alone we must wonder how it can be that many saints are currently being made to veil their faces and keep distanced, thereby making their expressions of joy, mourning, and faith unintelligible and unseen to fellow believers and neighbors; truly, these are things listed in God's Word as indicators and expressions of the needs of the body (Romans 12:15, Ecclesiastes 8:1, Proverbs 15:13, Hebrews 10:25). Is it not the literal [quenching of the Spirit](#) and smothering of displays of faith, love, mourning, and joy which we are commanded not to do? Are these not genuinely the "essential" works of faith that the Church and its neighbors need?

God institutes certain displays of faith and duty to Church leadership, such as administering baptism, communion, leading worship, administering discipline, teaching with authority, and managing orderly gatherings for the express purpose of putting His glory on display and building of the body of Christ; He has not instituted Church leaders with the power and authority to decide apart from scripture, or against it, which activities, that God Himself has stated are for the purposes of building up the body, can be used by individual members of the body within His sanctuaries. Truly, in a culture where greeting one another with a "holy kiss" was normative and directed by scripture (Romans 16:16, 1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:26), quenching of such activity between consenting individuals amongst the body of believers in God's sanctuaries would have been a direct affront to their liberty and mutual up-building; this ought to be especially true in modern circumstances wherein believers participating in similar physical acts of encouragement and greeting may have already had Covid-19 and/or been vaccinated, unbeknownst to leadership as it is rightfully not their jurisdiction to know or be concerned. Where God has not given His institutions proper jurisdiction and authority to act, they ought not claim it to be their duty to do otherwise.

Where God has given express duties to His Church, to both members of leaders, His law of liberty has been given to aid and empower such duty. God's law of liberty to carry out duty is particularly well exemplified by Church leadership's duty to lead the body in teaching through song (musical worship with all sorts of instruments, Psalm 150:1-6, Colossians 3:16, Ephesians 5:19); it is expressly shown in scripture that leadership has liberty to lead the congregation in worship with any manner of musical tools, all of which God has deemed lawful. Use of such tools is no matter of old covenant liberty, and therefore has no place as an argument of conscience or stumbling block from members of the congregation; such use of liberty in no way mandates or lays laws upon individual members of the congregation as to whether or not they can attend worship, or how, or in what way their hearts are to give praise to God in His sanctuary for His deeds and His excellence. By choice in instrument or even song, no individual in the congregation is being made to play, sing, lead, or do anything which they do not feel in their heart they

are able to cheerfully do to the glory of God; sticking a violin in everyone's hand and telling them they must play would be a different story. As long as leaders are fulfilling their duties in "fit" and "orderly" ways (1 Corinthians 14:40) that preserve liberty for the individual members of the body, they are free to use any lawful means of liberty which glorify God and build up the body.

Anyone claiming that someone else's use of musical liberty to perform worship hinders their ability to worship is like claiming that they are unable to worship because a saint sitting next to them raises their hands while singing or wore a black shirt to church; such squabbles over liberty are the exact and precise reason Paul wrote in his letters about not judging one another and quarrelling over opinions and matters of liberty. Those which are not matters of old testament liberty, or matters of glorifying God properly amongst neighbors, are to be accepted and not made to divide, especially when such use of liberty facilitates duty; God will never ask us to perform duties that would conflict with His laws or the meaning of loving neighbors, so any facilitation of duty in the name of "liberty" which adds to His laws, or goes against them, can be plainly seen and known to be done in falsehood, and therefore not love.

Self defence and the tools we use to carry it out are also an excellent example of the meaning of liberty, which allows for use of anything lawful to carry out duty; Exodus 22:2 makes it clear that under the civil laws from God given to Israel, there was no sin guilt, none at all, for killing a thief in the middle of the night which broke into your house to steal. A key point about this verse is that it clarifies the intruder as a thief, not a murder trying to steal your life in broad daylight whom you'd also be just in defending yourself against, but a potentially defenseless thief who sought to steal your private property; if anyone killed such a thief at night they were guilty of no sin at all! What is important to note is that God's Word and laws say nothing about the tools of self defense that we use; whether a knife, or gun, or bat, or acid if it were all that we had on the table in a bowl for some strange reason, if our hearts were operating justly in self defense and defense of property before the Lord, there would be no guilt before God for our actions; in God's court of laws, and therefore civilly under a just system of civil government, the person defending against the thief is innocent of any sin or evil. If there was malicious intent on the defenders part to seek vengeance or torture the assailant, but no evidence was left to expose them to authorities, God Himself reigns in authority over such an individual and will pay them with justice in due time (Romans 12:19); either through chastisement and exposing their sin if they are truly His child, moving them to repentance and therefore also grace and forgiveness, or through punishment in hell in His final administration of justice on humanity if they are not known by Christ.

