

---

# **Christian Liberty in Daily Life**

**Beware Of Entrance to a Quarrel**

C. Michael Holloway

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

[liberty@logicteacher.com](mailto:liberty@logicteacher.com)

---

---

# Where We Stand

- ✓ ■ 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?
-

---

## 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

---

---

# 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
-

---

# Where We Stand

- ✓ ■ 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?
-

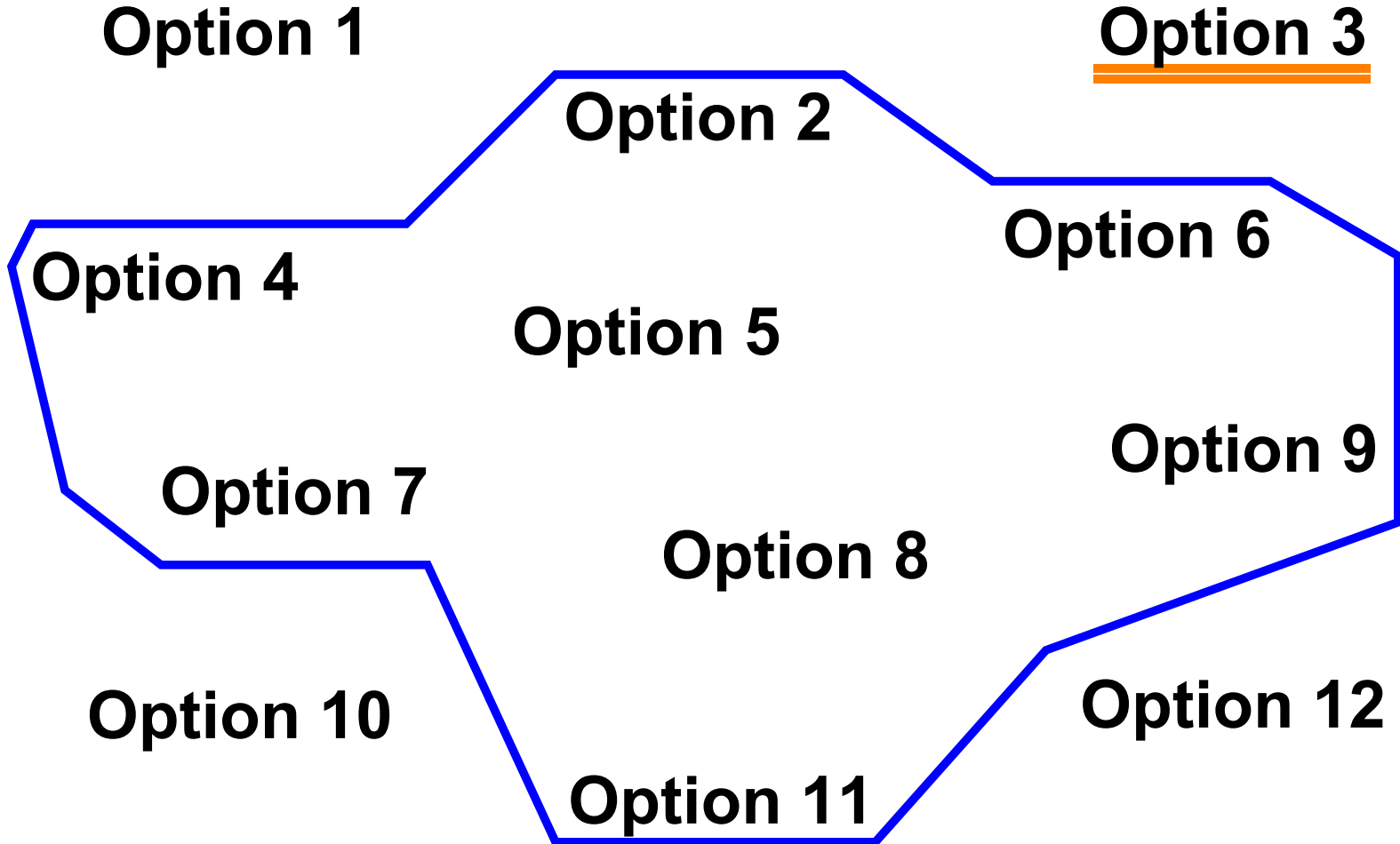
---

# Individual Disagreements

- Major disagreements between two people are usually about **actual choices**, not theoretical bounds of liberty.
    - ▶ Two people who make the same choice are unlikely to have any real conflict between them, even if they differ about the bounds of liberty.
    - ▶ So, we'll ignore disagreements about bounds alone.
  - Disagreements about actual choices may arise when one person thinks another is
    - ▶ **Sinning** (that is, choosing outside the bounds of liberty);  
or
    - ▶ **Being unwise** (that is, choosing within the bounds of liberty, but not wisely).
-

