

Freedom and Rights or Slavery and Service?

1 Corinthians 9

Paul's Exalted Status as an Apostle

This section begins with rhetorical questions.

These questions call attention to something the Corinthians already know.

The first two pose the outline for his persuasion.

The first question

“Of course you know I am free, don't you?”

The discussion for this takes place in 9:19-23 (note v 19) MORE LATER

The second question

“Of course you know I am an apostle don't you?”

The discussion for this takes place in 9:1c-18.

He states that he has the right (authority) to receive support because of his status as an apostle.

Paul demonstrates his status as an apostle

He has seen the risen Christ, 9:1c

He has a seal of his authorized ministry, the establishment of the church at Corinth, 9:1d, 2.

Paul shows the application of this status as an apostle, he has the right to certain things

Note usages of the word “right,” v, 4, 5, 6, 15, 18

Food and drink, 9:4, 6

To take a wife with him, 9:5

This matter defended and illustrated (note references to food), 9:7-14

In natural logic, 9:7

In the Old Testament, 9:8-10

In personal relationship logic, 9:11-12a

In temple codes, 9:13

The Lord's command, 9:14

The first question visited

“Of course you know I am free, don't you?”

The discussion for this takes place in 9:19-23 (note v 19): I make myself a slave...

Paul's Servant Spirit as an Apostle

We (Barnabas and I) could have used this right, but didn't, 9:12b, 15

Because it may have hindered the gospel, 9:12b

Because he wanted the reward of doing it free of charge, 9:18

Paul refused to profit from the exercise of his rights at the cost of love for people.

Paul voluntarily relinquishes freedom in order to be under any earthly rules and regulations to serve Christ's elect and bring them to faith, 9:20-23.

Low-status people have nothing to surrender.

High status people, those who have rights and freedoms, are called on to show their status by surrendering them for the sake of Christ.

What about you?

Paul as a Disciplined Athlete, 9:24-27

The only way an athlete wins the prize is through...

Discipline—doing the hard things in spite of how you feel

Sacrifice—giving up items of pleasure and comfort

Run as though eternity depended upon it. It does!

So what?

You know there are no Gods but one (8:4-6)...

But if this about knowledge (what you've learned) then you'll be proud, 8:1c

You'll focus on your wants and desires

You'll come to church late and focus on not getting what you want; you'll grumble and complain a great deal.

It's too cold, too hot, too loud, too soft, too long, too short, too many old people, not enough old people, too contemporary, not contemporary enough, too many programs, not enough programs

There is nothing here for me...

I've heard that in our exodus 4-5 times

If it is about love (for God, for brothers, for lost people, 8:1d), you'll

Give up your rights

I don't want the exercise of my right to be a stumbling block. I don't need to exercise it (8:13).

Give up your freedoms

I don't want the exercise of my freedom to become an obstacle to someone coming to Christ.

Discipline yourself and make sacrifices to minister effectively for Christ.

You'll come to church early and help others with their needs.

Who can I serve? How can I help? Where can I get busy?

Most people know a whole lot more than they love.

An illustration—only an illustration

You know there is no commandment in the Bible to wear a coat and tie to church on Sunday

But would you wear one if it removed obstacles in the minds of weak or unsaved peoples?

Would you stop wearing one if you could be convinced that not wearing one would remove an obstacle in the mind of weak or unsaved peoples?