

“Paul’s Example”
1 Corinthians 9:1-27
6/6/21
Message 18

Introduction

- Title of the Message is: “Paul’s Example”

- **Review**

- **We have been in a Study in 1st Corinthians**
 - We have been asking What was wrong in the Church of Corinth
 - But what we can really ask is what is wrong with the church of today
 - So MANY Similarities
- **Chapter 1-6** - Paul dealt with known SINS in the Church of Corinth
 - DIVISION
 - CARNALITY
 - IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH
 - SERIOUS NATURE OF SEXUAL SINS
- **Chapter 7** - Paul Switches Gears – Answers Questions
 - **The FIRST Question Marriage**
 - Celibacy - Marriage
 - Marriage is for LIFE
 - The Importance Of Being Content vs. 17-24
 - The Instructions To Stay Focused vs. 25-40

- Verse 29 – Time is SHORT
- **Chapter 8 – We looked at last week**
 - **The Second Question - How do you use your Christian Liberties?**
 - One of the Biggest Debates with Christians
 - Has centered around questionable practices
 - Practices that some believers feel to be wrong
 - But that are not specifically forbidden in Scripture
 - The Bible doesn't specifically say not to do them
 - It's NOT Black OR White
 - It's not like God's Top 10
 - That are very clear
 - Some of the key issues have been... Go over each of them
 - Drinking Alcoholic
 - Smoking
 - Wearing Makeup
 - Dancing
 - Styles of Music
 - Going to Movies
 - Watching T.V.
 - Tattoos
 - Bottom-Line – PUT - ON LOVE – Before Liberties

- **Now to Chapter 9**

- This Morning Paul will make 3 things very clear
 - 1st Paul was not respected by the Corinthians
 - 2nd Paul Laid down his Rights – Liberties to Win the lost to Christ

- 3rd Paul was VERY serious about the FAITH
- This will be seen in 3 Powerful Truth this morning
 - The RIGHTS Paul Had vs. 1-14
 - The REASON Paul Refused His Rights vs. 15-23
 - The RACE Paul Ran vs. 24-27

The RIGHTS Paul Had vs. 1-14

• First: Paul's Calling As An Apostle vs. 1-2

○ Verse 1

1 Corinthians 9:1 (NKJV)

1 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?

- **1st Had to Show them - He had Rights**
 - Before he could talk about giving up his rights he needed to them to understand he had rights
 - His rights as an apostle are the subject of these opening verses
- **2nd The Questions**
 - These questions all require a “Yes!” answer:
 - **1st “Am I not an apostle?”**
 - Yes he was – Called to be by Jesus Christ
 - **2nd “Am I not free?”**
 - Paul was not “under authority” to anyone but Jesus Christ
 - Just as many rights as others
 - But other Christians were under apostolic authority.

- 3rd **“Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?”**
 - Yes, he had, on the road to Damascus.
- 4th **What is an Apostle**
 - McGee, give 6 requirements for apostleship!
 - 1st The apostle receives their commission directly from the living lips of Jesus.
 - 2nd The apostle saw the Savior after His resurrection.
 - 3rd The apostles exercised a special inspiration.
 - They expounded and wrote Scripture (John 14:26, 16:13 / Gal. 1:11-12)
 - 4th They exercised supreme authority. (John 20:22-23 / 2 Cor. 10:8)
 - 5th The badge of their authority was the power to work miracles (Mark 6:13 / Luke 9:1-2 / Acts 2:43)
 - 6th They were given a universal commission to find churches (2 Cor. 11:28)
- 5th **Are you NOT Proof**
 - *Are you not my work in the Lord*
 - **Who Planted the Church? – Paul**
- 6th **PLEASE NOTE – There are NOT Apostles today**
 - Despite what Bethel Teaches...
 - New Apostolic Reformation

○ **Verse 2**

1 Corinthians 9:2 (NKJV)

2 *If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.*

- Paul had CRITICS Everywhere
 - Paul is NOT Apostle they said
 - They tore up his first letter to them
 - They LOOKED for REASONS to disqualify Paul
- Why?!
 - Most likely did not like what they heard –
 - Truth can go against the grain of our flesh –
 - So we want to dismiss it and blame anyone we can
- Paul Response
 - The Corinthians knew better
 - After all, he had founded their church and done the miraculous works of an apostle among them.
 - Having established he was an apostle, Paul listed a few of his rights:

• **Second: Paul's Comments Regarding Some Of His Rights vs. 3-5**

- **1st My defense v. 3**

1 Corinthians 9:3 (NKJV)

3 *My defense to those who examine me is this:*

- Paul is on trial
 - In Some ways he has already been “found guilty” by the Corinthian Christians.