All of these truths of the Word which facilitate such discourse and conclusions on duty are incredibly important to understand, because they affirm that God has given the Church liberty to defend liberty by acting in duty with whatever tools are available, as long as they are used in a manner glorifying God; this is to say, God has given great liberties to defend liberty! The distinction here is key; whatever is not rightfully to be considered as possibly sin against conscience according to the Word and old covenant laws, or which is not specifically addressed with wisdom in the Word regarding what it means to build up the body of Christ, then becomes a tool of duty against which no man rightly has any jurisdiction over another, not even Church leadership. A strong and mature Christian operating in faith and in liberty in a righteous manner can in no way be righteously admonished, rebuked, or condemned for their use of liberty by any human institution; not only this, they may understand rightly that their use of liberty to defend liberty is their duty before God, and to admonish or prevent them from doing their duty to God would be sin. Conscience and duty are not to be confused, and those who understand their duty and are operating in faith before the Lord are not to be hindered in doing so. Duty will never contradict what has been stated about love and liberty, and matters of conscience are not to be used sinfully as swords against the body to cause division and stifle liberty. In addition, conscience cannot be used as a means of avoiding duty. If one see's their neighbor being attacked and does nothing to help, they are not able to say "it was against my conscience to get involved." How and in what ways one may get involved, and whether they are pleasing to the Lord are within God's jurisdiction between Him and the individual, as well as subject to the wisdom of the Word as understood through proper teaching within the Church, but it is sin to argue against duty with conscience. Therefore, it is good that all saints come to a deep understanding of their duties to God and their neighbors, lest they absolve themselves of loving with the very love which God has displayed and taught through Christ.

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." - Galatians 5:1

The Sin of Denying Liberty

Not only is it a great sin to argue against duty with matters of conscience, but it is of greater sin to saddle the body of Christ with new laws and regulations which God Himself has not given. If a modern church claiming to be Christian began teaching that believers must not eat meat on Sundays before they entered the Church, similar to God's commands in Leviticus 10:9 before entering the tent of meeting, biblically led churches operating in the Spirit would understand that to be legalism, adding to the Gospel message and the law of liberty for worshiping God. Likewise, if church leadership required congregant members to stand for the entire service, or jump on a

pogo stick, biblically led churches operating in the Spirit would understand that to be adding to the laws of God for His Church; in any such scenario, if any church, through actions or words, displays the following message, then they are teaching and believing legalism: "Evidence of salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone is not enough to worship here; you must do X and Y to worship with us in the Spirit and the name of Christ".

Christians with proper understanding of these realities would rightly advise brothers and sisters to ignore and disobey such laws, being not from God and an affront to His perfect law of liberty. Christians with understanding ought to also approach the leadership of the church teaching such legalism and rebuke them for adding to the Word of God; ultimately God would righteously chastise and discipline such leadership for their error if they did not repent (and if they are truly His children whom He promises to discipline (Hebrews 12:7-8)), and congregant members ought rightfully consider leaving and pulling their support from such a church if repeated attempts to love and return it to worshiping in Spirit and truth fail; such would be part of God's chastisement for failure to repent, just as God commands as the final step in Church discipline, except in this instance it's discipline for leaders who have gone astray and aren't repenting; certainly congregant members can, and should, if possible, joyfully return if repentance is found.