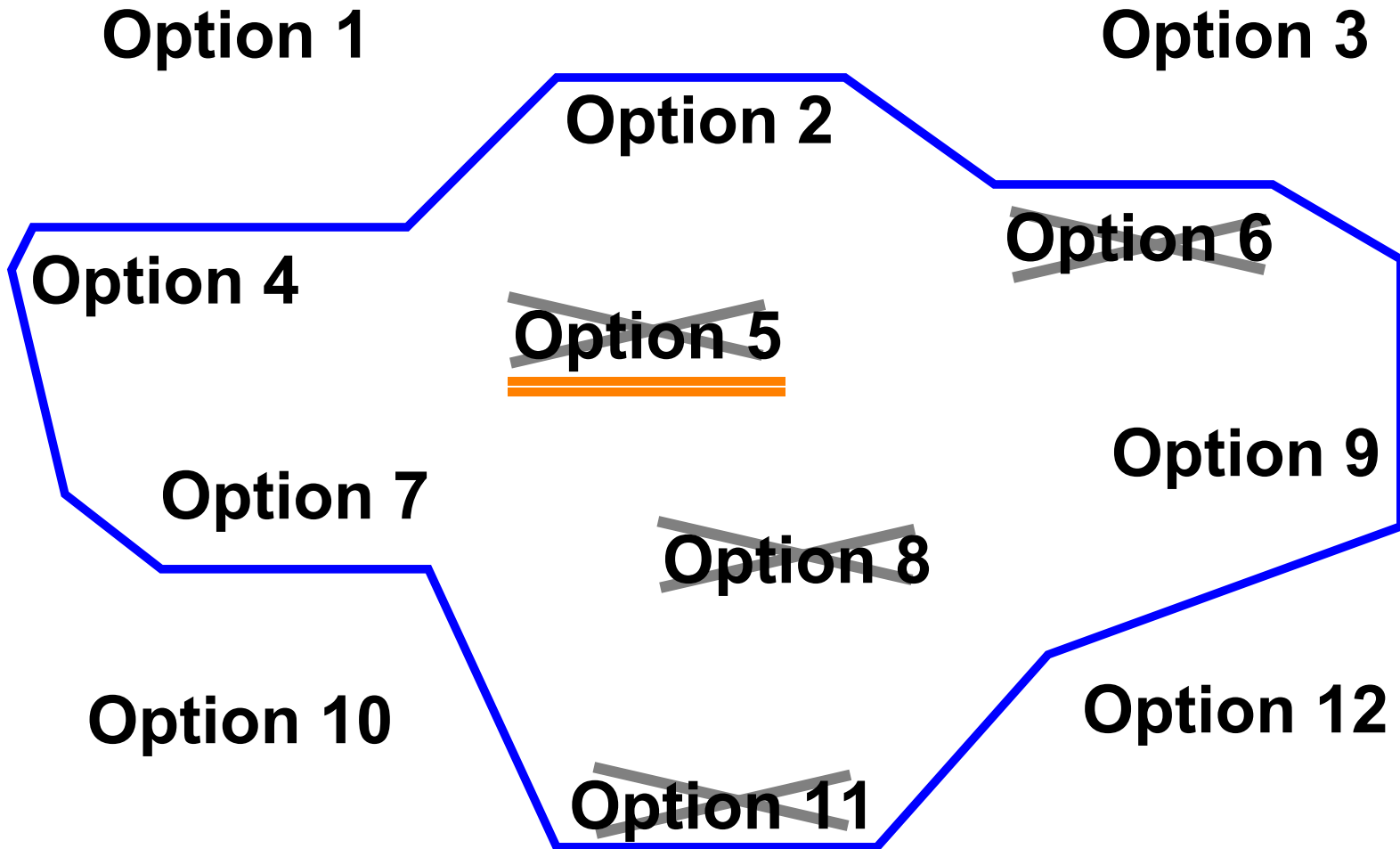
---

# Outside the Bounds: Sin