- Paul will now assert his rights as an apostle
 - As if he were a lawyer arguing a case.
 - The Words
 - Defense (Apologia)
 - Examine (Anakrino)
 - Are both legal words, taken from the Roman law court.
- **2nd Do we have no right to eat and drink v. 4**

1 Corinthians 9:4 (NKJV)

4 Do we have no right to eat and drink?

- Paul, like all the apostles, had the right to eat and drink.
- It wasn't that the Corinthian Christians questioned Paul's right to eat and drink
- What they questioned WAS did Paul have a right to eat and drink at the expense of the church he served
- **3rd Do we have no right to take along a believing wife v. 5**

1 Corinthians 9:5 (NKJV)

5 Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

- Paul, like all the apostles, had the right to take along a believing wife.
 - Again, the issue was not bring a wife – it was should he get paid to to do so
 - But Paul makes it clear that he had the right to expect support for not only himself, but for his family, also.
- Others Did

- Apparently, most of the other apostles were married, and their wives traveled with them as they did ministry.
- NOTE:
 - 1st Peter (Cephas)
 - Who was obviously married, yet still considered by the Roman Catholic church to be the first pope, in contradiction to the principle of mandatory celibacy
 - 2nd The Brothers of Jesus
 - Mary had more kids

○ **5th Or is it only Barnabas and I:**

1 Corinthians 9:6 (NKJV)

6 *Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working?*

- Indicating that they were the ones being singled out...

○ **6th Bottom Line**

- They deserved to receive support from their occupation
 - He listed some occupations to make his point
- The Baptist had a saying...
 - "Lord, You keep him humble, and we'll keep him poor."
 - They thought we were doing God a favor.
 - They thought that was the way it ought to be
 - Paul is saying the pastor has a right to be paid for his work
 - He now illustrates that

- **Third: Paul's Comparison To How Normal Life Works v. 7**

1 Corinthians 9:7 (NKJV)

7 Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?

- **1st His Illustrations**

- Who Goes to war at his own Expense?
- Who Plants a vineyard?
- Who Tends the Flock?
- In all these examples – the person doing the work – received from their work

- **Fourth: Paul's Confirmation From The Scripture vs. 8-10**

1 Corinthians 9:8–10 (NKJV)

8 Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also?

9 For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about?

10 Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope.

- **1st The "law" that Paul quoted was Deuteronomy 25:4.**

- The "ox" was to be permitted to eat of the grain while he labored pulling the grinding wheel.
- While the verse established the ethical treatment of animals under our stewardship
- Paul indicated that it was intended to be applied to the proper treatment of human laborers...a worker is worthy of wages
- The apostles should receive wages just like every other laborer.

- **2nd NOTE:**

- The Gentiles Muzzled the OX

- **Fifth: Paul's Contention That They Knew This Principle vs. 11-14**

1 Corinthians 9:11–14 (NKJV)

11 *If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?*

12 *If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.*

13 *Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar?*

14 *Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.*

- **1st If we have sown spiritual things:**

- Paul here makes it clear
- That it is right for the spiritual work of God's ministers to be repaid with the material support of the people they minister unto.

- **2nd If others are partakers of this right:**

- It wasn't that the Corinthian Christians refused to support anyone in ministry.
- No, others are partakers of this right.
- The problem with the Corinthian Christians was they refused to support Paul, and thought less of him because he did not receive it.

- **3rd Nevertheless we have not used the right... lest we hinder the gospel of Christ:**

- Just as strongly as Paul affirms his right to be supported by the church
- He also affirmed his right to not use that right
- If using it might hinder the gospel of Christ

○ **4th The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel:**

- This summary statement is conclusive.

