

1 Corinthians

Chapter 9

How this study handout is structured

We will go verse by verse (as appropriate)

Matthew 1:1

Scripture references are found at the end of the slides in the handout

Scripture is NIV from the Quest Study Bible copyright 2011

- The book of the generation. This is the proper title of the chapter. It is the same as to say, "The account of the ancestry or family, or the genealogical table of Jesus Christ." The phrase is common in Jewish writings. Compare [Ge 5:1](#), "This is the book of the generations of Adam," that is, the genealogical table of the family or descendants of Adam.

Barnes

- **Matthew 1:1**
This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:

The Bible software used for references and KJV scripture is from SwordSearcher

Different references will be used. In this case Albert Barnes Notes on the Bible. This is a clickable link if you have the SwordSearcher Bible Software

11

<https://www.swordsearcher.com/>

If you would like a pdf copy of this handout email james293504@gmail.com

Bible Study Meeting Information

9:00 am Wednesday, 6:45 pm Wednesday

In Person

Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, 75 Pine Lakes Parkway, Palm Coast Florida 32164

or

Zoom

Click on the link below

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4497575748?pwd=iKMcS9qbngU-vcQo2zCt7Igy9QjRZW8X>

Or Go to <https://zoom.us/join> and enter
Meeting ID → 449 757 5748, Passcode 04092006

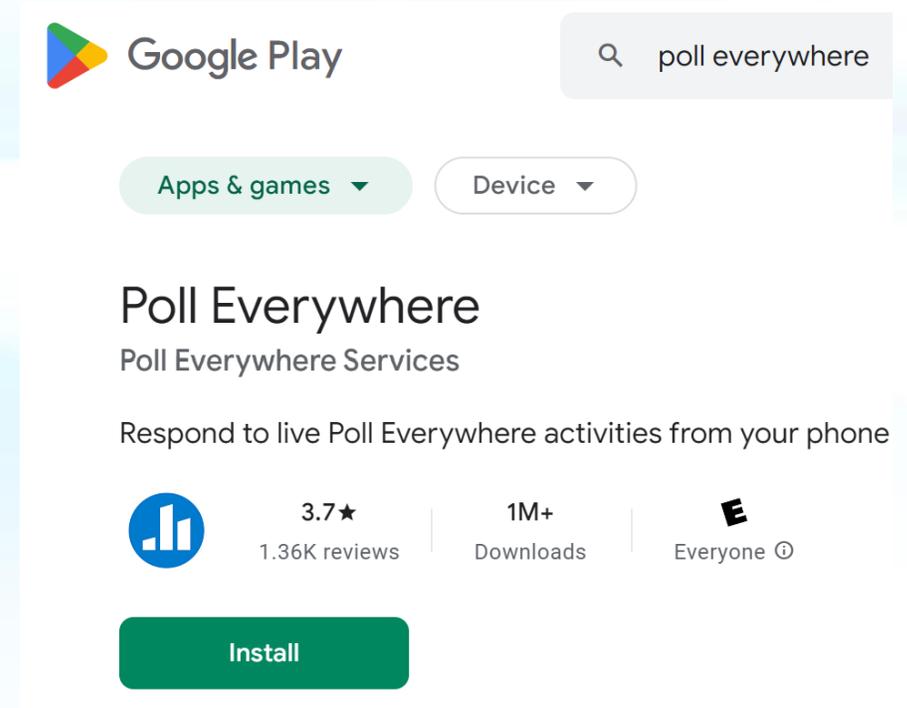
Or Dial in at 312-626-6799 or 929-205-6099

Enter meeting ID 449 757 5748#

Enter Password 04092006

Polling

- **By QR Code** (Pollev.com)
QR Code allows you vote and/or to download the app
- **By text** → Send **jamesbrown897** to **22333**
- **There is also an app you can download an open to avoid using the QR code every time**
- If you want personalized help getting the polling app on your phone I (James Brown), Linda Murray, Deacon Robinson or Angela Simpson are willing to assist you in getting set up.



