

Messy

Part Eleven: *disciplined servant*

July 17, 2022

Last Sunday we looked at 1 Corinthians chapter eight where Paul teaches Christians how to handle gray areas, or actions not directly forbidden in Scripture. At the end of chapter eight, Paul gives us the universal principle for Christian liberty. He says we are to not do anything that could cause another Christian to sin. *After he gives the universal principle for exercising Christian liberty...*

- **In chapter nine, Paul illustrates the principle for Christian liberty.**

1st - Paul gives some reasons why he had the right to be supported by the Corinthians. Vs 1-14

Paul reminds the Corinthians that he is an apostle, and it was through his ministry that they came to Christ. Paul also shows the Corinthians that all workers deserve to get paid. He had the right to ask for support for both God's Law and God's Son teach that Christians are to offer support to those who minister to them.

2nd - Paul gives some reasons why he refused to accept support from the Corinthian church. Vs. 15-23

Paul was willing to give up his right to be supported, and he was willing to modify his eating, his dress, his speech, and his actions to lead different types of people to Christ. The primary purpose of Paul's not taking full advantage of his Christian liberty was so he could share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with everyone around him.

3rd - Paul explains that a Christian must be disciplined to give up his rights for others. Vs. 24-27

Paul tells Christians they must be disciplined like an athlete to give up their rights for others. Liberty cannot be limited without self-control.

What does a Christian need to do to run the race God has set before them?

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up." (Hebrews 12:1-3, NLT)

1. A Christian must strip off everything that is hindering them from doing what God has called them to do.

Christians must throw off anything that hinders them from knowing Jesus, growing to be like Jesus, and showing Jesus to the world. We must do more than choose between what is good and what is bad for us. We must choose between the better and the best.

2. A Christian must keep their eyes on Jesus.

Jesus is "the author [originator] and finisher of our faith." We looked to Him for salvation and we must look to Him for wisdom, strength, and resources as we step through life. Keeping your eyes on Jesus will give you the endurance to keep running until the day He calls you home to Heaven.

Here's the lesson for today...

A Christian must exercise self-control to accomplish what God wants them to accomplish.