If not for an understanding of the nature of sin, one would be beyond bewilderment and astonishment to suppose that a church which typically would correctly identify the aforementioned scenario as a matter of sin by the church's leadership, could then itself turn around and saddle their own congregation with laws regarding wearing of masks and registration to attend the gathering of the body of Christ. How truly shameful and sorrowful it is that God's own institution of the Church, tasked with proclaiming and preserving the meaning of liberty, would fervently and zealously defend its own outright legalism on the body of Christ. What great sin it is that God's saints and leaders of His Church would add to His laws under the guise and defense of being loving towards neighbors, when in fact they have defiled God's perfect law of liberty for His saints, laid new law and prohibitions on believers in order to worship Him, have implicated believers of sin for operating in duty and defense of liberty, have pushed sheep under their spiritual care out from their flock, and have taught that loving neighbors as ourselves means to impose and restrict our neighbor's liberties under the guise of conscience, self-preservation, or blind obedience to government which is operating outside of its jurisdiction for defense of liberty, and being a terror to good conduct, not to bad. No argument of "love to neighbor" is just or biblically correct when it results in the perversion of God's law of liberty for His Church, resulting in legalism and the effective excommunication of members of the body for operating in duty for the defense of liberty.

No more ought need to be said regarding this legalism which currently exists such that it should immediately be removed from any congregations on which it still lies in the wake of Covid-19; as per liberty and the jurisdiction of conscience discussed herein, it should be abundantly clear that there is no ground to stand on which any charge or claim may be made to defend Christians, supposedly being weak in conscience, as the ones to whom church services and practices should be catered and made appeasible. Wearing a mask to Church has nothing to do with ceremonial and sacrificial laws of the old covenant, is no matter of liberty such that charges of sin can be made on the grounds of offended consciences or being stumbling blocks, and, when mandated on the whole body of a church, hinders, tarnishes, and makes unintelligible the display of freedom and liberty that comes with the Gospel message by directly veiling the sharing of joy which comes with it. By these truths alone, no further discussion of the matter should be necessary or warranted to induce immediate removal of all Covid-19 restrictions enforced by Church leadership on congregations, but lest any appeal and defense be left untouched, let us finally examine the meaning of “love your neighbor as yourself”, the second greatest commandment with which Jesus directly cites Leviticus 19:9-18, a passage titled by the ESV bible as “Love Your Neighbor As Yourself”, so that we will see there is no love of God at all in such mandates of legalism.

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” - Galatians 5:13

Love Your Neighbor As Yourself

In Leviticus 19 we see a few key verses which instruct us to what loving our neighbors means according to God in this context and scenarios:

““You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired worker shall not remain with you all night until the morning. You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the Lord. “You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor: I am the Lord.” - Leviticus 19:13-16

Three key components of what loving our neighbors means are: 1) we do not oppress or rob them, 2) we do no injustice by un-righteously judging them, and 3) we do not stand up against their life. Within the jurisdiction and context of the Church, to

un-righteously judge or neighbors is to judge them for evil over matters of conscience which are rightfully and only within God's jurisdiction, because such matters of conscience, which don't concern laws of the old covenant, are matters of the heart which only the Lord knows; to pass such judgement outside the bounds of jurisdiction of the Church is a gross injustice and no act of love on the part of any saint. Only in a scenario where witnesses are able to confirm maliciousness on the part of a saint, such as contracting Covid-19 and then intentionally visiting the elderly in their homes to cough on them, does a matter of liberty and conscience then enter the civil and spiritual jurisdictions of liberty from the Church and State.

If however, a saint, acting in duty and defense of liberty, seeks to rightly attend a gathering of the body of Christ over which God's perfect law of liberty reigns, it would be a gross sin and injustice, and no act of love, to deny them entrance to the body, implicating them as the ones committing an injustice and not showing love; such is to make a judgement reserved only for God in His jurisdiction over the heart. To extend the prior example to exemplify such matters of the heart, if a saint had contracted Covid-19 and their dying grandfather requested to see him fully knowing that he may contract the virus from him, if done in right heart before the Lord, there would be no sin guilt or evil done at all as long as the meeting took place in a manner which would not pose un-necessary risk or harm to other neighbors; meaning, the meeting should not take place in a nursing home with other at risk elderly who have no other choice to protect and isolate themselves, nor should the grandparent return to one until after a period of isolation, lest they be negligent and reckless with the other nursing home patient's lives (such an example does not simultaneously support the un-equivocal lockdowns and isolation that occurred in many nursing homes throughout the pandemic; such is a separate issue to be addressed).