1 Corinthians - Outline

I. THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD. SEPARATION AND TESTIMONY. CHAPTERS 1-10

1. What Grace Has Done and the Assurance which Grace Gives. Chapter 1:1-9.
2. Contrasts. Chapter 1:10-4.
3. Corinthian Failures. Chapters 5-6.
4. Concerning the Relationship of Man and Woman. Chapter 7.
5. Concerning Meats Offered to Idols. Liberty Governed by Love. Chapter 8.
6. Paul's Gracious Example. Chapter 9.
7. Concluding Warnings and Exhortations. Chapter 10.

1 Corinthians - Outline

II. THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST. CHAPTERS 11-14

1. The Headship of Christ and of Man. The Lords Supper. Chapter 11.
2. The Body and the Members of the Body. Chapter 12.
3. The Need and Superiority of Love. Chapter 13.
4. Prophecy and Speaking with Tongues. Chapter 14.

III. RESURRECTION AND THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH.

CONCLUSIONS.

CHAPTERS 15-16

1. The Doctrine of Resurrection and the Hope of the Church. Chapter 15.
2. Instruction and Greetings. Chapter 16.

Chapter 9 Background and Introduction

1. The Apostle's rights. (verses 1-14).
2. He waives his rights for the Gospel's sake. (verses 15-23).
3. The race-course and the crown. (verses 24-27).

Chapter 9 Background and Introduction

Paul's claim to an equality with Peter and the other Apostles was violently disputed by his enemies at Corinth, because in several matters he differed from them. Unlike Peter, he had no wife to support, and he worked for his livelihood, instead of being supported by the churches. In this chapter he strongly asserts his rights in this particular; but he is equally strong in saying that he had refused to avail himself of his right, that he might influence a wider circle of men. He was a soldier, a vineyard-keeper, a shepherd, and could claim his maintenance. But he desired to be free from the slightest imputation of self-seeking. He knew that jealous critics were watching his every action and seeking to weigh his secret motives. These were the very men he desired to win, and for their sakes he voluntarily surrendered his undoubted rights.

Chapter 9 Background and Introduction

- Paul's one aim was to *gain men*. He uses the words repeatedly. To gain one more for his Lord, he would forego comfort, reward, and well-earned restfulness. He would allow no competitor for an earthly prize to supersede himself in his sacrifices for this crown of rejoicing. He points to the denials, the hard training, and the severe discipline to which men who took part in the games subjected themselves. No one thought it strange that they should sacrifice so much for the chance of winning; why, then, should he be counted eccentric, who sought the certain reward of gaining new lovers of his Master's cross?

Contextual Reading 1 Corinthians 9:1-14

The Apostle's rights

¹Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord? ²Even though I may not be an apostle to others, surely I am to you! For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. ³This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me. ⁴Don't we have the right to food and drink? ⁵Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas? ⁶Or is it only I and Barnabas who lack the right to not work for a living? ⁷Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink the milk? ⁸Do I say this merely on human authority? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? ⁹For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? →

Contextual Reading 1 Corinthians 9:1-14

The Apostle's rights

¹⁰Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because whoever plows and threshes should be able to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. ¹¹If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? ¹²If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. ¹³Don't you know that those who serve in the temple get their food from the temple, and that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? ¹⁴In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

1 Corinthians 9:1

- It appears from this, and several other passages of the epistles to the Corinthians, that some of them, influenced probably by false teachers, who had crept in among them, objected to St. Paul's being an apostle, because he had not asserted his privilege in demanding and receiving such maintenance from the churches as was due to that office, inferring from this circumstance that he did not judge himself entitled to any such privilege, and therefore had wrought at a trade, to support himself thereby. Hence, after deciding some very difficult questions, which the Corinthians had proposed to him, →

- **1 Corinthians 9:1**
Am I not free?
Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord?