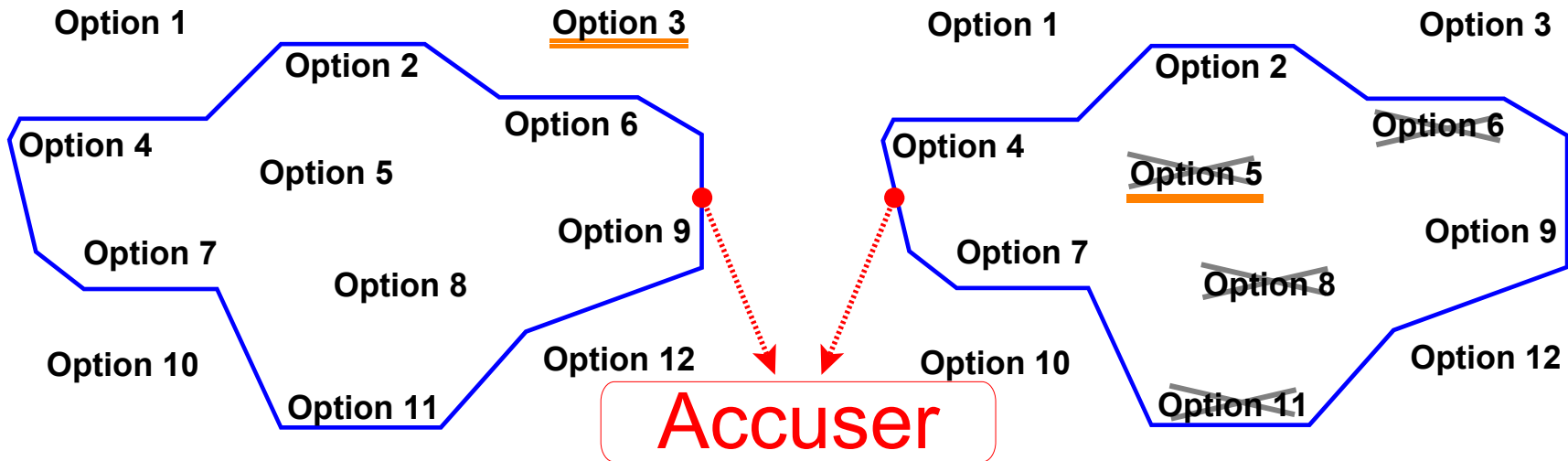
---

# Within the Bounds: Unwise

