

American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont, MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org
Encouraging Christians to guard their hearts January 2021

Liberty: Great Servant - Terrible Master

By: Steve Huston



“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” Galatians 5:13

Paul gives a warning about liberty and its use; one we would do well to consider both in regards to our American citizenship and our heavenly citizenship. You see, liberty makes a great servant but a terrible master. There are those who believe that liberty should be exercised without any self-restraint or without regard for others. This kind of thinking makes liberty their master and it leads to destruction. Without the restraint of virtue, self-promoting vice takes

us into places that bring harm and destruction. These words are true for both national and spiritual liberty.

Our founding fathers placed great value on virtue for they knew that virtue was the only thing that could keep liberty in check, stopping it from becoming the monster we see today.

Some will demand their rights as American citizens which are laid out in the Constitution and Bill of Rights, while others will state that Romans 13 tells us to give up those rights, regardless the fact that the government is not virtuous nor looking out for the best interest of the governed. As we unpack these very important truths, let us remember the Apostle Paul’s words, “use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another,” and his example. This is a difficult task; and one which each of us must prayerfully take up, depending upon the Spirit’s leading.

To the latter group, which

would quickly give up their God-given and constitutionally protected rights, I would remind them that in America “We the People” are the governing force and that those in position of authority must follow our Constitution (which is our governing document). When they step outside those boundaries (enumerated powers) or go against the law, they are breaking the law and they themselves are criminals committing criminal acts. **I cannot speak for other countries, but for Americans, obedience to tyrants is disobedience to God.** By that I mean, as they compel me to break the law, I must consider if I should willfully break that law (give up my God-given right) in light of my conscience and in light of what is best for my family and fellowman. After all, the great commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your mind, all your strength, and all your soul. And the second is like unto it, love your neighbor as yourself; and on these two commands hang all

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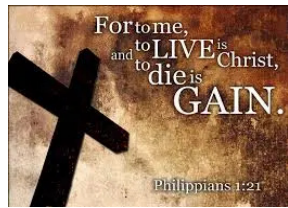
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“But what of our rights, our constitutionally protected freedoms?” that first group asks in all sincerity. To that we also go to God’s Word.

It’s important to recognize that virtue is the first restraint on liberty and that self-governance is the second. These restraints make liberty a useful servant rather than a monstrous master. Paul calls us to self-governance—to not use our liberty for selfishness, but to use it to serve one another. I may not feel compelled to give up my liberty for the sake of an overreaching government, but I may temporarily set it aside for the sake of a brother or sister in Christ, or even to reach an unbeliever for the sake of the gospel.

Whether we are talking about masks, quarantine, vaccines, or whatever, our goal must be to do all things for the glory of God, part of which is serving one another in love. We shouldn’t be motivated (forced) by fear of what others will think or even the consequences for doing what is right. Instead, let us fear God rather than men, show true love for our neighbor or brother by

the promotion of truth and the gospel, and conscientiously look out for one another.

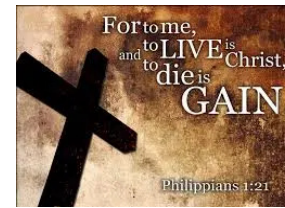
Even though Paul was first and foremost a citizen of heaven, he was not so quick to give up his rights as a Roman citizen. In Acts 16:37 is one lesser instance; but I urge you to read Acts 25 and 26, ending with verse 32, “Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.”

Paul used his earthly citizenship to the glory of God, to the advancement of God’s Kingdom. It meant that he would suffer much and eventually be put to death, but it also meant that he would preach the gospel to men in authority and many others along the way.

Let us not be so quick to discard our God-given liberty when it may be used for His glory. “According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.” Philippians 1:20

the law and the prophets. Jesus’ command was to love. If I willfully take part in lawlessness, instead of standing for the truth and ignoring the true Law of the Land, is that not a form of sin?

After all, we are no longer simply talking about God-given inalienable rights that sin-loving governing men can steal away at a whim, we are talking about the fact that our founders have placed those inalienable rights into our governing document—our Constitution—making it the law of the Land, the law which we are called to live and abide by—second to the Bible of course. Oughtn’t we to stand for and promote liberty for our fellow citizens and our Christian brethren? Can we so easily ignore the fact that once freedom is lost here, there is nothing to stop tyranny’s hand? Communism’s god is man and he hates the Creator God as well as Jehovah’s creation.



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