

# Calvary Chapel of El Cajon Women's Bible Studies

## 1 Corinthians 9

### Lesson 14

Moving from addressing the use and abuse of liberties in 1 Corinthians 8, Paul uses himself as an illustration. Using the example of the apostles' *right* to receive pay, Paul defended that right and also the right to refuse pay. His reasoning – that he might win others to the gospel. As you study, keep a close watch on how Paul reveals his heart's desire and the means to which he was willing to go for the sake of the spiritual welfare of others.

#### DAY ONE: Read 1 Corinthians 9

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheets and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they were about?

a. 1 Corinthians 9 has been divided into four sections. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

**Verses 1-14**

**Verses 15-18**

**Verses 19-23**

**Verses 24-27**

How would you title each section? Record your titles on the **Chapter & Paragraph Division Titles Chart** provided with your Observation Worksheet.

After titling each segment division, record a title for chapter 9.

2. At the right-hand side of the same chart are columns labeled **Key Word** and **Symbol**. They have been provided for you to record the key words and the symbol you have chosen to represent each one. Record the key words listed below and their symbols on the chart.

Used in prior homework lessons: *God, Jesus, Paul, recipients of the letter, and law.*

New to this lesson: *gospel* and *right*

Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in 1 Corinthians 9. Remember, as you mark the words *God, Jesus, and Paul*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to them. You do not need to mark every word that refers them – only those that you feel are significant.

3. Using the chart provided with your Observation Worksheets, add any information you feel is pertinent about the **Author(s)**, the **Recipients**, **Problems**, and **Commands**.

4. Paul uses the phrase, *Do you not know* two, times in 1 Corinthians 9 (verses 13 and 24). Record the two questions Paul asked in these verses.

## **DAY TWO: Read 1 Corinthians 9:1-14**

1. Apparently, there were people in the Corinthian church who were questioning Paul's credentials as an apostle. How did he authenticate his apostleship? 1 Corinthians 9:1b, 2.
  - a. To claim the title of *apostle* at that time, one had to have seen Jesus Christ. Today, an apostle is a church planter, one who starts churches. 1 Corinthians 9:1b proves Paul's qualification as an apostle at that time. How does 1 Corinthians 9:1c and 2 qualify him both then and now?
2. As an *apostle* Paul had all the rights and privileges of the other apostles. List a few of these rights from 1 Corinthians 9:4-6.
3. Paul supports his statements by using three examples in verse 7. What are they?
  - a. In 1 Corinthians 9:8, Paul reminds the believers that he is not simply speaking his own opinion, but his statement is in accordance with God's Word. Verse 9 quotes Deuteronomy 25:4. What does this verse say?
    - 1.) Write this verse (Deuteronomy 25:4) in your own words.
4. *...he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope* (1 Corinthians 9:10). In what way can we compare those who minister the gospel to *plowing* and *threshing*?
5. Paul asks a question in verse 11. Write that question in your own words.
  - a. What does Galatians 6:6 say about this?
  - b. Even so, Paul did not *partake of this right*. Why? 1 Corinthians 9:12

- 1.) Paul seemed to believe that taking money from the Corinthians might give them a reason to doubt his sincerity. To prevent this, Paul chose not to ask them for support. The preaching of the gospel was more important than his welfare. How does this speak to you?
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6. 2 Chronicles 31:4 supports 1 Corinthians 9:13 and 14. What were the people to do? Why?
    - a. How might the *gospel be hindered* when those *who preach the gospel* are required to support themselves through other means?

*Civilizations come into being only when they strive for the kind of man  
who believes he has more duties than rights.*

- A. Malraux

**DAY THREE: Read 1 Corinthians 9:15-18**

1. In this section, Paul further expresses his heart regarding using his right to be supported by the believers in Corinth. Summarize these verses by writing them as you would to explain Paul's position to someone.
2. Paul wrote that *preaching the gospel was not something he could boast about* (verse 16). Why not?
  - a. How do Acts 4:20 and Romans 4:2 relate to Paul's statement?
  - b. Paul said that it was necessary for him to preach the gospel. *I am compelled by God to do it* (1 Corinthians 9:16b NLT) What are some synonyms for the word *compelled*?
3. Paul did not preach *of his own free will*, but God had *chosen him and given him this sacred trust* (1 Corinthians 9:17 NLT). Record this *sacred trust* from Acts 26:16-18.

- a. Paul was not stating that he did not want to preach the gospel. Rather, he was stating that the call was beyond his own will. Record Jeremiah's dilemma from Jeremiah 20:9.
4. Paul knew of greater rewards than financial gain. What are some of the rewards you have discovered from doing God's will with no personal gain in mind?

