

Chapter Nine

In Chapter Nine Paul illustrates the principles of knowledge and love through the personal examples of himself and Barnabas (1st Cor. 9:1-14). Paul functioned under the Law of Love when he ministered to the Corinthians without any mention of their financial opportunities on his behalf (1st Cor. 9:15-18). Paul's attitude was one of bond-service to all whom he ministered (1st Cor. 9:19-23), and his attention was focused on the things above (1st Cor. 9:24-27).

Paul & Barnabas

1. This section of the chapter is an artillery barrage of rhetorical questions.
 - a. Four questions in verse one.
 - b. Ten questions in seven verses.
 - c. Seventeen questions in thirteen verses.
2. "Am I not free" (1st Cor. 9:1) establishes the theme of the entire chapter.
 - a. The contrast of knowledge-based liberty (Jn. 8:32) and applied love will be illustrated by the Apostle Paul.
 - b. If the Corinthians were so insistent upon their liberty, shouldn't a bona-fide Apostle be able to live a Christian life of liberty? (1st Cor. 8:9 cf. 9:1)
3. The four questions of verse 1 build an air-tight legal argument.
 - a. Of course, Paul is free.
 - b. Of course, Paul is an apostle.
 - c. Of course, Paul has seen Jesus Christ.
 - d. Of course, Corinth is an unimpeachable witness to Paul's apostleship (1st Cor. 9:2).
 - 1) They are the seal (#4973) of his apostleship (#651) in the Lord (Acts 1:25; Rom. 1:5; 1st Cor. 9:2; Gal. 2:8).
 - 2) The greatest letter of commendation any minister can have is the flock that has been edified by that minister's labour (2nd Cor. 3:1-3).
4. Paul's illustration of knowledge & love is termed as a defense to those who examine him (1st Cor. 9:3).
 - a. #627: *verbal defence, a reasoned statement or argument*. Apologetics is the field of demonstrating the reasonability of Christianity.
 - b. #350: *to examine, judge, scrutinize*. Goes with the territory for ministers: cf. 1st Cor. 4:9.
5. Paul waived not only matters of liberty, but matters of legitimate obligation (1st Cor. 9:4-14).
 - a. The right to refrain from working expected certain provisions. μ . The "I" of vv.1&2 changes to a "we" of vv.4ff..
 - 1) Food & drink (1st Cor. 9:4).
 - 2) Marriage, and accompanied travel expenses (1st Cor. 9:5).
 - 3) General Financial support (1st Cor. 9:7-14).
 - b. The right to refrain from working is a contrast of the spiritual with the material (1st Cor. 9:11).
 - 1) The not-working ones are in fact working the hardest of all (1st Cor. 15:10 cf. Matt. 10:10).
 - 2) The metaphors of soldier, vinedresser, and shepherd all describe spiritual ministry (1st Cor. 9:7).
 - 3) The legal provision for oxen describes the grace provision for spiritual leaders (1st Cor. 9:9; Deut. 25:4; 1st Tim. 5:18).
 - 4) The Corinthians know that Paul was a hard worker (1st Cor. 4:12).
 - 5) This right (#1849) was the normal practice of the church (1st Cor. 9:12).
 - 6) This right was the normal practice of the Levitical priesthood (1st Cor. 9:13; Num. 18:8-20).
 - c. This is the first and only reference to Barnabas in this epistle.
 - 1) Barnabas was not one of the apostles or teachers that the Corinthians had formed a faction in support of.
 - 2) Barnabas was therefore a safe illustration to demonstrate that other grace oriented apostles could indeed waive their expected financial support.
 - d. Ministers ought to be supported by their ministries (1st Cor. 9:4,6,11,14; Matt. 10:10; Lk. 8:3; 10:7; Gal. 6:6; 1st Tim. 5:17,18; Heb. 13:16; 3rd Jn. 5-8).