To speak briefly on negligence as it relates to topics herein, though the topic warrants a full and lengthy discussion alone, a key component of determining negligent behaviour deals with the accused party's knowledge and conscience regarding the actions they are accused of being negligent in. By way of example, acting in "good faith" is a common legal protection for individuals who take an action which, though they thought it was the good and right action to take at the time, actually resulted in more harm to the person they were seeking to help. If a person finds another person laying face down, incapacitated on the ground and rolls them over to check their breathing, not knowing that they have a spinal injury and that in rolling them over they have just caused a greater injury to occur, though they have caused greater harm to the individual they are still understood to have been acting in "good faith" and are not guilty of any negligence.

Case in point, [as commonly understood in the legal field](#), and as displayed in the “good faith” example, determining negligence must take into account the acting parties knowledge of harm that may come to their neighbors, how severe that harm is, and what the burden of preventing that harm would be, amongst other considerations of prudence. Therefore, it can be stated simply and conclusively now that when the burden of preventing the transmission of a virus amongst the voluntary public gathering of the Church is that legalism must be adopted in order for members of the body of Christ to worship in a gathering, or to shut the gathering down entirely, the burden of doing so is beyond consideration because it is immoral and a sin to do so in the eyes of God, as well as the omission of Church duties. Not only this, but when 20-30% of individuals who contract Covid-19 will never show symptoms of having the virus, and when the great, overwhelming majority of the population of both the Church and its neighbors will survive contracting Covid-19, attending such a voluntary public gathering with no evidence of symptoms, and even with knowledge of having been near/ in contact with someone who did, in no way implicates or makes guilty said person for acting in negligence or lack of prudence.

When a person has no evidence that they are sick, nor knowledge that convicts their conscience of just duty, they cannot be justly implicated of any evil or wrong doing; such would be gross injustice against the laws of God which requires evidence on the grounds of two or three witnesses, both in matters of civil and spiritual liberty. The logical extension of such thinking, that individuals can be held guilty of negligence or recklessness over a matter that they themselves have no evidence of within them, means that every year, each person on the planet is liable and guilty for negligence and recklessness in deaths of many elderly because they unknowingly pass around the common flu virus with their hands from touching doors or faucets, such that it made its way to an elderly person who died from it; truly, such thinking is no example of Godly justice, logic, or reason. By the same use of evil, illogical, and un-reasoned thinking, many are implicating their neighbors of “implicit” or “unconscious” bias in their actions towards their neighbors, having allegedly somehow committed some un-quantifiable ([the test are literally scientifically invalid](#)), unidentifiable evil and racial injustice against their neighbors; such accusations of injustice are conjured up without any proof or evidence as to how much, where, and when any such bias has been used, which is because no such evidence does or can exist, rightfully making it only a matter of the heart and God’s jurisdiction. The lack of evidence, and therefore the gross injustice of the entire claim, is the very fuel for the spread of such an idea through a society and Church body that knows not the meaning of justice. Truly, how great a sin and sorrowful a situation it is when the understanding of true, Godly justice is lost on the Church, the very institution that is supposed to understand and defend it! (Leviticus 19:11-16, 1 Corinthians 6:1-11)

Therefore in regards to duty, it is a gross injustice, and therefore sin and evil, against members of Christ's body to implicate them of evil and guilt for not showing love to their neighbors for desiring not to wear a mask to church; they are in fact the very ones defending God's perfect law of liberty for their neighbors and acting in duty. On top of this, to mandate and strap members of the body down with laws and requirements which God has not given for gathering with the Church, as well as to teach and display such oppression to our worldly neighbors and government which are rampantly operating unjustly, is to oppress and rob neighbors of the civil component of God's perfect law of liberty given to them, and is to tarnish and pervert the display of spiritual liberty in Christ which is to come from the Church; to do such is to "oppress" and "rob" our brothers, sisters, and neighbors of God's perfect law for them.