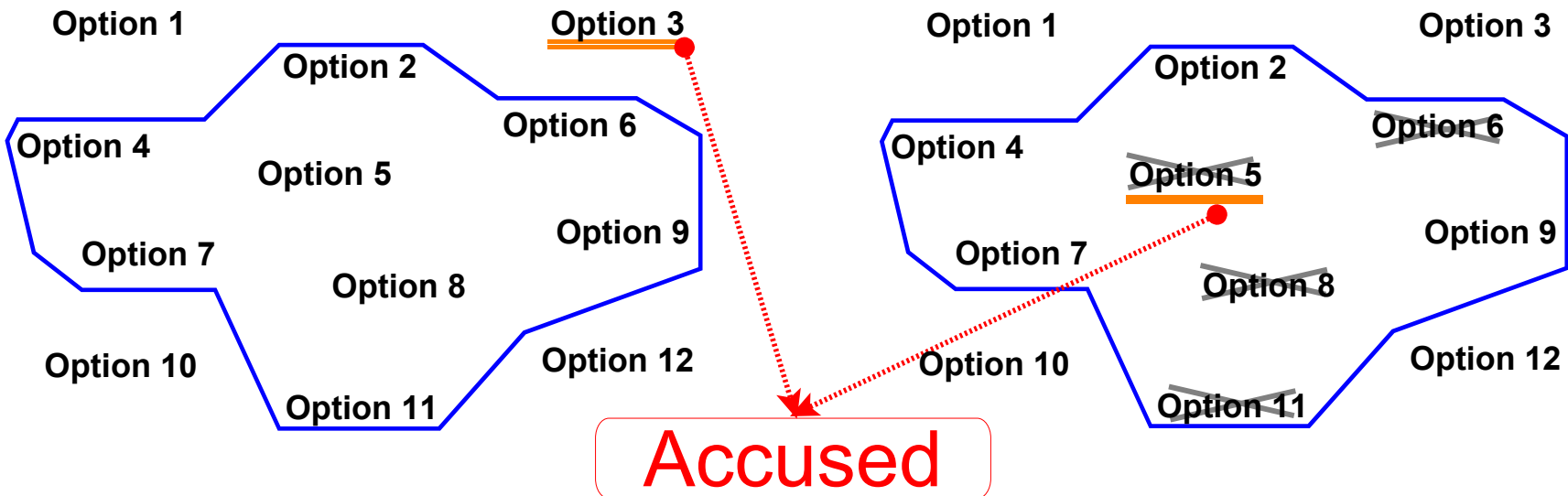
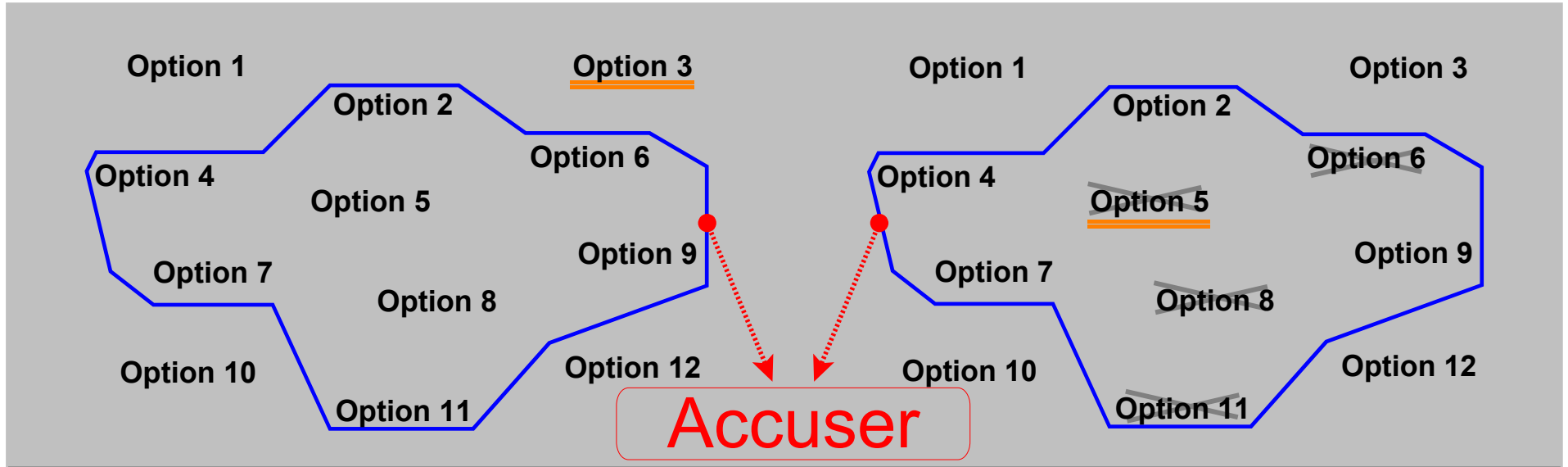


