

Freedom:

Liberty with Responsibility



Liberty; lacking oppressive and limiting restrictions comes with responsibility. 1 Corinthians 6:12 tells us that “Everything is permissible for me - but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me - but I will not be mastered by anything.” We may not be under the Law of the Old Testament and may be free in many areas “religious” people are not, but that liberty comes with responsibility. Paul also wrote in Galatians 5:13; “You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.” We are free, but our love for God and desire to please Him brings some limitations to that freedom.

Biblically, we are not to use our *freedom* to cause others to stumble. Paul wrote of food sacrificed to idols Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians, and while that may include food for us, but it could be having a glass of wine or a beer, or the way we dress or speak - anything that might cause a weaker Christian to stumble or a non-believer to question the reality of God. One writer said; “Freedom is not the right to do what we want, but the ability to do what we ought.” We are to care about others remembering that Jesus said loving our neighbor as ourselves is the second greatest commandment.

In marriage, any demands one spouse makes on the other violating *their* freedom is *sin*. Too many times I have heard of husbands demanding some sort of sex that their wives are not comfortable with and even using the submission verses to back up their demands. Wives may also make demands in violation of their husbands’ consciences also. Our freedom in Christ comes with responsibility! Too often husbands and/or wives will their own selfishness or flesh rule their lives. Life becomes about one’s own needs, desires, or wants rather than serving one another in love. Use your freedom responsibly to love your spouse and others.

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

The *Fortified Marriages Manual and Workbook* is a great tool to help couples develop healthy communication and connect with each other.

Other resources:

Freedom in Christ by various authors - www.focusonthefamily.com