1 Corinthians 9:1

- and particularly after affirming, in the end of chapter 7., that he had decided these questions by the inspiration of the Spirit; and after showing himself a faithful apostle of Christ, by declaring, in the end of the last chapter, his resolution on all occasions to abstain from things indifferent, rather than, by using his liberty respecting them, to lead his fellow-Christians into sin; he with great propriety introduces the proof of his apostleship, and answers all the objections and lies whereby his enemies endeavored to discredit him in the eyes of the Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 9:2

- There is no such argument to prove a minister sent of Christ, as the success of his ministry in the conversion of souls unto God. It is true, we cannot conclude, that a minister is no true minister if he be able to produce no such seals of his calling; for the spiritual seed may for a time lie under the clods, and changes may be wrought in hearts, which are not published to the world; and even Isaiah may be sent to make the hearts of people fat. But where those seals can be produced, it is a most certain sign that the minister is a true minister, that is, one sent of God; →

- **1 Corinthians 9:2**
Even though I may not be an apostle to others, surely I am to you! For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 9:2

- for he could be no instrument to do such works if God were not with him; and if God had not sent him, he would not be with him so blessing his ministry. Yet it is possible that a true minister may have serious personal flaws. Some question whether God has ever used an openly wicked person to convert souls, but consider even the extreme case of Judas — though he was ultimately a son of perdition (damnation), he was not openly scandalous until the very end. Given that, it would be rash for anyone to flatly claim that Judas never served as God's instrument in converting a single soul during his ministry.

1 Corinthians 9:2

- But where this seal can be produced, it is a certain sign that such a minister is sent from God, and that God is with him, and owns him; yet it must be added, that though the success of our ministry to others is a seal of our office, and assures us that we are true ministers, yet it is the efficacy of the word we preach, upon our own hearts and lives, that is the witness of our sanctification, and the seal of our salvation.
- Lord, how sad will it be for any of us to have been instruments for the helping of others to heaven by the soundness of our doctrine, and go to hell ourselves for the badness of our example, and the wickedness of our lives?

1 Corinthians 9:3

- These words may be understood in a double reference: either to what went before; then the sense is this: To those that examine me about my apostleship, this is my answer; That I have seen the Lord, that you are my work in the Lord, and the seal of my ministry. Or with reference to the words that follow; then the sense is this: If any man examine me, how I myself practise the doctrine which I preach to others, and determine myself as to my liberty for the good and profit of others, I give them the following answer.

- **1 Corinthians 9:3**
This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me.

1 Corinthians 9:4-5

- A right to be maintained at their expense, instead of supporting himself by manual labor. 
- He had as good a right to be married, and have his family supported, as Peter and other apostles had. Ministers of the gospel, whether settled in Christian or missionaries to heathen lands, have a right to be married, and with their families to be supported; though it may sometimes be wise not to exercise this right. 

- **1 Corinthians 9:4-5**
Don't we have the right to food and drink? Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas?

1 Corinthians 9:6

PNTC

- He and Barnabas worked with their own hands to sustain themselves while preaching. Others were sustained. Had not they the same right? He next shows that they had the right by various illustrations.
- It appears from this, 1. That the apostles did not generally support themselves by their own labor. 2. That Paul and Barnabas did support themselves. Some of the others probably did not have a business at which they could conveniently work; but Paul and Barnabas had a trade at which they could conveniently labor wherever they came.
- **1 Corinthians 9:6**
Or is it only I and Barnabas who lack the right to not work for a living?

Clarke

1 Corinthians 9:7

- In this and the following verses he presents six successive arguments to prove the right of a minister to be supported by his congregation.
 1. From the ordinary laws of human justice (ver. 7).
 2. By analogy, from the Law of Moses (vers. 8-10).
 3. From the obligations of common gratitude (ver. 11).
 4. From their concession of the right to others who had inferior claims (ver. 12).
 5. From the Jewish provision for the maintenance of priests (ver. 13).
 6. By the rule laid down by Christ himself (ver. 14).

- **1 Corinthians 9:7**
Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink the milk?

1 Corinthians 9:8

- He proceeds to show that his appeal is not to a human principle, but to the recognition by men of a principle which is itself divine. The divinely given Law also says these things.

