
Christian Liberty in Daily Life

**To Be or Not To Be
(A Liberty Issue)?**

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Biblical Foundations

- Romans 14
- 1 Corinthians 8
- 1 Corinthians 10
- Galatians 5
- Colossians 2

The basic theology of Christian Liberty is summarized in Chapter 20 of the Westminster Confession of Faith

Questions We've Answered

-  What is the definition and purpose of Christian Liberty?



Definition Reviewed

- **Christian Liberty:** The condition of being able to act in any desired way to glorify God without biblical hindrance or restraint; faculty or power to do as one likes to glorify God.

Therefore, whether you eat or drink,
or whatever you do, do all to the
glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31


When Christian Liberty Applies

- When God has neither forbidden nor required particular behavior, then Christian liberty applies.
 - So long as we operate within the bounds established by Scripture, we are able to glorify God by doing what we want to do.
 - We'll call any issue to which Christian liberty applies a Christian liberty issue.
 - That is, something is a liberty issue whenever God, through the Scripture, does not reduce to one the number of God-glorifying choices available to His people.
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Convenient Labels

- **Libertarian** — someone who has a correct understanding of the Biblical teaching on Christian liberty.
 - ▶ The Bible is just right.
 - **Libertine** — someone who seeks to remove Biblical restrictions on Christian liberty.
 - ▶ The Bible is too long.
 - **Legalist** — someone who seeks to place non-Biblical restrictions on Christian liberty.
 - ▶ The Bible is too short.
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Questions We'll Try to Answer

-  What is the definition and purpose of Christian Liberty?
 - How do I recognize whether something is a liberty issue?
 - How do I decide what to do for a given liberty issue?
 - What do I do when others disagree with me about liberty issues?
 - Does respect for liberty negate the pursuit of wisdom?
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**To Be
or
Not To Be
(A Liberty Issue)?**

First Question to Ask

- Does the Scripture *explicitly* or by *good and necessary consequence* require particular behavior?
 - ▶ If so, then the issue is not a liberty issue



Not To Be (resolved by Question 1)

- My husband is ugly. May I divorce him?
 - My employer doesn't pay me well. May I steal property from him?
 - Our music is dull. May I stop attending worship?
 - My brother-in-law is really, really annoying. May I have him killed?
 - My wife is smarter than I am. May she be the leader of the household?
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First Question to Ask

- Does the Scripture *explicitly* or by *good and necessary consequence* require particular behavior?
 - ▶ If so, then the issue is not a liberty issue

Example that this question does not resolve:

Acceptable ways to discipline children

Second Question to Ask

- Does *applying relevant Scriptural principles* require particular behavior?
 - ▶ If so, then the issue is not a liberty issue



Second Question to Ask

- Does *applying relevant Scriptural principles* require particular behavior?
 - ▶ If so, then the issue is not a liberty issue

Derived Questions

- What are the Scriptural principles that are relevant to the issue at hand?
 - How do I properly apply these principles?
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Some Possible Principles

- **Chief End Principle:** *Do that which gives glory to God*
 - ▶ 1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 14:7-8; Colossians 3:17; ...
 - **Edification Principle:** *Do that which edifies others*
 - ▶ Romans 14:19-21; 1 Corinthians 10:23; Romans 15:2; ...
 - **Providence Principle:** *Consider your abilities, interests, and circumstances*
 - ▶ Romans 8:28; Esther 4:14; ...
 - **Authority Principle:** *Give deference to those God has placed in authority over you; accept responsibility for those in submission to you*
 - ▶ Ephesians 5:22-6:6; 1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:5...
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Some Possible Principles - 2

- **Counsel Principle:** *Seek the counsel of fellow believers*
 - ▶ Proverbs 12:15; Proverbs 13:20; ...
- **Diligence Principle:** *Do all things to the best of your ability*
 - ▶ Proverbs 6:6-11; Proverbs 20:4; Colossians 3:23...
- **Holding Principle:** *Be convinced that any action you are considering is not sin*
 - ▶ Romans 14:14, 23; ...
- ...






Recognizing Liberty Issues

- Does the Scripture *explicitly* or by *good and necessary consequence* require particular behavior?
 - ▶ If so, then the issue is not a liberty issue
 - ▶ If not, then ask the next question
 - Does *applying relevant Scriptural principles* require particular behavior?
 - ▶ If so, then the issue is not a liberty issue
 - ▶ If not, then apply the relevant principles to determine the bounds of your liberty
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Difficulties May Arise Because We ...

- Misunderstand Scripture
 - Are too lazy to search for the truth
 - Think everyone else is just like us
 - Think we are better than everyone else
 - Too easily believe what our heros tell us
 - ...
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Questions We're Trying to Answer

-  What is the definition and purpose of Christian Liberty?
 -  How do I recognize whether something is a liberty issue?
 -  How do I decide what to do for a given liberty issue?
 - What do I do when others disagree with me about liberty issues?
 - Does respect for liberty negate the pursuit of wisdom?
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**Notes and audio will be
available (*deo volente*)
within a couple of days at:**

<http://www.logicteacher.com/liberty/>