No Charge to You

1. This paragraph begins with use, and ends with full use.
 - a. μ ^{#5530} (1st Cor. 9:15 (also v.12)).
 - b. μ ^{#2710} (1st Cor. 9:18).
 - c. Both terms are employed in 1st Cor. 7:31.
 - 1) Using the world without making “full use” of it means believers can rest by faith in the Sovereignty of God to work all things together for good (Job 27:16,17; Prov. 13:22; 28:8; Ecc. 2:26).
 - 2) Believers in grace may not use certain rights and privileges “fully” or even at all for the sake of edifying fellow believers.
2. Paul does not “boast” in order to change what the Corinthians are doing. He “boasts” so as to illustrate what the Corinthians are not doing (1st Cor. 9:15,16).
 - a. μ ^{#2745} (1st Cor. 1:31; 2nd Cor. 10:17).
 - b. This principle was one that the Corinthians struggled to understand, and so Paul had to return to it again and again (2nd Cor. 11:7-11; 12:13-16).
3. The 3rd class conditional “if I preach the Gospel” considers the question of evangelizing versus not evangelizing (1st Cor. 9:16).
 - a. The nature of Biblical communication is likened to “compulsion.” μ .
 - 1) ^{#318} used already in 1st Cor. 7:26,37. Upcoming uses in 2nd Cor. 9:7; Philem. 14; Jude 3.
 - 2) μ ^{#1945}: *to lay upon, impose*; Lk. 23:23; 1st Cor. 9:16; Heb. 9:10.
 - b. A Bible communicator impressed with the urgency of his calling, recognizes the consuming necessity to be faithful, and proceeds in obedience (Jer. 1:17; 20:7-9; Amos 3:8; Acts 4:20).
4. The 1st class conditional “if I do this voluntarily” considers the unquestioned nature of voluntary service (1st Cor. 9:17a; 2nd Cor. 9:7; 1st Pet. 5:2).
 - a. ^{#1635}: *unforced, voluntary, willing*. ^{#1596}: *voluntarily, willingly*.
 - b. The consequences of the 1st class condition is a present possession of reward. μ . μ ^{#3408} .
5. The 1st class conditional “if I do this against my will” considers the unquestioned nature of stewardship commitment (1st Cor. 9:17b; cf. 4:1; Gal. 2:7; Eph. 3:2; Phil. 1:16; Col. 1:25).
 - a. ^{#210}_{Hapax}: *not of one’s own will*.
 - b. The consequences of the 1st class condition is a perfect entrustment of a stewardship. μ . μ .
perf.pass.ind. ^{#4100} .
6. The reward is the grace giving (1st Cor. 9:18; Acts 20:35).

Bond Service with a Heavenly View

1. The conclusion to chapter nine explains why Paul can set aside privileges (liberties) and even rights (obligations/expectations).
2. Chapter nine began with “Am I not free?” (9:1) but it concludes with “Though I am free” (9:19).
 - a. Continually being free from all, I enslaved myself to all.
 - 1) ^{#1658}: *free* (1st Cor. 7:21,22; 9:1,19). pres.act.ptc. μ ^{#1510}: *to be*.
 - 2) ^{#1402}: *to make a slave of, reduce to bondage*. This is not God’s enslaving of us unto righteousness (Rom. 6:18,19,22), but our own self-enslaving to others for their evangelism and edification.
 - 3) Note: Paul’s aorist self-enslaving did not alter his present active participle of continuously being () free. Consider: Jesus’ message of losing one’s life (Matt. 16:25).
 - b. In order that I might win more.
 - 1) ^{#2443}: *that, in order that, so that*.
 - 2) v.1s.aor.act.subj. ^{#2770}: *to gain, acquire, to win*. Used 17x in the NT. 5x in this paragraph. (Matt. 16:26; 18:15; 25:16,17,20,22; Mk. 8:36; Lk. 9:25; Acts 27:21; 1st Cor. 9:19,20_{x2},21,22; Phil. 3:8; Jas. 4:13; 1st Pet. 3:1) ^{#2771}: *gain, advantage* (Phil. 1:21; 3:7; Tit. 1:11).
 - c. Peter also learned the principle of the “free” bondsman (1st Pet. 2:16).
3. “Winning” equals “saving” (1st Cor. 9:22). ^{#4982}: *to save, rescue from danger, deliver* (cf. Jude 23).
 - a. Church discipline can “win” a brother (Matt. 18:15).
 - b. Godly wives can “win” their husbands (1st Pet. 3:1) & vice-versa (1st Cor. 7:16).
 - c. Imitating Christ as bond-servants can “win” a maximum number of others (1st Cor. 9:19; Phil. 2:7).
4. “Winning” the maximum number of Jews possible meant that Paul had to become “as a Jew” (1st Cor. 9:20).
 - a. μ aor.mid.ind. μ ^{#1096}: *to become, come into existence, begin to be, receive being*.
 - b. ^{#2453}. *Jewish* (adj. used almost always substantively). Dative plural, nominative singular, accusative plural of μ .
 - c. The combination of μ or μ with μ is used “to express the basic reality of something” (BDAG) as a similarity. Paul says “I became Jew-like to the Jews so that I might win Jews.”
 - 1) Like children (Matt. 18:4).
 - 2) Like angels (Matt. 22:30).
 - 3) Like sheep without a shepherd (Mk. 6:34).
 - 4) Like the sand of the sea (Rom. 9:27), like Sodom (Rom. 9:29).
 - 5) Like grass (1st Pet. 1:24).
 - 6) Like a thousand years & like one day (2nd Pet. 3:8).
 - d. Becoming “like” our targeted winnings doesn’t mean we change the reality of our being.
 - 1) Becoming under-law-like did not change Paul’s being not under Mosaic law (1st Cor. 9:20b).
 - 2) Becoming Mosaic law-less-like did not change Paul’s being lawful according to the Law of Christ (1st Cor. 9:21).
5. Winning the weak required Paul to become weak (not weak-like) (1st Cor. 9:22a). ^{#772}: *without strength, weak* (1st Cor. 8:7; Rom. 14:1; 15:1; 1st Thess. 5:14 cf. 2nd Cor. 12:10).
6. Becoming all things to all men uses all means to “save” some (1st Cor. 9:22b).
 - a. Don’t compromise—if you can’t become the reality, become a facsimile.
 - b. Becoming or becoming like our targeted winnings is the essence of Christ-like-ness (Phil. 2:5-7).
 - c. Being pleasing to men (1st Cor. 9:22b; 10:33) is not a compromise in seeking favor of men (Gal. 1:10).
7. The motivation for all things to all men using all means is for the sake of the gospel (1st Cor. 9:23).
8. An eternal perspective serves to warn us from disqualification (1st Cor. 9:24-27).

