



The First Epistle to the Corinthians

I Corinthians 9:1-14 Paul's Apostleship & Freedom Part 1

- ***I Corinth 9:1,2: “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? 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.”***
 - What's an *apostle*?
 - Having seen Jesus Christ is a basic principle of being an apostle - *Acts 1:21-22, 2:32, 3:15, 9:3-5,17, 27; I Cor 15:8*
 - *having not seen – perfect active indicative*
 - The working of wonders or miracles.
 - Another mark can be found in the results of his preaching - *the seal of my apostleship in the Lord – Acts 22:14-16*
 - Their conversion could not have been accomplished by man; God used Paul.
 - From what is *Paul free*?
 - Do you think Paul in anyway is doubting himself here?



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- ***I Corinth 9:3-6: “My defense to those who examine me is this: Do we have no right to eat and drink? Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working?”***
 - What do you make of *Paul's defense to those who examine him*?
 - *defense* here means defense against a charge.
 - *to those who examine him* – a forensic term , e.g. judges
 - *Luke 23:14; Acts 4:9 12:19, 24:8.*
 - What is Paul defending?
 - Isn't it his liberty and freedom?



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- And here there are multiple examples including *the right (power) to eat and drink*.
 - » Legally, *Col 2:16 - So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths.*
 - » Paganistic, *1 Cor 8:4 - Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one.*
 - » In compensation for services, *1 Cor 9:4 - Do we have no right to eat and drink?*
- *Do we have no right to take along a believing wife*
 - Apparently most apostles traveled with *believing wives* (and/or families) but not *Paul and Barnabas*.
 - Note *believing wives!*
 - And despite Peter, who was apparently with wife, this verse is one in which Papists and their flock felt.
- What does *or is it only Barnabas and I (Acts 18:3, both tentmakers) who have no right to refrain from working?*
 - Not live by the works of their hands (*Acts 20:34*)?
- Is Paul's defense a bit too defensive?



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- See also *Acts 22:1, 25:16; 2 Cor 7:11; Phil 1:7,17; 2 Tim 4:16; 1 Pet 3:15.*
- ***I Corinth 9:7: "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?"***
 - How would you describe these inquiries?
 - The principle here is that everyone lives off of the proceeds of their occupation, and the preaching of the gospel is no exception.
- ***I Corinth 9:8: "Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also?"***
 - Is this verse inconsistent with v. 7?
 - How does this relate to being free?
 - Why would Paul bring up the law here?



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- ***I Corinth 9:9: "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?***
 - The idea here is that the ox should not be prevented from eating when it's available; only when it is muzzled.
 - And the freedom God gives oxen relates to us as believers living in a real world system.
- ***I Corinth 9:1:10 "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.***
 - *altogether* here is best translated *chiefly*.
 - And the answer is yes, he cares about oxen, birds and beyond but *no doubt* His ultimate care is for us with great hope.



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- *1 Tim 5:18 - For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."*
- *1 Cor 3:9 - For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building.*
- *1 Cor 3:6 - I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.*
- ***I Corinth 9:11,12: "If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? 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."***
 - I wish *if (ei)* here was not translated as conditional but it depends on *spiritual things having been sown*.
 - The intent here is that spiritual labor should be rewarded as for physical labor, here to the Corinthian body of believers.
 - *If others are partakers of this right over you, Paul did not*



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- Do you think Paul was setting a precedent here that other apostles needed to follow?
 - The furtherance of the gospel was most important (*not hindered* or *without charge*).
 - But at times Paul did accept compensation for his service – *Phil 4:15,16*
- ***I Corinth 9:13: “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?”***
 - McCalley – ‘It was the right of the Old Testament priests to eat part of the sacrifices that they offered at the altar (*Num 18:8-19, Deut 18:1*).
 - Granted, it was capable of abuse and in later times was, as a matter of fact, abused.’



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- ***I Corinth 9:14: “Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.”***
 - Why *even so*?
 - And the Lord so *commanded (ordained)* – *Matt 10:9,10, Luke 10:7,8*
 - As does Paul – *Gal 6:6, 1 Tim 5:17*