

Liberty in Christ

Romans 6:14; Romans 8:4

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by John MacArthur

It is crucial that you understand the nature of Christian liberty. As a Christian, you are not under law, but under grace (Romans 6:14). Freedom from the law certainly does not mean that the principles of righteousness revealed in the Old Testament law are now nullified. It does not mean that the Ten Commandments have no application to your present life. It does not mean that you can subjugate God's holy standards to personal preference. It obviously does not mean you are free from any moral requirements.

What does it mean? It means that Christians are not bound to observe Old Testament ritual. We don't have to sacrifice animals, observe the laws of ceremonial cleanness, and celebrate all the new moons and feasts and sacrifices. We don't have to follow the dietary laws given to Israel through Moses. We are free from all that.

Likewise, obviously, we are free from all Gentile religious ceremony and superstition. Whatever our religious background or heritage, in Christ we are free from all the trappings of it. We now live by God's grace, which has the principle of true righteousness built in.

In other words, our spiritual lives are governed not merely by an external code, but by God's grace, which operates in us to fulfill the righteous requirements of the law (Romans 8:4). Grace teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires, and to live sensibly, righteously, and godly (Titus 2:12). And grace empowers us to live holy lives.

This tremendous liberty is one of the most remarkable aspects of the Christian life. We have no need to yield to custom or ceremony or human opinion. There are no earthly priests to intercede between us and God: "There is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). We don't need to make a pilgrimage to a temple somewhere to worship; our very bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). We can worship God in spirit and in truth anytime, anyplace (John 4:23, 24). Whatever we ask in Jesus' name He will do (John 14:13, 14). The Holy Spirit is given to us as our advocate and comforter (John 14:16, 26). All things belong to us, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's (1 Corinthians 3:21–23).

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