

in Jesus, even in his afflictions.

The Gospel message was everything to Paul; he always shared it, even when he did not feel well.

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### THE RIGHTS OF GOSPEL PREACHING

*“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? (14) In the same way, **the Lord commanded** that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.”*

(1 Corinthians 9:13-14)

In these verses, he compares the Temple Priests with Gospel preachers. He tells us that the Lord COMMANDED that Gospel preachers should make their living from their Gospel ministry. Serving as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is an arduous calling that requires complete commitment. The right to earn a livelihood is legitimate, as is the command from the Lord.

But Paul did not exercise his right to compensation. For the sake of the Gospel, he refused to make money a stumbling block.

Notice Paul’s choice does not invalidate the Lord’s command. Instead, it demonstrates the heart and mindset of legitimate ministers and ministries.

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PAUL’S REWARD

*“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. (19) For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.” (1 Corinthians 9:18-19)

What is the reward that Paul is talking about? The answer is in verse 19. Paul chose to FREELY proclaim the Gospel with the sole intention of WINNING MORE to Jesus. As stated above, it is the right of the preacher to expect to earn a living, but Paul CHOSE not to in order to WIN MORE for Jesus.

Paul knew that money was a significant problem for most people, and he did not want to allow for any issues between his message and his audience. Paul desired his reward to come from God rather than those he ministered to. He knew that it was more blessed to give than to receive.

“I have coveted no man’s silver, or gold, or apparel. (34) Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. (35) I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Acts 20:33-35)

So, Paul gave his all for the sake of the Gospel!

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### Conclusion

Paul’s intense desire was for the SALVATION of lost sinners. He did everything he could to proclaim the message of Jesus without hindrance.

*“...Then said Jesus unto him, **Go, and do thou likewise.**” (Luke 10:37)*

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*“And **this I do for the gospel’s sake**, that I might be partaker thereof with you.” (1 Corinthians 9:23)*

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### FOR THE GOSPEL

When reading the Bible, it is vital to understand the purpose of every word of Scripture, and that purpose is...

### **To bring people to Jesus!**

Paul ‘hungered’ for the salvation of souls. Paul’s statement in 1 Corinthians 9:23 serves as a powerful reminder of his intense desire to see people saved. **Everything** Paul did was for the purpose of spreading the Gospel. Paul was focused on releasing God’s POWER unto salvation, the Gospel.

*“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for **it is the power of God unto salvation** to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” (Romans 1:16)*

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WOE IF I DON’T PREACH

*“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!** (17) For if I do*

WHY PAUL DID WHAT HE DID

this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship.”
(1 Corinthians 9:16-17)

Paul was commissioned to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Stewardship of the Gospel was required of him throughout his life after conversion. When Paul responded in faith to Jesus, **he gave up his right to choose. He knew that his only choice was to OBEY or DISOBEY.** Paul chose to obey Jesus, and he is still preaching the Gospel to this day via the words inspired by the Holy Spirit in the Bible.

Like Paul, when we come to faith in Jesus, our choice is to OBEY or DISOBEY. Lord, help us be primarily focused on glorifying you and giving you a reason to celebrate over every sinner who repents.

*“Likewise, I say unto you, **there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.**”* (Luke 15:10)

The Apostle Paul provides an unambiguous and concise declaration of the message of the Gospel. This Gospel is the message all the post-resurrection believers preached in the Bible and is the ONLY Gospel message that true believers should EVER preach.

*“Now I would remind you, brothers, of the Gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, (2) and by which you are being saved, **if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.** (3) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that **Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,** (4) that **he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,**”*
(1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

Paul did everything he did for the sake of the Gospel!

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## PAUL COULD WISH HIMSELF ACCURSED

*“For **I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:**”* (Romans 9:3)

Paul was so filled with love (especially for his people, the Jews) that if it were possible, he would give up his own salvation in exchange for them to be saved. Think about that! This powerfully demonstrates the truth that **EVERYTHING** Paul did was to further the message of salvation.

Knowing the glory ahead for believers and the hell for the lost, **Paul made such a love-filled expression.**

Imagine being so filled with the love of God that you would trade an eternity in the torments of hell for the salvation of a group of people.

Paul did everything he did for the sake of the Gospel!

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TO JEWS, PAUL BECAME A JEW

*“And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, **that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;**”*
(1 Corinthians 9:20)

This motivation is critical to understand. There are rapidly growing heretical movements that are trying to put believers back into bondage to the law of Moses, and we must **take heed not to be deceived.** These legalists often direct you to Scripture that shows Paul keeping some aspect of the law. They then make the unfounded leap and teach that Paul (or any of the Apostles) expected followers of Jesus to keep the law.

However, we must believe the Scripture when God’s Word tells us why Paul kept the law. Yes, there were instances where Paul agreed to keep the law, **but why?**

As with everything he did, **it was for the sake of the Gospel!** He wanted an open door to preach Jesus. **So, to the Jew, Paul became as a Jew.**

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## TO THOSE OUTSIDE THE LAW

*“To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) **that I might gain them that are without law.**”* (1 Corinthians 9:21)

For those who were Gentile converts, Paul and the other Apostles became like the Gentiles (not in any sinful way) in order to win Gentiles to Jesus. This is evident when **Paul publicly rebuked Peter for his hypocrisy.** Peter was fellowshiping with and living like a Gentile, until some Jews came... then he hypocritically severed himself from the Gentile believers.

*“But when I saw that **they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel,** I said unto Peter before them all, **If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?**”* (Galatians 2:14)

Paul did everything to further the Gospel of Jesus Christ, **even publicly rebuking a fellow Apostle!**

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TO THE WEAK, PAUL BECAME WEAK

*“You know **it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first,** (14) and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus.”* (Galatians 4:13-14)

Paul’s “bodily ailment” has been long debated. Regardless of what it was, **Paul preached the Gospel in his WEAKNESS.** He knew how to thrive