

## Christian Obedience

Christian liberty cannot mean a Christian is free to do as he pleases without reference to the will of God. By rejecting the will of God, he automatically chooses the world, sin, and Satan. To be freed from sin means submission to the will of God.

Whatever a person does should be done unto the Lord, that is, with the conviction that he is obeying and glorifying the Lord in everything. In no case should a Christian allow his exercise of Christian liberty to put an obstacle in the path of another.

Some people abuse the concept of Christian liberty in order to condone violation of holiness principles. "In the last days, ungodly men will change the grace of our God into a license for immorality **Jude 4**

False teachers will appeal to lustful desires and promise liberty but will actually be under bondage to sin **2 Pet. 2:18-19**

Some think they can continue to sin because they are no longer under the law but under grace. Their attitude is "I can sin because I know God will forgive me. God's moral law is still binding, and Christian liberty, means freedom to submit to truth, not freedom from truth. God's word also teaches submission to godly authority. Christian liberty does not eliminate our responsibility to follow his church and his leaders when they apply biblical principles of holiness to contemporary issues. **"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you. Heb. 13:17**

We must regulate our activities so that none of them controls us. We must not allow anything to dominate our will or rob us of too much energy, time, and money. We must not let anything interfere with our relationship with God. In some cases, the bible presents a general principle but does not give detailed instructions for our culture. For example, it teaches men to have short hair, but does not specify the precise length. It teaches women to

dress modestly, but does not describe a dress length. In such cases the church should reach a consensus as to the implementing of these principles. It must send forth a clear sound, presenting clear guidance to the believer and a clear witness to the unbeliever. The church should not be chaotic but orderly, and it's members should walk orderly and in unity **2 Thess. 3:6-7, 1 Cor. 14:8**

If everyone did what was right in his eyes without submitting to leadership, the result would be confusion **Judges 21:25**

The true child of God seeks godly leaders who will warn of danger and protect his soul. **Heb. 13:17**

He will not despise or reject authority **2 Pet. 2:10, Jude 8**

God has established authority and government in the church to give specific guidance **1 Cor. 12:28, 1 Thess. 5:12-13, 1 Tim. 5:17, 2 Tim. 4:2**

A wise person appreciates counsel, instruction, correction, and reproof. **Prov. 11:14, 13:1, 17:10**

Many people today view our practical application of holiness principles as extremely narrow and even fanatical. Jesus Christ did teach that the Christian walk was narrow compared to the one chosen by the majority of the world. "Enter ye in at the straight (small, constricted) gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat, because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it". **Mat. 7:13, 14, 21**

EYES---"I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes" **Psalms 101:3**

Many biblical passages admonish us to guard our eyes from beholding evil scenes and our minds from entertaining evil thoughts **Job 31:1, Psalm 19:14, 119:37, Isaiah 33:15-16, Roms. 1:32, 1 Thess. 5:22.**

The Bible instructs us in **Philippians 4:8** to think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy.

Evil thoughts defile us **Mat. 15:18-20, Mark 7:21-23**

Our thoughts determine in a large measure what we are or will become  
**Provs. 23:7**

The eyes is the primary means by which external information enters the mind, thereby stimulating our thought life. For this reason the eyes are the light of the body, and the lust of the eyes is a major source of temptation.  
**Mat. 6:22-23, Luke 11:34, 1 John 2:16**

To a large degree then, what we allow our eyes to indulge in, both shapes, and reveals our inner spiritual character. Television depicts so much violence and illicit sex, profanity, immodest dress, smoking, drinking, lying, hatred assault, cursing. Movies do not glorify God, but glorify evil.

**DRESS----**“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array **1 Tim. 2:9**

Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel **1 Pet. 3:3**

**The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment, for all that do so are an abomination unto the Lord thy God Deut. 22:5**

God desires for his people to display the spirit of holiness in outward appearance.

The plaiting of the hair was a usual feature of the Jewish women’s hairstyle, and in more elaborate types, the plaits were fastened with ribbons and bows. Such tendencies to showy adornment must be resisted by Christian women, and the same applies to the use of jewelry and costly clothing. To be modest means to be decent, chaste, proper, unpretentious and pure. Paul and Peter did not oppose the simple braiding or arranging of the hair. Many women of that day arranged their hair lavishly and extravagantly.

They often braided into their hair, strands of pearls and silk cords with gold coins attached. Many wore ornamental crowns and head dresses **1 Pet. 3:1-5**

A woman wearing short skirts, tight knits; low necking could be subconsciously inviting a proposition to sin. Could it be that she likes the gleam of desire she sees in a man's eyes? Our dress is an important statement to God. It signifies to him our attitude, lifestyle, and choice of identity. Our dress reveals to others our commitments and beliefs. Since man looks on the outward appearance, it is important for Christians to display godliness in outward appearance. We are to abstain from all appearance of evil **1 Thess. 5:22**

The Christian is not to love the things of the world **James 4:4, 1 John 2:15, Roms. 12:2**

Do not live according to the fashions of the times. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold. The movie producers in Hollywood, fashion designers in Paris and so forth, tells us that beauty comes from sex appeal, make up, colors, and dyes. According to Paul and Peter, a woman develops her beauty by concentrating on spiritual values. Immodest clothing, jewelry, and make up, feed the lust of the flesh. Women who wear immodest clothing and adorn themselves sensually are actually placing temptation before men. If they cause someone to sin, God will not hold them blameless.

**HAIR---Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man has long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her, for her hair is given her for a covering 1 Cor. 11:14-16**

The Word establishes that men should have short hair but that the women should have long, uncut hair. We obey this teaching for the following reasons:

- 1) It demonstrates the wife's submission to the husband.
- 2) It demonstrates the churches submission to Christ.
- 3) It is a sign to the angels of the Christian woman's obedience to God.

- 4) It is a shame for a man to pray with long hair or for a woman to pray with short hair.
- 5) Nature itself teaches us these principles.
- 6) Long hair is a shame for a man, but is a woman's glory.
- 7) This is one of God's methods for maintaining a clear distinction between male and female