

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

February 23, 2021

Series - *The Life and Writings of the Apostle Paul*

The Corinthian Letters

*The Long Letter* (First Corinthians)

Text – 1 Corinthians 9 – *Question and Answer Continued – Christian Liberty and Compensation*

Memory Verse – 1 Corinthians 9:27

*"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." (1 Corinthians 9:27)*

## Introduction

In chapter nine the apostle is still answering questions that were submitted to him by the church at Corinth (v. 3). Through all of these inquiries Paul will offer what is acceptable, but will stress that which is expedient or the most profitable for the cause of Christ and for the good of others. (1 Corinthians 6:12; 10:23 & 24).

*"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." (1 Corinthians 6:12)*

*"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." (1 Corinthians 10:23-24)*

In this chapter Paul will specifically deal with his liberty as an apostle. The people at Corinth seemed to expect Paul to labor without their support. Paul would not demand support from Corinth because he wanted them to be sure that he was not after their money. (See 2 Corinthians 12:13 & 14).

*"For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong. Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: **for I seek not yours, but you:** for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." (2 Corinthians 12:13-14)*

However, in this passage Paul presents principles for compensation to ministers.

**The Church's Attitude** - The church that is mature spiritually will be very concerned about the welfare of those that labor for them.

**The Minister's Attitude** - The minister that is mature will be ready to labor, whether he is compensated or not, realizing that God will meet his needs whether the church does or not.

Illustrate – Famous preacher from Florida would not allow the church that he was candidating in to discuss salary. He stated that if he was sure and if they were sure it was God's will, God would pay all of the bills.

## I. Paul's Power (privilege or right) (vs. 1 – 6)

The word free in v. 1 (ἐλεύθερος from ἐλεύθερος – *eleutheros* – Adj – Nom – Sing - Masc) literal means “not a slave.”

In vs. 1 and 2, Paul is once again defending his apostleship, which was a fairly common occurrence in many of his letters.

*"I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."*

(2 Corinthians 12:11-12)

The word power in vs. 4 - 6 (ἐξουσίαν from ἐξουσία – *exousia* – Noun – Acc – Sing - Fem) means authority. It means to have liberty or to have the privilege or the right to do something.

- A. The Right to Eat and Drink (v. 4)
- B. The Right to Marriage (v. 5)
- C. The Right for Provision (v. 6)

Note, however, that although Paul had the right to do many things he chose not to do some of them. Why? Because all things are not expedient.

## II. Paul's Principle for Provision (vs. 7 – 15)

- A. The Principle Represented through Illustration (v. 7)
  - 1. The Soldier
  - 2. The Farmer
  - 3. The Shepherd
- B. The Principle Restated from the Law (vs. 8 – 10; vv. 13 & 14)
  - 1. The Old Testament Principle (vs. 8 – 10)
  - 2. The Old Testament Example (vs. 13 – 14)
- C. The Principle of Reaping (v. 11)
  - 1. The minister sows spiritual things for the edification of the people.
  - 2. The minister should reap the physical things that are required for life.

*"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward."* (1 Timothy 5:17-18)

- D. The Principle Refused (vs. 12; 15)

## III. Paul's Preaching (vs. 16 – 18)

- A. He was Compelled to Preach (v. 16)

*"O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."* (Jeremiah 20:7-9; Also – Jonah was compelled to preach to the Ninevites.)

B. He Chose to Offer the Gospel Freely (vs. 17 & 18)

#### IV. Paul's Passion (vs. 19 – 23)

Though Paul was free, he became a servant to the people so that he would be more effective in reaching them with the gospel. He was willing to do whatever was necessary.

(See Philippians 2:1 – 11)

#### V. Paul's Prize (vs. 24 – 27)

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14)

A. Paul's Race

He had a purpose in his race.

B. Paul's Fight

*"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"* (2 Timothy 4:7)

He battled with real enemies: his flesh; the world; and the devil

C. Paul's Practice

Paul determined to be temperate and stay disciplined so that he himself would receive a full reward and so that he would bring more people with him.

The phrase, "I keep under" (ὑπωπιάζω from ὑπωπιάζω *hypōpiazō* – Verb – Pres – Act – Ind – 1<sup>st</sup> Person Sing) literally means to beat until black and blue. Paul was saying that he kept his body under control, or under subjection.

*"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.*

*And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."* (2

Corinthians 12:7-10)

Paul did not want to be a castaway. He wanted to remain disciplined and faithful until the Lord was finished with him. He wanted to hear the Lord say, "Well done."

*"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward." (2 John 1:8)*

*"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (1 Thessalonians 2:19)*