

Sermon Title: The Guidelines For The Principle of Christian Liberty, Part 3

Sermon Text: Romans 14:9-12

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to realize the biblical principle of mutual acceptance on doubtful things.

Sermon Proposition: There are 3 final guidelines for the principle of Christian liberty.

- I. The ultimate verdict on doubtful things belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. V.9**
- II. The disqualified verdict on doubtful things belongs to brothers and sisters of the Church. V.10-11**
- III. The final verdict on doubtful things belongs to the judgment seat of Christ. V.12**

I. The ultimate verdict on doubtful things belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. V.9

A. A clear purpose of salvation. V.9a

- 1. The atonement of God's wrath against sin.
- 2. The salvation of fallen men.
- 3. The restoration of all things.

B. A concise purpose of salvation. V.9a

Jesus died for the purpose of being recognized as "Lord" of both the dead and the living.

2 Corinthians 5:15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

1 Corinthians 15:54-58 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." **55** "O Death, where *is* your sting? O Hades, where *is* your victory?" **56** The sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law. **57** But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. **58** Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. The death, burial and resurrection should stimulate Christians to live "for the Lord" rather than themselves.

1. Jesus is a sample of mankind. (**Romans 5:12-21**)

2. Jesus is a substitution for mankind.

2 Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

3. Jesus is a symbol for mankind.

1 Peter 2:18-24 Servants, *be* submissive to *your* masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. **19** For this *is* commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. **20** For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God. **21** For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: **22** "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth"; **23** who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously; **24** who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness-- by whose stripes you were healed.

"When the possessor of heaven and earth brought you into being and placed you in this world, He placed you here not as owner but as a steward." – John Wesley

"Stewardship is the 'use of God-given resources for the accomplishment of God-given goals.'" – Ron Blue, *Master Your Money*

Quotes taken from Charles R. Swindoll, *Swindoll's Ultimate Book of Illustrations & Quotes*, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 1998, pp. 534.

- II. The disqualified verdict on doubtful things belongs to brothers and sisters of the Church. V.10-11**
- A. Exhortation to avoid the sin of judging your brother and sister in Christ. V.10a**
The judging was being done by the “weak.” They were guilty of “condemning or being irresponsible at behavior possibly depraved.”
- B. Exhortation to avoid the sin of showing contempt for your brother and sister in Christ. V.10b**
The contempt was being shown by the “strong.” They are showing contempt by demonstrating a despising attitude considering a brother or sister as worthless, who deserves only disdain and rejection.
- C. Exhortation to approve the liberty that will be evaluated by Christ. V.10c-11**
In confirmation that God and God alone, will judge all people and their actions. Paul cites [*Isaiah 45:23 I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, And shall not return, That to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath.*] to validate his argument.
- III. The final verdict on doubtful things belongs to the judgment seat of Christ. V.12**
The preferred rendering is “the judgment seat of God.”
- 1 Corinthians 3:13-15** each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. **14** If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. **15** If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.
- Every believer will give an account of himself for himself to the Lord, who will judge, based on His standards and understanding.
- This includes the decisions they made in the areas of conscious. This verdict is the only one that counts for eternity.
- 1 Corinthians 4:1-5** Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. **2** Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. **3** But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. **4** For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord. **5** Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.
- 2 Corinthians 5:9-10** Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. **10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.
- The issue of grace does not exist at the “judgment seat of Christ” nor does mercy exist. The tribunal of God or Christ (2 Corinthians 5:9-10) is for true believers. This is not the same as the Great White Throne of Judgment.
- Revelation 20:11-15** Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. **12** And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. **13** The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. **14** Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. **15** And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.
- The “judgment seat of Christ” is where true believers will be rewarded or suffer loss of rewards (**1 Corinthians 3:13**) based on their deeds and their stewardship of God given responsibilities. All believers will humble themselves and be elevated (**Luke 12:35-40; 12:41-48; 16:1-13**) at the “judgment seat of Christ” for their lives and the stewardship of their time, talents, treasures, temple and testimony.

Some Christians foolishly think or feel that because they are exempt from the final condemnation because of the cross of Calvary. That they can live anyway they choose, but the wise understand and are controlled by the truth that Christ is Lord and we are His slaves, disciples, followers, and friends. The Lord Jesus Christ will evaluate each and every one of us. Paul uses this final accountability as a motive for all Christians to take with diligent seriousness their life and service.

(Romans 13:11-14; Ephesians 5:6-12)

1 Peter 4:1-6 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, **2** that he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. **3** For we *have spent* enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles-- when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. **4** In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with *them* in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of *you*. **5** They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. **6** For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.