Finally, as stated in Leviticus 19, loving our neighbors means not standing up against their life; this command is preceded by a command to not go around slandering our neighbors, as well as commands about acting justly towards them. Therefore, this statement is rightfully understood within context as not unjustly testifying against our neighbors if they are innocent, so as to destroy their name and livelihood, which may also come by slandering and defamation of their name. Though loving our neighbors also certainly means not stealing their life (murder) as stated in the 7th commandment, and it means that we are to justly defend and stand up for their life when and where duty calls, as discussed in Leviticus 19, it does not mean that love towards our neighbors is to act such that life is never lost through actions in liberty; acts of duty in warfare, just capital punishment, and self defense are simple examples of this truth.

The stated commands do not mean that we shall never justly testify against a criminal who may have committed a crime for which they will receive the death penalty (which Paul affirms as just punishment by government in Acts 25:11), and it does not mean that loving our neighbors is to add to God's perfect law of liberty, which is the duty of the Church to display and defend, such that their desires to operate both in liberty and self-preservation can be made possible at the oppression of their brother and sisters liberty. Truly, this is the current state of many churches which are legalistically adding laws to the body of Christ such that members who desire to act both in self-preservation and liberty are enabled to do so by crushing the duty and displays of faith of the rest of the body. If a member of the body feels the need to act in self-preservation, then let them flee and do so in a way that does not tarnish or cause division within the Church; let the leadership and congregants of a church seek to serve, love, and gather with such individuals in a manner that does not tarnish liberty and crush duty, separate from corporate worship in private gathering and community. No man has any rightful claim before God to demand that His perfect law of liberty for creation be oppressed and

taken from another man on the individual grounds of self preservation over that which is not evil or wrong, especially not within the jurisdiction of the Church or matters of conscience and duty under God's jurisdiction.

While private businesses and institutions may, in their own act of liberty and jurisdiction of their private business, require a mask for attendance or admission, such is not a right from God for the leadership or members of a church to hinder displays of faith and the preservation of liberty, the very instituted purposes of their existence, from within. The church is not a civil government, social club, or private business through which members and leadership can agree or demand that liberties be given up; the Church is wholly instituted to defend the perfect law of liberty as given to man by God under His authority alone, a truly inalienable right. If all private, secular, and government institutions were to abandon liberty and place rules and laws on all members and employees, the Church should be the remaining city on a hill, shining its light of liberty forth until either Christ returns or the other institutions are redeemed.

A Christian attending church without a mask can rightfully claim they are doing their duty to their neighbor because they are being jealous for and defending God's perfect law liberty, as it should be displayed by the Church, as should be handled within the Church, and as it should be proclaimed to the world by the Church. Attending Church with a mask on cannot rightfully be labeled as a matter of duty to neighbors because our neighbors have no right or claim to demand that an institution of liberty give up liberty, saddling it with laws which God has not placed as boundaries of liberty, so that they may attend in both their desires of liberty and acts of self preservation. If an at-risk individual decides in faith and a sense of duty to attend a voluntary gathering of the Church, it is no matter of love or duty that the rest of the body should cater to them and stifle God's law of liberty for the rest of the body; to advocate such is to misunderstand God Himself, His love, and His law of liberty. If a saint is visiting the elderly in their own home per a request, then certainly wearing a mask becomes a matter of love because it is in the privacy of one's home and not a God instituted, voluntary place of open gathering and duty fulfillment, which is what the gathering of the body of Christ is to be. To add to God's boundaries of liberty for the Church implicates believers who are dutifully defending liberty of committing evil for not following the laws, which is truly unjust and unloving. To do so is to cause detriment to our neighbors within the church, which is to sin.

If a person desires to come to church who is at risk for sickness and wears a mask, they do so in the faith that they have between themselves and the Lord, thinking it their duty to act in sensibility for their own life, in faith that the mask will help them, and in a sense of duty that it is better that they worship with the body, even with a mask on. It is

possibly a display of faith for such a person to walk into a church and continue to worship, and they should be welcomed and esteemed if it is being done truly in faith. Such an action could either be sin or faith depending on the disposition of their heart to the Lord, and whether they are truly operating in duty and faith, or if they are being careless with their life and tempting God; it is His jurisdiction, not ours. However, if they do so in a manner that judges the rest of the congregation for not conforming to them in their act of liberty, self preservation, and faith, then they do so in a manner that is divisive, judgemental, and truly robbing the unity of the body centered on liberty.

