

We will begin our 8th lecture on 1 Corinthians. /Today we will study 1 Corinthians 9. /The title of chapter 9 is “Apostle.” /First, verses 1-3. The apostle’s defense. /Second, verses 4-14. The rights of a preacher. /Third, verses 15-18. Go beyond everything to preach the gospel.

/Fourth, verses 19-22. Embrace everyone. /Fifth, verses 23-27. Running to share in the gospel. /The chapter explains Paul’s position as apostle, and it explains the freedom that is in Christ.

/1 Corinthians 9:13 gives a detailed example of the principles of practicing faith as declared by Paul. /Paul emphasizes the necessity to lay down every right and freedom in Christ to adopt the position of servant when it comes to the gospel.

/Paul specifically teaches the true freedom that is in Christ to those who argue they are free to eat food offered to idols. /To set an example, Paul wrote down his life as a testimony.

/9:1-3 says, “Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you, for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. This is my defense to those who would examine me.

/In verse 1, Paul defends his rights and his position. /He says, “Am I not free?” /Paul is free from the law, and in the gospel of Christ, he has received spiritual freedom.

/Paul also says, “Am I not an apostle?” /Paul is an apostle sent by the resurrected Jesus himself. /He says, “Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?” /As you all know, Paul encountered the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus. /He didn’t see a vision, but he saw Jesus. /This is powerful evidence that Paul was appointed apostle.

/Paul says, “Are not you my workmanship in the Lord?” /It means the church in Corinth was planted as a result of Paul doing work as an apostle in the Lord and preaching the gospel. /The reason Paul says this is false prophets appeared and criticized Paul, denying that he was an apostle.

/It is a serious matter for people to deny Paul’s apostleship. /The reason is denying Paul’s apostleship is denying the gospel preached by Paul. /For this reason, Paul emphasizes the fact that Jesus himself sent Paul as an apostle.

/Paul speaks to the Corinthian church in this manner. /Others may deny his apostleship, but the church of Corinth cannot deny it. /The Corinthian church cannot deny this fact because it is a church formed through the Apostle Paul. /Therefore, the church of Corinth is evidence of Paul’s apostleship—it is like a stamp. /In this way, in verses 1 and 2, Paul defends himself against those who criticize him.

/Second, verses 4-14. The rights of a preacher.

/Verses 4-7. /Do we not have the right to eat and drink? Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock without getting some of the milk?

/God's servants have the right to eat and drink. /Pastors have the right to be rewarded by the church. /Also, like Peter, pastors have the right to take their wives around. /Peter brought his wife when he preached the gospel.

/Verse 5 says, "Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife?" /Everyone is allowed to take along their believing wife when they evangelize. /Paul and Barnabas say that they have the right to not do work in the world but to be rewarded by the church.

/It is only fair for someone to be paid by the place where he works. Paul takes three examples. /A soldier does not carry his food around, but the nation feeds him. /The farmer plants a vineyard and eats the fruit. /Someone who tends a flock has the right to eat the milk of the flock.

/Therefore, it is fair for Paul to work with the church of Corinth and receive fair compensation. /But it was the false prophets in the church of Corinth who denied Paul's apostleship.

/In verses 8-10, Paul continues to explain that those who work have the right to eat. /He says that they shouldn't muzzle an ox when it treads the grain. /This comes from the Law of Moses in Deuteronomy 25:4.

/The verse says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain." /If an ox treading out the grain is muzzled, it is unable to eat. /To not muzzle an ox means to let it eat. /An ox that works definitely needs to eat. /In this way, those who do the Lord's work have the right to be compensated by the church. Normally, pastors need to be paid by the church when they work.

/Verse 11. /If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?

/ "Sown spiritual things" means that the gospel was preached in the Holy Spirit. / "Reap material things" refers to pastors being paid with material things. /Galatians 6:6 says, "Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches."

/Romans 15:27 reads, "For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings." /Because the Gentiles received the spiritual gospel from the Jerusalem church, it was fit for them to help the Jerusalem church with material things when it was suffering due to famine.

/What is spiritual is eternal and precious. /If they had received what is eternal and precious, it makes sense for them to supply material things.

/Verse 12. /If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

/Paul says that others share this rightful claim to you. /He is talking about the Corinthian church's false prophets. /He is saying that the false prophets have this material right— doesn't the Apostle Paul have more?

/Paul most certainly did have the right, but in order to prevent it from hindering his work of preaching the gospel, he didn't make use of the right. /People who preach the gospel must do whatever they can to bring one more person to Jesus, to prevent believers from falling into temptation.

/In order to not receive material things as a preacher of the gospel, Paul worked with his own hands as he spread the gospel.

/Verses 13-14. /Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.

/In the Old Testament times, the priests and Levites who worked in the temple got their food from the temple. /God made it so that those who served at the altar get the food from the altar.

