

Let It Be

1 Corinthians 10:23 – 11:4



~ Is it a sin for you to go to church? If you aren't sitting down – I wouldn't read this report. We're in the middle of a multiple report study on "*Christian liberties*" – that is, carnal issues – "*gray areas*" of the law; laws for Christian conduct that aren't explicitly called-out in the Bible. Paul says we're free to do many questionable things; and if he wanted go to the races, such as the Olympic Games in his day, for example, then he would go. I think he did go to some of the great athletic events because he uses so many metaphors involving sports and racing. Well, Paul also knew it probably wasn't expedient that he go to the races; because it might hurt or harm some other weaker believers' faith.

I think Paul may have done many other things that did *NOT* build him up in the faith, too. We all have those things in our lives. Me, personally, I played football in school, and I loved it. However, I don't want to go watch some group of men play a game of football; especially when they're being paid obscene money to do it. However, there is a book that says, "*...anything a preacher or teacher can use in his ministry and any experience of where he goes and what he sees is valid; because his total life is his ministry. Everything must be grist for his mill.*" If you can't take your *ENTIRE* life into the pulpit – don't be in a pulpit. If you cannot translate your own life into the Word of God, quite frankly, I wouldn't even talk about it – I would study to be quiet and listen....

X

²³ All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

²⁴ Let no man seek his own, but every man another's welfare.

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~ The best thing we can do in our lives today is that which God instructs through Paul the apostle in verse twenty-four. Let's ask ourselves: how are we doing with that? We have a tremendous liberty as Christians, and we aren't pinned down by *ANY* type of legality. We aren't circumscribed by strict rules; but our liberty is limited by *LOVE*! We're talking about the things we want to do in our life to influence and affect other people in our world and lives....

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake:

~ See, friends, we can enjoy the produce of God's creation. His creation brings us wonderful herbs, fruits, meats and beautiful sights, scents and scenery. *ALL THINGS* are for believers to enjoy, by the way. It's all God's stuff anyways, friends – He has provided it. Sometimes, as strong believers, we aren't even to ask where the meat came from – we're told to just shut up and eat. It's a very practical illustration Paul is using. However, if the host volunteers the fact that this was bought down there at the temple; we are to refrain from partaking with that person. Not because there's a rule about it, and not because *YOU* think it's wrong, but because we desire to help our brother. That just happens to be the whole point.

It's important to learn and understand this Biblical rule of Christian liberty right now – it's critical, in fact. See, we have a testimony, friends. I *KNOW* I am harsh and brutal – but not with legalities. Whatever you do, frankly, please don't tell me, because I can't help you; and I really don't want to know. If you say we're brothers in Christ; that's good enough for me. Now, if that same weak and legal crowd could change *THEIR* motive to a *GENUINE* love approach, then they might have a lasting influence on others. Maybe you should read these last two paragraphs again very carefully, write them down, and then re-read what you wrote – it would do you well....

26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

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27 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

~ My friends, this is, perhaps, the single greatest principle on the face of this earth when *TESTING* what to do or not do in our Christian Liberty; but it is *NOT* a rule, either. Should you do this or that – can you do it for the glory of God? Some people should not go to church because they don't go for the glory of God. Frankly, they should stay home. That would be in the best interest of everyone involved because the criticism, gossip, judgment, harshness and bitterness in their hearts makes it a sin for them to attend church. You do *NOT* do everything in your life for the glory of God — and you know it. Well, glorifying Christ just happens to be the all-important thing in this universe. Maybe you want to write that down, too....

32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

~ Jews, Gentiles and the church are the three great divisions of man. Each have certain beliefs relative to diet, for instance. I wouldn't invite a Seventh Day Adventist over for a Saturday afternoon Honey baked ham. I just feel

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that would be the wrong thing to do. I don't want to give any offense with what I do. Now, I understand there are some Gentiles with some very peculiar notions today; I don't expect to please everyone — but I try. There is some way out, radical thinking these days, I understand. We don't want to give them any further reason to be suspicious of the church; and we don't want to offend them. Some people have asked why they were rebuked at a certain church for the way they dressed. Which group was wrong? Well, a public rebuke is wrong, and dressing a certain way is *VERY* inappropriate for the worship of God; so, they're both wrong!

You see, friends — here's what we so desperately need to learn: when we dispute the Christian liberty of others we are always wrong — *ALWAYS* — wrong; and God is always right. Are you offending someone with what you do or say or how you act? You're wrong. Our modern-day culture is totally absorbed with offensive behavior; from the comedy club to the football field. Let's get real, friends; one of these days the church of God will leave this God-given green earth. There will be a seemingly tremendous coming together of mankind in unity such as has not been realized previously — not even at the Tower of Babel. But that unity won't last long, because, it will be based on a lie....

³³ Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

XI

¹ Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

~ This is a perfect time to make a gratuitous Spiritual Safari advertisement: **WARNING**: I do *NOT* recommend you follow this expedition. That's right, friends. Let me suggest that you *never* even consider anything I say. That will be fine with me. Paul called for the Corinthian church to follow Him. I don't do that. I would never suggest you come along on this safari. What I would suggest is that you pray for and search out a sincere, honest, educated, daily, competent, proper, correct and complete, Spirit-filled and

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Spirit-led Bible study — and then listen to the Lord and do it. Of all the agendas I could be running in this so-called safari: I merely suggest you learn your Bible – but feel free to do so elsewhere....

² Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.

³ But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

~ Some people want to isolate the middle statement in verse three; but we have to take all three together here, my friend. If you don't take them all as a collective statement – guess what – you're wrong again. Look, there is authority for the sake of order to eliminate confusion. The real problem is: we have way too many chiefs, but not enough Indians. Everybody seems to think they are a leader – but I can't quite place my finger on the Scripture that says we're all to be leaders in a church. We have leadership training in some churches – and that's not Biblical at all.

Listen here: Paul says study to be quiet. That's always your best bet. I wish we could recognize who does tangible, physical work and who doesn't do anything in the church. We sure don't need all the counterfeit "*missionaries*" who produce nothing genuine for Christ. We need men who actually believe God and bring forth fruit in the spiritual realm for our church. Do you have that in your church? If yes: you better love it, guard it and nurture it with your life.

God is our direction, my beloved readers. The church body unites when Christ is the head of each person there. Until a man is mastered by Christ – he's not a normal Christian man. There are those who are mastered by the flesh, but we need to concentrate on being mastered by the Lord Jesus Christ. Augustine says, "*.... our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee, oh, God!*" This is an awesome vista of truth in our safari. There happens to be at least one man left in this world who is genuinely mastered by Christ.

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We've already covered the woman-to-man relationship on this Corinthian leg of our expedition. If a woman cannot look up to a Christian man who does the right things in his life, then she better not marry him – period! That also means a man who is willing to die for her, too, by the way. Any less standard is simply not Biblical. A woman should never marry unless she finds a man who can master her. Otherwise, it will be a total disaster. There will be trouble from day one, you may be absolutely sure.

The head of Christ is God. The Lord Jesus Christ saith, *“I and My Father are One.”* Jesus also said, *“My Father is greater than I.”* In the work of redemption, Christ took a lower place; *“VOLUNTARILY made lower than the angels”* – to be specific - and Jesus walked a meek and lowly path down here on earth, my friends. Let that same mind be in you. This was all important in Corinth in the day in which we are studying; and it's all important today....

⁴ Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

2 Corinthians 3: ¹³ *And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: ¹⁴ But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. ¹⁵ But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. ¹⁶ Nevertheless when their hearts shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away ~*

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