- a. “Do you not know” () means that Paul is using the obvious to illustrate (v.24).
- 1) In stadium races (^{#4712}) only one “receives” (μ ^{#2983}) the prize (^{#1017} 1st Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:14; ^{#1018} Col. 3:15).
 - 2) In the Christian Way of Life every believer can potentially “win” (μ ^{#2638} Rom. 9:30; 1st Cor. 9:24; Eph. 3:18; Phil. 3:12_{x2},13; 1st Thess. 5:4).
- b. “Every competitor” (μ ^{#75}) continues the metaphor contrasting sports stars with Church Members (v.25). ^{#73} , ^{#74} , μ ^{#75} common sports metaphor used in the NT 1st Tim. 4:10; 6:12; 2nd Tim. 4:7; Heb. 12:1.
- 1) Perishing ones agonize for a perishable (^{#5349} Rom. 1:23; 1st Cor. 9:25; 15:53,54; 1st Pet. 1:18,23) crown (^{#4735}).
 - 2) Imperishable saints agonize for an imperishable (^{#862} Rom. 1:23; 1st Cor. 9:25; 15:52; 1st Tim. 1:17; Tit. 2:7; 1st Pet. 1:4,23; 3:4) crown.
 - 3) Self-control (μ ^{#1467} 1st Cor. 7:9; 9:25; LXX Gen. 43:31; ^{#1466} Acts 24:25; Gal. 5:23; 2nd Pet. 1:6_{x2}; ^{#1468} Tit. 1:8) is essential for victory.
- c. Paul splits the metaphor into two athletic realms (v.26).
- 1) Running not without aim (fr. ^{#84} Hapax fr. ^{#82} *indistinct* 1st Cor. 14:8; also ^{#83} *uncertainty* 1st Tim. 6:17). The overall concept is “unclear” in noun, adjective, and adverb forms.
 - 2) Boxing not beating the air (). Obviously, the objective defines the necessary activity.
- d. Paul recognized that the greatest enemy to an eternal perspective was his own body (μ ^{#4983}) (v.27).
- 1) He disciplined (^{#5299} Lk. 18:5; 1st Cor. 9:27) it. The verb in secular lit. means *to give a black eye*.
 - 2) He enslaved (^{#1396} Hapax) it. Rare word, intensive and thorough.
 - 3) He apprehended disqualification (μ ^{#96} *unapproved* 2nd Cor. 13:5-7; *worthless* Tit. 1:16).

Principle: Church Members are admonished to brutally deal with their own sinful bodies so as to not forfeit eternal crowns.