/After the priests gave offerings to God, they ate a portion of that food. /Jesus commanded that those who proclaim the gospel live by the gospel. /Matthew 10:10 says, "For the laborer deserves his food." Luke 10:7.

/Whoever proclaims the gospel should live by the gospel. /Today's pastors cannot live by the gospel because they cannot handle the work of the gospel. /As God gives the birds of the air food to eat, he gives food to those who carry out the work of the gospel.

/Third, go beyond everything to spread the gospel. /Verses 15 talks about this.

/Verse 15. /But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing these things to secure any such provision. For I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of my ground for boasting.

/The verse says, "But I have made no use of any of these rights." /Paul didn't make any use of the material rights he had with the church of Corinth. /As we know, Paul worked and earned money while he preached the gospel.

/Paul didn't receive wages from the church. Acts 20:33-34. /A preacher who becomes a preacher to earn money because he has no other job isn't a true preacher.

/This person is a preacher who works for wages. God's servants must set aside the problem of material things, preach the gospel with a sense of calling, and do the work of God.

/Verse 15 says, "For I would rather die." /He is saying he would rather die than be treated with these things. /Paul made a big decision. /The verse shows us his firm resolution. /He would rather die than be treated.

/There is a serious problem in today's church. /Pastors try to take as much as they can from the church, while church members do whatever they can to treat their pastors with as little as possible. /However, it should be the reverse.

/Pastors must have the mentality that they should not be treated, while believers should do whatever they can to treat their pastors. /If pastors faithfully do the work of God, God will feed them and clothe them.

/Why did Paul rather have death than to be treated? The second half of verse 15 says, "Than have anyone deprive me of my ground for boasting." /Paul boasted in the gospel.

/Galatians 6:14 says, "But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." /If Paul relied on material things while he preached the gospel, /the gospel would have gone somewhere meaningless.

/Verse 16. /For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!

/Why does Paul say that it is woe to us if we do not preach the gospel? /This means the gospel is not only for us. God says we need to preach the gospel to many people, to share with them.

/Therefore preachers of the gospel have the duty of preaching the gospel. Ezekiel 3:17-19 says that if the preacher does not deliver the gospel, the person perishes. The preacher is responsible for this. But if the preacher preaches the gospel but the person does not believe, the preacher has no responsibility.

/Paul says he is innocent of the blood of all. /This means Paul preached the gospel to everyone he should preach to. Acts 20:26. /Furthermore, in Romans 1:14, Paul says he is under obligation.

/As someone under obligation to all people, Paul did his best to preach the gospel to all people. /We who believe in Jesus and are saved must have a heart of obligation. /There were missionaries who delivered the gospel to us. They came here and suffered to spread the gospel.

/We too are obligated to the gospel. /We must preach the gospel knowing that there is woe to us if we do not preach the gospel.

/Verse 17. /For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship.

/ “For if I do this of my own will” means “If I voluntarily preach the gospel with a heart of sacrifice, I will be rewarded.” / “If not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship” means “If I do not volunteer to preach the gospel.” /Even so, because Paul is entrusted with a stewardship, it is saying he must preach the gospel.

/Preaching the gospel is Jesus’ command. /It is the King’s command. /If you live under a kingship, wouldn’t it be hard to keep your life if you disobey a king’s order? /We need to know that preaching the gospel is an order given by the King, and we must do our best to preach the gospel.

/Verse 18. /What then is my reward? That in my preaching I may present the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.

/Paul says that sacrificing for the gospel is a reward before God. /In other words, Paul could use his rights to be treated well, but not using his rights is his reward. /The more we sacrifice for the gospel, the greater our reward.

/Paul could have eaten, but for the Lord, he didn’t eat. He could have enjoyed pleasures, but for the Lord, he gave it up, and he could have possessed many things, but for the Lord, he didn’t keep them. He could have lived, but for the Lord, he was martyred. Paul had a Roman citizenship, but he didn’t use that right but was beaten. For all these things, God will reward him greatly. /Whoever sacrifices for the Lord will be rewarded before God.

/Fourth, embrace everyone. /Verses 19-22.

/Verse 19. /For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.

/Paul says, “For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all.” /Because of Christ’s redemption, we are free from sin and the law.

/However, in order to guide more people to Christ, he became a servant to all. /He humbled himself like Christ humbled himself. Philippians 2:6-8.

/Verses 20-22. /To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside

the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.

/When preaching the gospel, Paul embraced everyone. /This does not mean he compromised the truth. /He did it to bring more people to Christ.

/To the Jews, Paul became as a Jew, to those under the law, he became as one under the law, /and to those outside the law, he became as one outside the law. /The weak are those who are weak in faith and in their conscience. Paul adjusted himself to their standards when he dealt with them.

/Here, it says Paul became a Jew to the Jews, and when Paul proclaimed the gospel, he himself said he is a Jew. /He treated the Jews, who were his people, with friendliness to deliver the gospel to them.

