

(1st Corinthians 9:1-14)
“Defending My Mission”

~ INTRO ~

LAST TIME IN (Chap. 8)

- Paul dealt with the issue of Christian liberty.
 - “Just because I have the freedom to do something...
 - Doesn’t always mean that I should.”

IN FACT... WE LEARNED...

- That **sometimes**... love causes me to surrender something...
 - I have every right to enjoy.

~ STUDY ~

NOW TODAY... IN (Chap. 9)

- Paul makes the teaching personal.
 - He begins with a defense of his calling...
 - And then moves into his surrender for the gospel’s sake.

IN ESSENCE HE SAYS...

- “Let me show you what surrender looks like in my own life.”
 - Paul had rights.
 - Paul had freedoms.
 - Paul had legitimate expectations.
- But he was willing to lay some of those things down...
 - In order to preach the Gospel in Corinth.

IDEA #1 – MY CALLING

SOME PEOPLE WERE QUESTIONING...

- Paul’s legitimacy as an apostle.

THIS IS INTERESTING...

- Because the church at Corinth were Christians...
 - Largely because of Paul’s ministry!
- “You want evidence that God called me? Look around the church.”

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- Your transformed lives...
 - Is the evidence of God working through me.

SIDE NOTE:

- Because many of you are newer to the faith.

The Greek word for *apostle* is (***apostolos***)... meaning:

- *One who is sent / a messenger / OR an authorized representative.*
- It carries the idea of being sent out on a mission with authority.

USED TWO WAYS:

- 1) A **general sense** — someone sent as a messenger or missionary by a church.
- 2) A **specific sense** — an Apostle of Jesus Christ.

HERE’S WHY I MAKE THIS DISTINCTION...

- (Eph. 4:11-12) NKJV

(v.11)

Apostles = A **governing ministry**; those sent out to establish ministries.

Prophets = A **guiding ministry** where the word of God is spoken by the Spirit.

Evangelists = A **gathering ministry** (Greg Laurie, Billy Graham) as they hold crusades to share the Gospel.

Pastors = A **guarding ministry** to protecting and caring for the church.

Teachers = A **grounding ministry**, which grounds people in the Scripture.

(v.12) THE PURPOSE OF THESE GIFTS...

- Is not titles—it’s for equipping the saints to do ministry.

Churches are places primarily to build up the saints...

- Who in-turn... do the work of ministry...

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- Leading people to faith AND serving others.
- It's your life being poured out for Christ.

IDEA #2 – MY RIGHTS

Paul continues by talking about some of the rights....

- He & Barnabas possessed as apostles.

PAUL SAYS...

- Why should everyone else receive support for ministry...
 - While Barnabas and I are expected to support ourselves?

REMEMBER...

- Paul was a tentmaker.
 - And there were seasons when he worked with his hands...
 - While also preaching the gospel.

But he wanted them to understand:

- **He wasn't** working because ministers don't deserve support.
- **He** worked because he had chosen...
 - To refrain from being supported as the church was being planted.

IDEA #3 – GOD'S PRINCIPLE FOR SUPPORT

THREE TYPES OF ARGUMENTS...

- The **practical** (v.7)...
- The **scriptural** (vv.9-13)
- **God's command** (v.14)

THE PRACTICAL ARGUMENT: (v.7)

- 1) A soldier doesn't go to war at his own expense.
- 2) A farmer plants a vineyard and eats from its fruit.
- 3) A shepherd tends a flock and drinks from its milk.

Christian ministry carries the same rights to financial-support.

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The principle is straight forward...

- Those who give their lives for the Gospel...
 - Should reasonably benefit from their labor.

THE SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT:

(vv.9-10) Carries a principle from the OT (Deut. 25:4)...

- Those who labor should share in the fruit of their labor.

(vv.11-12)

- When you're part of a fellowship...
 - It's important that you give financial support.

ANOTHER SIDE NOTE:

- The **basic order** of generosity:
 - 1) Home church – regular faithful giving (“*tithe*”).
 - 2) Outside ministries – additional generosity (“*offerings*”).

Many Christians are never taught that generosity starts at home...

- And whatever else you desire to give is added on top of that.

(v.13) Paul keeps the argument for support going...

- **Spiritual workers** are supported through the ministry they perform

~ IN CLOSING ~

(v.14) NLT

*In the same way, the Lord ordered that those who preach the Good News
should be supported by those who benefit from it.*

HEAR ME ON THIS CHURCH...

- Support is **God's command** and not man's invention.

HOWEVER...

- While Paul had the right to receive support...
 - He chose NOT to use that right.

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WE ALL HAVE RIGHTS...

- But will we surrender them before allowing the Gospel to be hindered?

That’s really the lesson Paul has been teaching since (chap. 8)...

- Christian maturity isn’t only knowing what I’m allowed to do...
 - It’s knowing **WHEN** love requires me to lay something down.