

**“AIMING HIGHER
THAN THE LAW OF LIBERTY”**
1 Corinthians 6:12

INTRODUCTION

The Corinthians lived for experiences without restrictions. The Greek philosophers promoted a lifestyle with a devotion to pleasure and comfort. Paul recognized that this was not biblical. Later in Corinthians he stated: **“All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify.” 1 Corinthians 10:23** NKJV. Paul does not necessarily address sin issues, but any activities of life that will either build us up or tear us down.

WHAT ARE “ALL THINGS”?

“All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” 1 Corinthians 6:12 NKJV. In his writing prior to this verse, Paul informed the church to not tolerate wrong, sinful acts. He laid a clear line between Heaven/hell; saved/unsaved; righteousness/unrighteousness. (He certainly doesn't mean you can do *anything!*)

With other renderings of this verse, the word **helpful** is: KJV – expedient, ESV – helpful, NASB – profitable, NIV – beneficial.

PAUL'S MENTALITY

Paul's approach to life has changed since he met Jesus. He gives us a few snapshots such as “...**forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**” Phil. 3:13, 14 NKJV. **“Run in such a way that you may obtain it (the prize). But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection...” 1 Corinthians 9:24, 25** NKJV.

TWO CAMPS

There are two camps in Christianity, the Legalist camp and Libertine camp. If the scripture says “no”, then it isn't legalism. The Pharisees added to the scripture. Some want to right every wrong. They have a passion, but go into areas where the scripture doesn't specify, usually looking to accuse other people. Legalists seem to base their relationship to God strictly on obedience. This is not the best relationship, because He wants our relationship to be based on love.

In the Libertine camp, they enjoy freedom so much that they revel in it. It's as if freedom is the ultimate goal. They interpret any kind of restriction or restraint as legalist. Paul is for liberty, but not as a libertine. In Acts 15 he did not want the law imposed on the Gentile church. His letters, by the Holy Spirit, are filled with many spiritual disciplines.

CONSIDER

How do we spend our time in our liberty? It's obvious that sinful activity is wrong, but what about “gray areas”, or things that are not wrong in and of themselves. Things such as: watching TV, spending time on social media, playing games, participating in hobbies, or reading. We need to evaluate our activities. Are they beneficial? Do they edify or build up? Do they control us? If we are honest, we may find that some of these things are out of order! What would we change? Let's set them in the right balance so we can grow spiritually.

Another aspect to think about is, do our liberties stumble others? We may have the right to be involved in certain activities, but by doing so, do we stumble a weak brother or sister? Would our participation in a particular activity edify others? Out of love, we must think of *them!* **Romans 13:8.**

Are you bothered by the liberties that others take? Part of our maturing process is to not judge others for the liberties that *they* exercise. Jesus is the judge! **Romans 14:10-13.**

Our goal is to have a deeper, more meaningful relationship with Jesus. Let's aim high!

PRAY

- for the team going to help with the church in Ireland.
- for the Pastors' Conference in September. Rest and encouragement for those who are in the battle.
- for Calvary Chapel Academy and the School of Ministry. May their students fall in love with You!
- for the Women's Retreat, “The Way Home”. May there be a release of burdens and joy for the oppressed.