

# Christian Discipleship Guide



*“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.’” (Matthew 28:18-20)*

## 11. Liberty in Christ

Since all my sins are forgiven, am I free to do as I please?

The New Testament is very clear that, as saved people, we are no longer bound by any law to please God, but we are under His grace. However, many people take this freedom as an opportunity to sin, thinking they are free to do as they wish. This is not true. Christians need to understand just what are their “liberties” in Jesus Christ, and what lines need to be drawn in their lives in relation to their actions as children of God.

Personally, regarding their own lives, Christians are free to make their own choices (John 8:36; Romans 14:22; Titus 1:15). Believers are eternally secure in Jesus Christ. If they have genuinely placed their trust in Jesus as their Savior, they cannot go to Hell. They will go to heaven regardless of what they do and whether they like it or not (Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9). They are not bound by any laws (Romans 8:2; Galatians 3:24-25). For example, Christians are not bound by the Mosaic laws of circumcision (Acts 15:5-11).

However, the liberty that believers have in Jesus Christ gives them freedom to do what is right, without the constraints of any laws, as opposed to giving them license to sin or do whatever they want (Romans 6:1-2; Galatians 5:13). Their liberty must not be used to feed their sinful flesh (Romans 6:12-18). Their liberty enables them to serve God (1 Peter 2:16). For example, Jesus cured a blind man on the Sabbath and was accused by the Pharisees of working on the Sabbath (John 9:14-16, 30-33).

Christians are free to make their own choices, but if they choose to sin, they should be aware of the following consequences:

- They will not bear fruit (John 15:1-8).
- God will chasten (discipline) them as His children (Hebrews 12:5-11).
- God will allow them to reap what they have sown (Galatians 6:7-8).

God will receive the glory from our lives one way or another, either as a vessel of honor or a vessel of dishonor. The choice is ours (2 Timothy 2:20-21).

Our freedom in Christ affects those around us as well. Our lives will be a testimony for good or for bad, whether we want it to be or not (Romans 14:7). We are to avoid things which could cause weaker Christians to stumble in their faith (Romans 14:13-15); 1 Corinthians 8:9-13). We are to avoid things which appear wrong even though they may not be wrong (Romans 14:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22). We are to have a good testimony toward both saved (Acts 6:1-3; Acts 16:1-2) and lost people (Romans 14:18; Colossians 4:5; 1 Timothy 3:7) so as to influence them for good in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 11:22-24; 1 Corinthians 9:19-23).

Now let us consider the bounds of our liberty in Christ. There are many “gray areas” in dealing with certain things with which we may or may not want to be involved. In these cases, we can ask ourselves some questions:

- Am I being brought under the power of something that should not be controlling my life (1 Corinthians 6:12)?
- Am I edifying myself or others (1 Corinthians 10:23)?

- Can I ask God to bless it with a clear conscience (Colossians 3:17; Acts 24:16)?
- If the Lord returned at this moment, would I be ashamed (1 Corinthians 1:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:23)?
- Would it cause a brother to stumble (Romans 14:13-15; Romans 15:1-2)?
- Would it be cause for an unsaved person to reject the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior (1 Corinthians 10:31-33)?
- Does my conscience condemn me for it (1 Peter 3:16; Hebrews 13:18; 1 Timothy 1:5)?

In summary, rather than thinking about freedom to do as we please, we need to think about our freedom to serve one another (Galatians 5:13) and to please God in everything we do (1 Corinthians 10:31).

**Questions:**

1. As Christians, are we free to do whatever we please? Briefly explain.

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2. The Word of God draws boundaries on our freedom. Explain those boundaries from each of the following verses:

(1) Galatians 5:13 ---

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(2) Romans 6:18 ---

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(3) 1 Peter 2:16 ---

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3. When we choose to sin, what are the consequences of our choice?

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(2) \_\_\_\_\_

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(3) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Additional Scripture Verses:**

*Romans 6:1-2; Romans 6:15; Romans 15:1.*