○ **5th Bottom Line**

- Paul Laid down his rights to be paid
 - He did not want that hindering the Gospel
- Lesson
 - This MUST BE THE HEART OF A TRUE PASTOR
 - A True Shepherd of God's Sheep – serves with the right heart
 - Illustration
 - As I was studying this again – I was so glad when I came here that there was very little pay

The REASON Paul Refused His Rights vs. 15-23

• **First: Paul's Deep Conviction vs. 15-18**

1 Corinthians 9:15–18 (NKJV)

15 *But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void.*

16 *For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!*

17 *For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship.*

18 *What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.*

○ **1st But I have used none of these things:**

- Paul had the right to be supported, but he did not use that right.

- **2nd Nor have I written these things:**
 - In writing this - Paul was not “hinting” for support by the Corinthian Christians.
 - He shows them the value, and the reasons, for giving up one’s own rights.
- **3rd It would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void**
 - Paul’s boasting wasn’t that he preached the gospel.
 - He had to do that (for necessity is laid upon me)
 - **Instead, his boasting was that he was able to do it without asking his hearers for support.**
- **4th Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!**
 - Paul’s ministry was not just a matter of choice or personal ambition; it was something he was called to, something he had to do.
 - He did not just have “preacher’s itch.”
 - He was called to preach and felt compelled to fulfill that call.
- **5th If I do this willingly**
 - The RIGHT HEART
 - If the Pastor has the right – you are paying the RIGHT man
- **6th I may present the gospel of Christ without charge:**
 - In Paul’s day, there were a lot of religious entrepreneurs, who were out to preach any message to get money.
 - Paul was happy to distance himself from these people

- Lesson

- There is a LOT of Problems with this today
- Examples
 - Too many to count
 - Pastors Wife that said you can do both
 - Christian Bands
 - Pastors asking for Honorariums

- **Second: Paul's Strong Concern For The Lost vs. 19-23**

1 Corinthians 9:19–23 (NKJV)

19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more;

20 and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law;

21 to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law;

22 to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

23 Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.

- **1st What these verses do NOT mean**

- It is unfortunate that the phrase “all things to all men” has been used and abused by the world and the church
 - Paul was not a chameleon
 - Who changed his message and methods with each new situation
 - Nor was Paul a compromiser
 - Who adjusted his message to please his audience
 - He was an Ambassador

- Not a politician!
- Illustrations of Abuse
 - The Cursing Pastor
 - The Beer Drinking Pastor
 - Secular music in Church
 - One church's worship team opened with "Highway to Hell" by AC/DC

- **Tozer Quote**

- **2nd Paul Heart**

- Paul was a Jew who had a great burden for his own people (Rom. 9:1–3; 10:1).
- But his calling was to minister to the Gentiles (Eph. 3:8).
- Whenever he went into a new city he headed straight for the synagogue, if there was one, and boldly shared the Gospel.
- If he was rejected by the Jews, then he turned to the Gentiles.

- **3rd So What Is Paul Saying**

- What separated Jews and Gentiles in that day?
- The Law and the Covenants (Eph. 2:11–15).
- In his personal life –
 - Paul so lived that he did not offend either the Jews or the Gentiles
 - He did not parade his liberty before the Jews
 - Nor did he impose the Law on the Gentiles

- Paul simply adapted his approach to different groups
- When you read his sermons in the Book of Acts, you See this
 - When he preached to Jews
 - He started with the Old Testament Patriarchs
 - When he preached to Gentiles
 - He began with the God of Creation.
 - Paul did not have a “stock sermon” for all occasions.

The RACE Paul Ran vs. 24-27

• **Intro To this Section**

- I think Paul was a sports fan
- Corinth sponsored what was called the “Isthmian Games”
 - These contests were second only to the Olympics in Athens in terms of fame and popularity in the Roman Empire.
 - Everyone in the church at Corinth was familiar with the athletes of the Isthmian Games.

• **First: Verse 24**

1 Corinthians 9:24 (NKJV)

24 *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.*

- **1st Background**
 - The competitors in the Isthmian Games – Qualifications
 - 1st Prove that they had been in rigorous physical and mental training for a full 10 months prior to the games.