/Also, to those under the law, Paul kept the rituals of the law. /For example, he circumcised Timothy. Acts 16:2-3. /Furthermore, Paul went up to the Jerusalem temple and purified himself. Acts 21:17-26.

/But when raising up the truth, Paul did not make concessions. /He did not circumcise Titus. Galatians 2:3. /To those who knew the law, he used the Law of Moses to preach the gospel to them.

/For example, Deuteronomy 18:15 says, “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you.” / “A prophet like me” ultimately refers to the Messiah who is to come. /Did it not say God will raise up for you a prophet like me?

/Therefore, to those who knew the law, Paul bore witness by saying that believing in Christ means the law is being fulfilled. In this way, to those who knew the law, Paul did his best to preach the gospel.

/How did Paul preach the gospel to Gentiles outside the law? /Paul bore witness, saying that salvation is not earned by keeping the law. /Paul taught them that whoever believes in Jesus becomes a child of God and receives salvation.

/Paul also went to Antioch and sat with Gentiles. /On the other hand, Peter was rebuked for his hypocrisy. Galatians 2:11. /Paul became like the Gentiles in this way.

/Making sure he did not stray from the truth, Paul had fellowship with Gentiles and told them the gospel.

/Verse 22 says “the weak,” and this refers to those who are weak in faith and in their conscience. To the weak, Paul became like the weak. /They were people who had a weak understanding of the truth. /Therefore, we cannot say that their way of thinking is a sin.

/Thus Paul tolerated their weakness. /In 8:13, Paul said he would never eat meat if it made the weak stumble.

/Apart from spreading the gospel to these people, Paul preached the gospel to many other kinds of people. /This is the experience of walking in faith. /It says that Christ sympathizes with our weaknesses. Hebrews 4:15.

/Fifth, the faith of running to share in the gospel.

/Verses 23-24. /I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings. Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.

/Paul says, “I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.” /We mustn’t stop at learning the gospel and preaching it, but we must go further to share in the gospel and stand in it.

/Paul, whether in life or death, wanted Christ to **be** honored in his body. Philippians 1:20. /Paul didn’t stop at believing the gospel and preaching it. /He worked hard to share in the gospel.

/If we preach the gospel to others but do not share in it, our spirits do not gain anything. That is why Paul, who received Christ, regarded everything of the flesh as garbage in order to live a life of discovering within him.

/Preachers of the gospel must not only focus on teaching others, but they need to work hard in sharing in the gospel. /If we spread the word to someone else, but we ourselves are abandoned, how sad would that be? /That is why Paul lived a life of running in faith, so that he may share in the gospel.

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/During Paul’s time, every two years, something similar to the Olympics was held in Corinth. /In these games, there was a race, and only one person received the prize. /Therefore, we Christians must do our best to run in faith as if we are running to receive the prize.

/Our walk of faith is similar to running in a race. /The person who runs for the prize must direct all his strength to himself. Philippians 3:10-14; 2 Timothy 4:7; Hebrews 12:1-4.

/Verse 25. /Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

/Many months before the Olympics start, athletes practice self-control, and they are prohibited from doing things that may have negative effects on their performance. /The

athletes especially keep a distance from enjoying pleasures, and they follow regular eating and sleeping patterns. /Every day, they train their bodies.

/For what do the players do this? /They do it to receive a perishable wreath. /To receive this perishable wreath, they can't eat, can't sleep, and they must sweat as they train everyday.

/Then shouldn't we believers, to receive an eternal wreath, work harder than these athletes and have more self-control? /In order to have a proper walk of faith, we must control ourselves and run with patience.

/If we believers do not have self-control, we will not do well in our lives of faith. /We can only run as much as we have self-control, and we must have self-control to follow after the image of God. /We must use the time, health, and materials that God has given us to grow in faith.

/Verse 26. /So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air.

/If there is no direction to which we run, we cannot reach the finish line. /Without an objective, we cannot succeed in running. /We must choose an objective for running in faith.

/Our objective as believers is Jesus Christ. /Jesus Christ, who is our goal, is the objective of our faith. /Believers must daily become like Jesus. /When we fight the good fight, we must not beat the air, but we need to know clearly who our enemy is. /Who is someone we need to fight against? /The answer is ourselves.

/Paul says he disciplines his body to keep it under control. /The devil does not rest for one day. /He presses on the corrupt nature of believers to make them sin. /Therefore, our regenerated spirits must always receive the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

/We need to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to fight the devil and defeat him. /We have to discipline the sinful nature of our flesh and keep it under control. /It is impossible for us to do this on our own. /But if the Holy Spirit is with us, it is possible.

/We need to be molded into the image of Christ. /A believer's lifelong enemy is the person himself. /It is important that we fight ourselves first and win. 1 Peter 2:11.

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/Fearing he would be disqualified after preaching the gospel, Paul always disciplined himself and kept his body under control. /Today, we preachers of the gospel must follow after Paul.

/This concludes our 8th lecture on 1 and 2 Corinthians. /Goodbye.