Ellicott

- **1 Corinthians 9:8**
Do I say this merely on human authority?
Doesn't the Law say the same thing?

1 Corinthians 9:9

- According to the law of Moses (De 25:4), it appears that some overly greedy people would muzzle their oxen while the animals were treading out grain, preventing them from eating any of it. God viewed this as an act of cruelty and heartlessness, and so he forbade his people, the Jews, from doing it.
- Now, the apostle asks: "Does God care about oxen?" The point is — does God care *more* about oxen than about ministers or people? Because God does indeed care for oxen. He watches over both humans and animals. →

- **1 Corinthians 9:9**
For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned?

1 Corinthians 9:9

- As Jesus teaches elsewhere, God cares even for sparrows, for the birds of the air, for the grass in the fields — and certainly for oxen, which are a higher order of creature than these. **But by that same logic, we must conclude that he cares even more for people, and especially for those he has called into his direct service.**
- The good which such a provision as the Law achieved for the oxen was nothing compared to the good which it accomplished for man. God did not do this simply as a provision for the ox, but to teach us men humanity—to teach us that it is a divine principle that the labourer should have his reward.

Poole

Ellicott

1 Corinthians 9:10

- ...to show that it is the will of God that ministers of the gospel should receive support from the people for whom they labor, and that all who labor are entitled to a just reward for their services. Specific directions contained in the Old Testament, even with regard to beasts and inanimate things, are often illustrations of principles, and are designed to instruct men in all ages as to the character and will of God, and the nature, variety, and extent of human duties.



- **1 Corinthians 9:10**
Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because whoever plows and threshes should be able to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest.

1 Corinthians 9:11

- A third argument for the ministers' maintenance is here taken from common justice: **they sow spiritual things.** That is, they dispense the word and sacraments, and endeavor to make men spiritual and holy here, and happy hereafter; and therefore they ought to reap some of their people's **carnal things**, things for the support of their lives, and subsistence for themselves and their families: so that the ministers of God are not indebted both to God and them; they give their people things of a much greater value, and more excellent use, for things of a much lesser value, and more inferior use; for their carnal things they give them spiritual things.

- **1 Corinthians 9:11** If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?

1 Corinthians 9:12

- If others availed themselves of this right to take of their carnal things, how much more could the apostle, who had served them so faithfully? If he refrained from taking of their carnal things, it was no proof that he was not an apostle, nor that he had no right to receive from them, but rather that he judged, in their case, the interests of the gospel of Christ would best be served by his suffering “all things”, rather than by taking of their “carnal things”. In his service the apostle was not governed by the thought of gain, but by the interests of Christ and His gospel.
- **1 Corinthians 9:12** If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ.

1 Corinthians 9:13

- You may understand what is the mind and will of God under the New Testament, by reflecting upon what appeareth to you to have been his mind and will under the Old Testament: God had a ministry under the Old Testament, the tribe of Levi was it; and God there ordained and appointed a livelihood for them, [Nu 18:20](#); [De 10:9](#); [18:1](#), so as they needed not (as other men) to labour with their hands to get bread to eat.

- **1 Corinthians 9:13**
Don't you know that those who serve in the temple get their food from the temple, and that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar?

1 Corinthians 9:14

- *Should live of the gospel.* Should be supported and maintained in this work. Paul here probably refers to the appointment of the Lord Jesus, when he sent forth his disciples to preach, [Mt 10:10](#); [Lu 10:8](#). Compare [Ga 6:6](#). The man may be said to "live in the gospel" who is supported while he preaches it, or who derives his maintenance in that work. Here we may observe,
- (1.) that the command is, that they shall *live* of the gospel. It is not that they should grow rich, or lay up treasures, or speculate in it, or become merchants, farmers, teachers, or book-makers for a living; →
- **1 Corinthians 9:14**
In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

