**1 Corinthians 9**

*Paul defends his right to receive support as an apostle and preacher. He does not exercise that right, avoiding the charge that he was abusing his* “authority in the gospel.” *(Synopsis by Stan Cox)*

1. Inquiry from Corinthians **(7:1-16:4)** – *“Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me:”* **(7:1)**.
   1. Liberties, but should not jeopardize another’s, or own, relationship to God **(8:1-11:1)**.
      1. *“concerning things offered to idols”* **(8:1-13)**.
      2. Paul’s Example – Forgoing Liberties **(9:1-23).**
         1. Paul’s Liberty as an Apostle **(9:1-14).**
            1. Paul’s Apostleship Affirmed **(v. 1-2).**

As a free man in Christ, and an apostle, he had the right to exercise liberties **(v. 1a).**

The appearance of Jesus to Paul, and the conversion of the Corinthians – thus the establishment of the church in Corinth – were proofs of his apostleship **(v. 1b-2).**

* + - 1. Paul’s example of forgoing liberties for the sake of others **(9:15-23).**
         1. Paul’s liberties **(v. 3-14).**

Right to eat and drink **(v. 4).**

Right to marry **(v. 5).**

Right to refrain from secular work and receive support from brethren. Illustrations to explain **(v. 6-14).**

Soldier, farmer, shepherd **(v. 7).**

What does the law of Moses say **(v. 8-10)?**

Sow spiritual, reap material **(v. 11-12).**

Those who minister the holy things **(v. 13).**

The Lord’s command **(v. 14).**

* + - * 1. Paul’s reasons for forgoing these liberties **(v. 15-23).**

He did not write to solicit support **(v. 15).**

His preaching of the gospel was a command from the Lord – thus a necessity **(v. 16-17).**

No boasting in preaching the gospel. If he did not preach he would be lost **(v. 16).**

He does not preach out of pure volunteering, but has been given a stewardship **(v. 17).**

*Outline continued on back. 🡪*

His choice to forgo liberties was to receive a reward, and avoid abuse of his authority **(v. 18).**

He wished to be of service to all men to win them over. Which required giving up liberties he had **(v. 19-23).**

He becomes a servant, although free, to win over men **(v. 19-22a).**

To Jews and those under the law **(v. 20).**

To those without law (Gentiles) **(v. 21).**

To the weak **(cf. chapter 8) (v. 22a).**

He does this to effectively share the gospel, and partake in its promises with them **(v. 23).**

* + 1. *“take heed lest [you] fall”* **(9:24-10:33)**.
       1. Exercising restraint to avoid disqualification **(9:24-27).**
          1. Example of running a race: You run to win the prize **(v. 24).**
          2. In order to be successful in the competition there must be temperance. How much more in spiritual things **(v. 25)!**
          3. For this reason, Paul disciplines himself as he runs the spiritual race. He does not want to become disqualified after preaching the message **(v. 26).**

**Questions**

1. What is the connection between **chapter 8 and 9**? Is **chapter 9** a random insertion from Paul? **(cf. 8:13)**
2. What is Paul’s limit to *“becom[ing] all things to all men”* **(v. 19-23)?**
3. What does Paul mean by his wish to *“be [a] partaker of [the gospel] with [the Corinthians]”* **(v. 23)?**

**Another Question to Consider**

**Verses 6-14** give authority for the monetary support of preachers in their gospel work. (Along with other passages.) What is the relationship between preachers and the congregations who support them?