If a person who is not sick or at risk for great harm wears a mask to church, being mistaken that they are acting in any sense of definable biblical duty to neighbors, they must do so in the faith that they have and not be divisive or quarrelling over the matter, causing a detriment to those who would come and worship in liberty; let them wear the mask and glorify God in their heart in faith, though it be of no true duty or help or love to their neighbors. If brothers or sisters whom may be in attendance are at such risk for harm from contracting pestilence, or care for individuals who would be at such risk, they ought not be in attendance of a venue defined by liberty unless they are able to have someone substitute for their duties when they get sick, or unless they are doing so in duty and in faith, for which they are then trusting God for their health and protection, not in demands that everyone else wear masks; they must also be prepared to act godly and lovingly by taking appropriate actions if and when they do get sick. Such situations are perfect scenarios for Church leadership and congregant members to display true Spirit filled love for brothers and sisters by supplementing their needed absence from the public gathering with private, controlled fellowship and care through a number of possible arrangements and scenarios. We all ought endeavour that those who would wear masks in a false sense of love and duty should learn quickly what is God's perfect law of liberty, by lovingly encouraging them and providing proper teaching of liberty from the pulpit so that they may join the body in defense and shining forth of liberty. If though, they are divisive and causing quarrels by judging others who don't wear masks, thereby seeking to place their conscience on them, a conscience which seeks to obey laws never placed on it by God, therefore practicing legalism, let them be rebuked and silenced from such controversy.

The Perfect Law of Liberty

As stated by God Himself, His law of liberty is "perfect"; perfect means that it is holy, representing Christ Himself; perfect means that there is no appeal or argument that can stand against it; perfect means that there is no alternative to it; perfect means that it shall not be changed, added to, or tarnished; perfect means that it stands even when disobeyed; God's perfect law of liberty stands come hell or high water.

It is without doubt that the display of God's perfect law of liberty is being abandoned in all jurisdictions, driven and encouraged by those in His Church whom use a rod of oppression and injustice on their own flocks, claiming jurisdiction where they have it not, enabling the state to claim jurisdiction where they have it not, and implicating evil and injustice on saints where there is none so far as any know. The Church is the last line of defense of liberty aside from providential acts of God, and how tragic that it is being tossed away because of worldly understandings of justice and love, sinful cowardice, or, in the best case, naive confusion which, though well-meaning, is still sinful; let us all pray that God will show mercy and grace, restoring His shepherds to truth, repentance, and the love of the Spirit, which loves liberty, such that perfect liberty is not trampled under sin that grace may abound, and so that God's saints are not returned again to the bondage of law. Let it be in a true spirit of love and celebration that congregants and saints welcome and rejoice, as if it were the return of a prodigal son, over any shepherds who would find their eyes opened and hearts made repentant to having been walking in such sin; let the sheep eagerly run back to loving fellowship with such shepherds amongst the other sheep of the fold.

God instituted His Church for the very purposes of showing liberty to a world that knows it not; therefore, let us be not only hearers, but doers; let us teach, proclaim, enforce, and defend liberty just as we pray when we say, "Your kingdom come your will be done". God's Will for His creation is that His kingdom of liberty reign. Let none of us stand in the way or oppose liberty, lest we die; let us instead embody the true depth, zeal, and fervency behind the saying, "give me liberty, or give me death", which only a Christian can fully know. Let us preach the good news of the Gospel, a message of pure liberty, pointing us all to our one and only savior, Jesus Christ, the pure man of liberty.

"He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul,
But he who is careless of conduct will die." - Proverbs 19:16

"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." - James 2:12

Further Readings:

The Liberty Book by John Bona and Don Schanzenbach

Slaying Leviathan by Glenn Sunshine

Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos by Junius Brutus

Resistance to Tyrants: Romans 13 and the Christian Duty to Oppose Wicked Rulers by Gordan Runyan

[The Doctrine of Lesser Magistrates](#), [Martin Luther's Beerwolf Theory](#), [Resistance Theory](#), [Destructive Influence of Pietism](#)