

Direct Sin vs What is Expedient

Definitions:

Sin – A direct violation of a rule or a law of God in the Bible. A Transgression against God.

Expedient – Not sin or wrong, but depending on the situation or who you are, it could potentially be wrong or sin; or even cause other people to sin.

Sin Examples:

- Gossip/Lie
- Cheat/Steal
- Murder
- Adultery
- Fornication
- Laziness
- Procrastination
- Mischief
- False Witness

Expedient Examples:

- Eating Meat or a certain food
- Alcohol
- Smoking
- A particular type of clothing (IE woman's pants or make up, within Modest boundaries)
- Type of job or setting that a person regularly encounters (IE Customer Service)
- Any activity, that isn't a direct violation, that is perceived to be wrong, but isn't necessarily wrong.

Nothing is Unclean in and of Itself

Romans 14:14-23

- 14: I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but **to him that esteemeth** anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.
- 20: For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but **it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.**

All Things Lawful, But Not Expedient

I Corinthians 10:23-33

Specifically:

- 23: All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.
- 29: Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

Do NOT become a servant of your Liberty

I Corinthians 6:12

- 12: ALL things are lawful unto me, but all things are NOT expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I **will not be brought under the power** of any.

Romans 6:1-23

- 1: What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?
- 2: God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?
- 12: Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.
- 13: Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.
- 15: What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? **God forbid.**

Become ALL things to ALL men. Meet people where they are

I Corinthians 9:19-23

- 19: For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.
- 22: To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: **I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.**
- 23: And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

Protect the mind/conscience of baby brethren (weaker Christians) in Christ

I Corinthians 8:8-13

- 9: But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a **stumblingblock** to them that are weak.
- 13: Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, **lest I make my brother to offend.**

Therefore, while many things in the Word of God are identified as a direct violation of a rule or law of God, a transgression, there are also many things that are NOT sin, but may or may not be expedient for us to do.

The expediency of a non-sinful matter is up to each individual person to determine. However, while we all make such determinations, we must consider the conscience of those around us as to mitigate (reduce) the chances of bringing an offence. There are those Christians that do not fully understand the liberty we have in Christ(I Cor 8:9) and will stumble, or lose faith, if we are careless about how/when/where we implement our liberty/freedoms.

Christian liberty means that we have been freed to engage in any activity not expressly forbidden in the Bible – a Direct Violation or a Transgression. I Cor. 10:23 discusses our liberty, however, verse 24 puts a restriction on our liberty by encouraging us to seek the wellbeing of OTHERS first – 24: Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth. That means, therefore, in exercising our freedom, we must temper our actions with love, discretion, emotional intelligence and awareness.

Jesus commanded us in John 13:34, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Our love for one another will cause us to **want to** restrict our own behavior so as not to hurt others, or "cause them to stumble."

However, we must be careful as we can go overboard in either extreme with our freedoms. For example; On the one hand, we can be so conscious of our freedoms that we bring shame on Christ and His church in our actions by abusing our freedoms. Galatians 5:13 - *For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.* I Peter 2:16 - *As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.* It can be seen, that if we are not careful with our freedoms, and not use self-restraint to mitigate abuse, we will become carnal – or “of the world”, while we are called to be “in the world” only – and to savor it with SALT.(Matt 5:13; Mark 9:50)

On the other hand, if we are too careful in our attempt to avoid the abuse of our freedoms, we can potentially become **legalistic and invent rules** of behavior that are not biblical. Colossians 2:20-22 – *Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, ²¹ (Touch not; taste not; handle not; ²² Which all are to perish with the using:;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?* This is exactly what happened to the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees during Christ's first advent on Earth.

To put it plainly, licentiousness(extreme abuse of freedom or disregard of rules) on the one hand and legalism(extreme exaggeration of rules or the invention of rules) on the other are both wrong. We must continually seek the will of God to determine what is the right way to **exercise** or **voluntarily restrict** our liberty in each situation.

As a rule of thumb, if you are unsure about the practice of a freedom, err on the side of caution, and refrain from practicing said freedom until further prayer and counsel has clarified the matter.

Matthew 22:29 - *Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*