

“The Weightiness of My Liberty”

1 Corinthians 8:9-13

Fractured: How God Restores a Broken Church

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Don't assume that everybody can carry the same _____... because not everyone is as strong as you are.

- Take, for example, a couple of 100-pound dumbbells.

This leads me to the following question: When should I give up my _____ for someone else?

- The textbook answer: When that liberty, or freedom, is too “heavy” for someone else to bear.



We'll gather more _____... by exploring the following real-world examples: The beer at dinner, the casino outing, the movie choice, the social media post, that particular word, the holiday conviction, the music playlist, the recreational activity...

This leads me to the following question: What's at stake when I _____ on exercising my freedom, even though someone else will be ill-affected??

Insisting on exercising my freedom results in being selfish → Someone being stumbled → Now, I'm sinning against Christ

“Wow, Pastor, you just took this to a whole ‘nuther level. *Help!*” Sure, happy to be of service. Let's dive in.

1 Corinthians 8:9-13

1. V 9... Consider your _____. Just because you can _____ mean you should. (1 Cor 10:23-24)

- *In other words...* the issue isn't about whether you have the freedom to do something. Rather, it's carelessly exercising your freedom without considering its effect on another believer.

2. VV 10-12... Consider your _____. What I can enjoy with a clear conscience may be _____ for someone else's conscience.

- *In other words...* Spiritual maturity is considerate towards others' weaknesses. (Rom 14:13, 21)

3. V 13... Choose _____. Love is willing to go _____ for someone else's spiritual good.

- *In other words...* We might be faced with a decision to follow Paul's example and take this principle to its radical conclusion. “If necessary, I'll give up my liberty altogether.” (Phil 2:5-8; Rom 15:1-2)

CALLS-TO-ACTION

1. Identify the liberty you have that could possibly harm others. Then, keep between you and God. – Rom 14:22
2. Be aware of who you are influencing and where they are at on their faith journey.
3. If you're confident that the liberty you engage in is not a sinful thing, then examine your heart for any doubt. If you have any doubts whatsoever, then perhaps you should not engage in said liberty. – Rom 14:22-23
4. Ask yourself, on a scale of 1-5, how concerned are you with others' spiritual health? ___/5.
5. Take the time to learn about one's history and personal convictions B4 exercising your liberty around them.
6. Never pressure another Christian to violate their conscience.
7. Be willing to quietly go without. Sometimes love doesn't order the drink or play the card game or whatever.
8. Don't belittle someone else for the boundaries they set for themselves.
9. Be willing to go all the way. In other words, suspend the liberty - or surrender it altogether - for someone else's spiritual good.

GOING DEEPER

Go through this note sheet with your Growth Group and/or your family at the dinner table. Bring this note sheet to your work or school and discuss it with someone over lunch. Read the main passage and look up all of the supporting verses. Pray with one another.

1. What Christian liberty do you enjoy that might be difficult for another believer to handle? (You won't be able to share your answer unless you're confident that others in your Growth Group won't be offended or stumbled. You understand this, right?)
2. How can you tell when exercising a freedom could become a stumbling block to someone else?
3. Who in your life may be spiritually influenced by the choices they see you make, good or bad?
4. When have you seen someone else influence you toward a good or harmful decision?
5. Why is "Am I allowed to do this?" sometimes the wrong question for a mature Christian to ask? (This question should be settled in the Christian's mind. Rather, the question should be, "Will the person I'm with be stumbled?")
6. What is the difference between someone being offended by your liberty and being stumbled by it? (This is huge question! One being offended is quite different and requires a different response.)
7. How can you learn another person's weaknesses without becoming judgmental or condescending?
8. Why might giving up a legitimate freedom actually demonstrate greater spiritual maturity?
9. Is there a liberty you would find especially difficult to surrender for another person's spiritual good? Why?