

First Baptist Church of Clinton, Louisiana
 1689 Second London Baptist Confession
 “Chapter 21, Of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience”
 August 12, 2018

- Introduction:
 - The Reformers taught that the two greatest truths recovered by the Reformation were the doctrine of the Sufficiency of Scripture, and the doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone. But they also taught that the great corollary to justification is the doctrine of the liberty of conscience.
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 - This chapter addresses three different forms of authoritarianism and totalitarianism.
 - First, civil totalitarianism: oppressive states and regimes.
 - Second, ecclesiastical totalitarianism: oppressive churches and ministers.
 - Third, familial totalitarianism: oppressive spouses and parents.
- Paragraph 1. The Basic Doctrine
 - First, “The liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers.” Christian liberty is founded in the purchase of Christ. The payment for this was the death of the Son of God.
 - Christian liberty relates to the doctrine of justification.
 - Christian liberty also relates to the doctrine of sanctification. Rom 4:15; 5:13
 - Christian liberty relates to worship and the church (we'll see this later in the confession).
 - Second, Christian liberty mercifully removes certain things away from us.
 - First, freedom from the curse of the law.
 - First, freedom from the guilt of sin (Chapter 6.3).
 - Second, liberty frees us from the wrath of God.
 - Third, liberty frees us from the rigor and curse of the law (Chapter 7).
 - See Gal 3:13.
 - Second, deliverance from enemies and miseries.
 - First, The world (Gal 1:4), the devil (Acts 26:18), and the flesh (Rom 8:3).
 - Second,, we are delivered from the evil of afflictions. Rom 8:28. See Genesis 50:20
 - Third, we are delivered from the fear and sting of death. Hebrews 2:15, 1 Cor 15:54-57.
 - Fourth, we are delivered from the victory of the grave and everlasting damnation.

- Third, Christian liberty gives us certain privileges.
 - First, free access to God.
 - Second, obedience from a childlike love.
 - See Rom 8:15; Lk 1:73-75; 1 Jn 4:18

[NEXT PARAGRAPH – 1B]

- Christian liberty in the Old Testament. Gal 3:9, 14
- Christians have have more liberty in the New Testament in three ways.
 - First, we have freedom from the ceremonial law of God.
 - Second, we have greater boldness of access to God's throne.
 - Third, we have fuller communications of the Spirit.
 - See Jn 7:38-39; Heb 10:19-21
- Paragraph 2. The Boundaries of Christian Liberty.
 - God alone is Lord of the conscience. Jas 4:12; Rom 14:4
 - Our consciences are free from the doctrines of men. Matt 15:1-9
 - Our consciences are free from commandments of men. Acts 4:19, 29; 1 Cor 7:23; Col 2:20-23
 - Our consciences are free from obeying the commands of men “in anything contrary to His Word, or not contained in it.” This is how God is Lord of conscience: through His Word alone.
 - Liberty of conscience is destroyed by certain things. A/B, A/B pattern
 - A: Believing human doctrines destroys liberty of conscience.
 - B: Obeying human commands destroys liberty of conscience.
 - A: Requiring implicit faith [in human doctrines] destroys liberty of conscience.
 - B: Requiring blind obedience [in human commands] destroys liberty of conscience.
- READ Paragraph 3. Cautions Against Abuses of Christian Liberty
 - The great danger in Christian liberty is sinning under pretense of Christian liberty.
 - But pretense is a perversion of Christian liberty and the gospel. Rom 6:1-2
 - Pretense of Christian liberty results in destruction.

- The destruction of themselves.
- The destruction of the goal of Christian liberty.
- The true goal of Christian liberty is threefold.
 - First, to be delivered out of the hands of all enemies.
 - Second, to serve the Lord without fear.
 - Third, to live in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives.
 - See Gal 5:13; 2 Pet 2:18-21