---

# Where Are You?



# Where Are You?



---

# You Are the Accuser (Sin)

## ■ You may ignore it.

- ▶ **1 Peter 4:8** — *And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."*
- ▶ **Proverbs 19:11** — *The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, And his glory is to overlook a transgression.*

## ■ You may follow Scriptural guidelines for confrontation.

- ▶ **Matthew 18:15-17** — *“And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that **BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED.** And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer.”*
-

---

## **Possible Outcomes of Initial Confrontation**

- He may convince you that his choice is not outside the bounds of liberty.
  - You may convince him that his choice is outside the bounds of liberty, and he repents.
  - He may continue to believe that his choice is acceptable, while you continue to believe it is not.
-

---

## Possible Outcomes of Initial Confrontation

- He may convince you that his choice is not outside the bounds of liberty.
  - You may convince him that his choice is outside the bounds of liberty, and he repents.
  - He may continue to believe that his choice is acceptable, while you continue to believe it is not.
    - Ignore now
    - Escalate to next step in Matthew 18
-

---

# You Are the Accuser (Unwise)

- You may ignore it.
- You may discuss it with him.



---

# You Are the Accuser (Unwise)

- You may ignore it.
  - You may discuss it with the person.
    - ▶ Be clear that you are not claiming sin.
    - ▶ Briefly express your concern.
    - ▶ Allow him to explain the reasoning that led to the choice.
    - ▶ Ask questions to be sure you understand the reasoning.
    - ▶ If, after the explanation, you still believe the decision was unwise, give the reasons for your belief.
    - ▶ Have as many discussions as the two of you together think are appropriate, then let it drop.
-

---

# You Are the Accused (Sin or Unwise)

- On first glance, the Bible seems to give contradictory guidance about what to do.

- ▶ Romans 14 — Give in.

{15} Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died. {16} Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil; .... {20} Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense. {21} It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.

- ▶ Colossians 2 — Don't give in.

{16} So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, {17} which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. ... {20} Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations; {21} "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle," {22} which all concern things which perish with the using; according to the commandments and doctrines of men? {23} These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

---

---

# A Resolution

- “Give in” applies when you might otherwise influence another to do something against his conscience.
  - ▶ Romans 14:14, 23
  - ▶ 1 Corinthians 8:9-13



---

# A Resolution

- “Give in” applies when you might otherwise influence another to do something against his conscience.
    - ▶ Romans 14:14, 23
    - ▶ 1 Corinthians 8:9-13
  - “Don’t give in” applies when others with narrow liberty bounds try to impose their narrow bounds on you.
    - ▶ Their liberty choices become rules of righteousness, which they seek to force others to follow.
    - ▶ There is no danger that your liberty choices will influence such people to violate their consciences.
-

---

# Thus Says The Lord?

- We ought not underestimate the damage that is done when believers falsely assert, “Thus says the Lord.”
    - Internal damage
      - ▶ Local church conflict and splits
      - ▶ Unnecessary guilt
      - ▶ Skeptical children
    - External damage
      - ▶ Misrepresenting God’s truth to the world
      - ▶ Lost opportunities to witness
      - ▶ Seeming support for non-believers’ prejudices
-

---

# Concluding Remarks - 1

- You may be as strict as you want in your own liberty choices, so long as you do not ...
  - ▶ ... claim that your choices are mandated by God, without strong Scriptural & historical support for the claim.
  - ▶ ... make conformance to your choices a condition for fellowship.



---

## Concluding Remarks - 2

- You may be as loose as you want in your own liberty choices, so long as you do not ...
  - ▶ ... ignore the clear teaching of Scripture against your choices .
  - ▶ ... influence others to violate their consciences.



---

## Concluding Remarks - 3

“Whatever you do,  
do all to the glory of God.”

---

---

# We're Done

- ✓ ■ 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?
-

---

**Notes and audio will be  
available (*deo volente*)  
within a couple of days at:**

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

---