*Care for the flock of God entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—  
not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God.*

- 1 Peter 5:2 NLT

**DAY FOUR: Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23**

1. In this section of chapter 9, Paul expresses his heart to win souls for Christ. Paul did not rely upon his freedoms, but rather *made himself a servant to all*. Describe Paul's viewpoint using the following verses:
  - a. 1 Corinthians 10:33
  - b. 2 Corinthians 4:5
  - c. Galatians 5:13

Personal: What *right* have you given up for the sake of the gospel? How do you view that sacrifice?

2. Paul did not compromise the gospel, but he sought to relate to those he sought to minister to. Fill in the following chart to see what Paul *became* for the sake of others.

Verse	To	I became	that I might
19			
20a			
20b			
21			
22			

- a. Underline and meditate on the word *win*. In what way does this speak to you?
- b. How can we *become all things to all men* without compromising our convictions?

## DAY FIVE: Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

1. Corinth was the center of the Isthmian games held every two years. These games were second only to the Olympics. It has been said that the city and hillsides of Acrocorinth were full of athletes in training for these great events. Believers in Corinth would immediately understand Paul's example of the runner in 1 Corinthians 9:24. He says that we are to *run in such a way that we might obtain it* (the prize). What kind of effort does a runner exert to win a race?
  - a. What do you learn from Hebrews 12:1-3 that will help you *run the race* with all your might?
  - b. "Go for the gold" is a motto for those who train for the Olympics. What parallels are there between these athletes and the exhortation of 1 Corinthians 9:25-27?
2. *And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things...*(1 Corinthians 9:25). *Temperate* means to exercise self-restraint or self-control. Why are those who run in races *temperate in all things*? verse 25b
  - a. Why, according to this verse, should Christians be *temperate in all things*?
    - 1.) Paul is not referring to salvation here, but to a life that strives to hear a *well done* from our Savior. *Therefore*, because Paul has this goal how does he *run* and *fight*? verse 26
      - a.) What do you think Paul means by this?
3. The word *fight* in verse 26 assumes there is an opponent. Consider 1 Peter 2:11 in the New Living Translation: *Dear brothers and sisters, you are foreigners and aliens here. So I warn you to keep away from evil desires because they fight against your very souls.* Who (or what) is our opponent?
  - a. Paul's strategy to combat these *evil desires* is in 1 Corinthians 9:27: *No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize* (NIV). In the last part of verse 26, Paul transitioned metaphors from a runner to a boxer. Remember, this is a metaphor, not something Paul literally does to himself. How can we make our bodies a slave to us rather than let them rule over us?

## DAY SIX: Review 1 Corinthians 9

1. What attitudes can prevent a believer from relinquishing her rights for the welfare of another?
2. How does insisting on our rights hinder the gospel of Christ?
3. How can neglecting spiritual disciplines (such as prayer, Bible study, and Christian fellowship) hinder a Christian from having an influence on unbelievers?
4. What one thing has this lesson shown you that you can do towards being assured of finishing your race well?
5. What impact has this lesson had on you?

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

*- 2 Timothy 4:7*

## Scripture References for Lesson 14

### DAY TWO:

**Acts 18:18** So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila were with him. He had his hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow.

**Acts 18:28** for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

**Deut. 25:4** "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.

**Galatians 6:6** Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.

**2 Chron. 31:4** Moreover he commanded the people who dwelt in Jerusalem to contribute support for the priests and the Levites, that they might devote themselves to the Law of the Lord.

### DAY THREE:

**Acts 4:20** For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

**Romans 4:2** For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

**1 Cor. 9:16-17** NLT For preaching the Good News is not something I can boast about. I am compelled by God to do it. How terrible for me if I didn't do it! 17 If I were doing this of my own free will, then I would deserve payment. But God has chosen me and given me this sacred trust, and I have no choice.

**Acts 26:16-18** But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. [17] I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, [18] to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

**Jeremiah 20:9** Then I said, "I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name." But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not.

**1 Peter 5:2** Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

### DAY FOUR:

**1 Cor. 10:33** just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

**2 Cor. 4:5** For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

**Galatians 5:13** For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

## **DAY FIVE:**

**Hebrews 12:1-3** Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, [2] looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. [3] For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

**1 Peter 2:11** NLT Dear brothers and sisters, you are foreigners and aliens here. So I warn you to keep away from evil desires because they fight against your very souls.

**1 Cor. 9:27** NIV No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

**2 Tim. 4:7** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.