- The last month was spent in Corinth with supervised daily work-outs in the gymnasiums and on the fields.
- These athletes were Serious
 - They knew that their daily training would put them in a position to “run” to be the one who “receives the prize.”
 - None of them trained for second place
 - They Made Tremendous Sacrifice
- **2nd Application for us**
 - The Christian life is a RACE
 - *All Run – But one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.*
 - Paul is NOT saying we are in Competition with EACH OTHER
 - You’re not competing against other believers, however.
 - You’re competing against yourself!
 - For one thing we’re competing against what the Bible calls “The Flesh”
 - You’re Running For Jesus

• **Second: Verse 25**

1 Corinthians 9:25 (NKJV)

25 *And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.*

- **1st An athlete in training is “temperate in all things.”**
 - It means they exercise self-restraint in every area in order to be at their very best

- They adjust their diet, their sleep cycles, and their social and personal calendars in order to be at their best.
- **2nd They ONLY Win a Perishable Crown**
 - Perishable - Phthartos –
 - corruptible, perishing
 - In Paul's day, the winners of the games received a wreath of fir branches to wear around their head.
 - The fir trees surrounded the Isthmian race course.
 - In earlier days, the wreath was made of parsley.
 - In the Olympics, it was of a wild olive branch.
 - Ancient athletes ran just for the glory of the race, for a crown that would dry up and rot.
- **2nd Application For us**
 - Imperishable – Aphthartos –
 - uncorrupted, not liable to corruption or decay, imperishable
 - The crown we're "running" for is an imperishable one, something we will receive in heaven.
 - We will receive rewards for what we do on earth when we get to heaven.

2 Timothy 4:6–8 (NKJV)

6 *For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.*

7 *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*

8 *Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

- The Victors Crown Stephanos

- **Third: Verse 26**

1 Corinthians 9:26 (NKJV)

26 *Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air.*

- **1st Paul Illustrations**

- 1st A Runner

- When he said, “not with uncertainty” he pictured a runner who, on hearing the “Go!” started running in the wrong direction.
- He didn’t have the finish line in view but ran all over the place.
- For emphasis he switched from the track to the ring

- 2nd He pictured a boxer “beat(ing) the air.”

- He was not talking about shadowboxing...that’s good
- He was picturing a boxer coming out and throwing punches that never landed
- All that’s going to do is leave him exhausted

- **2nd Application For Us**

- You may be running...

- But if you’re not set on the finish line you are only running in place.
- You may think you’re fighting but if you’re not landing any blows you are only going to exhaust yourself and be susceptible to knock-out

- What’s the bottom line?

- **Fourth: Verse 27**

1 Corinthians 9:27 (NKJV)

27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

- **1st I discipline my body:**

- Discipline is a - Weak translation
 - The ancient Greek word means
 - “To strike under the eye; to give a black eye.”
 - Paul didn’t want his body to lord it over his entire being.

- **2nd Bring it into subjection**

- Literally means to lead about as a slave.
- Paul made sure that his body was the servant, and his inner man was the master.
- The desires of his body were not going to rule over his entire self.

- **3rd Application**

- **Keep this in context**
 - By “Discipline” and “Subjection”
 - Paul meant that he limited his liberties for the sake of preaching the Gospel in order to be in the best position to win people to Christ
 - In Corinth
 - They Missed this whole point
 - They did not care if their liberties caused someone to stumble – they did it anyways

- **Within the larger context of Christian Discipline**

- If ANYTHING gets in the way of you running your RACE to please Jesus (even Liberties)
- They need to GO!!!
- Examine yourself on this

Close

- **Run To Win**

- A big issue for Believers being hindered in the RUN for the Prize

- **THE PAST**

Philippians 3:12–14 (NKJV)

12 *Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.*

13 *Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,*

14 *I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

Communion

- First: Remember (Looking Back at what Jesus did)
- Second: Repent / Reflect (Looking Within) 1 Cor. 11:27-28
- Third: Rejoice (Looking Forward) 1 Cor. 11:26
- Fourth: Reconcile (Looking Around) 1 Cor. 11:29, 33-34

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV)

23 *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;*

24 *and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."*

25 *In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."*

26 *For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*