1 Corinthians 9:14

- but it is, that they should have such a maintenance as to constitute a livelihood. They should be made comfortable, not rich. They should receive so much as to keep their minds from being harassed with cares, and their families from want; not so much as to lead them to forget their dependence on God, or on the people. Probably the true rule is, that they should be able to live as the *mass* of the people among whom they labour live; that they should be able to receive and entertain the poor, and be willing to do it; and so that the rich also may not despise them, or turn away from their dwelling. →

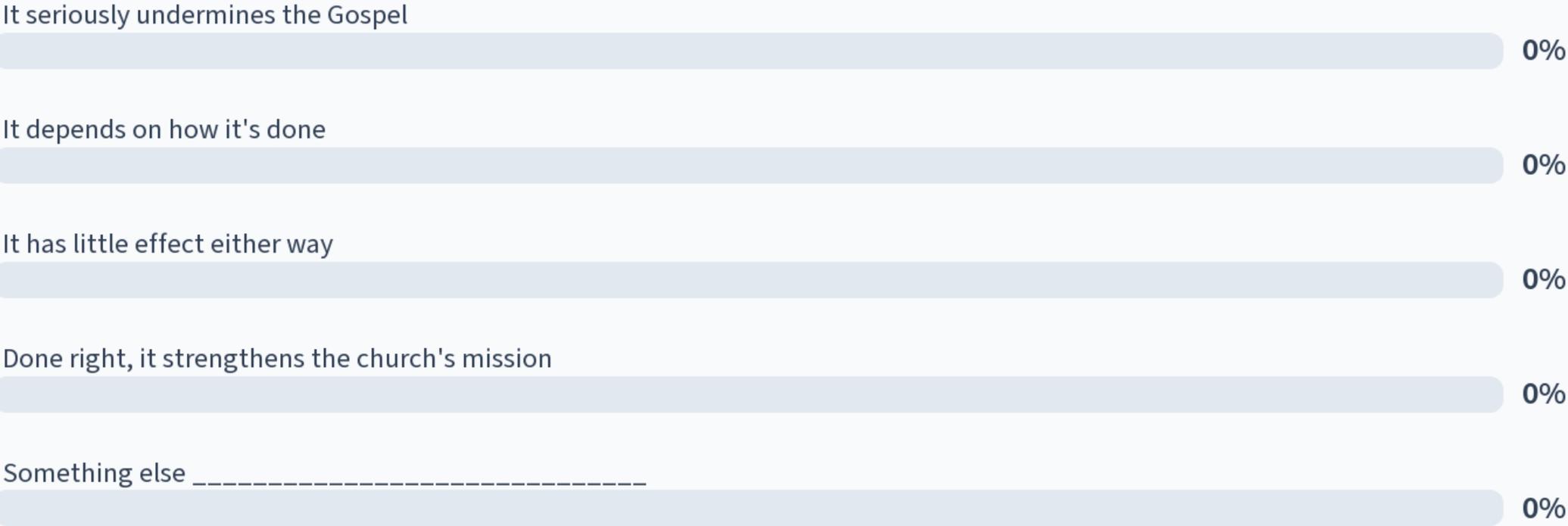
1 Corinthians 9:14

- (2.) This is a *command* of the Lord Jesus; and if it is a command, it should be obeyed as much as any other law of the Redeemer. And if this is a command, then the minister is *entitled* to a support; and then also a people are not at liberty to withhold it. Further, there are as strong reasons why they should support him, as there are why they should pay a schoolmaster, a lawyer, a physician, or a day-labourer. The minister usually toils as hard as others; expends as much in preparing for his work; and does as much good. And there is even a higher claim in this case. God has given an *express* command in this case; he has not in the others. →

1 Corinthians 9:14

- (3.) The salary of a minister should not be regarded as a *gift* merely, any more than the pay of a congress-man, a physician, or a lawyer. He has a claim to it; and God has commanded that it should be paid. It is, moreover, a matter of stipulation and of agreement, by which a people agree to compensate him for his services. And yet, is there anything in the shape of debt where there is so much looseness in regard to this subject? Are men usually as conscientious in this as they are in paying a physician or a merchant? Are not ministers often in distress for that which has been promised them, and which they have a right to expect? And is not their usefulness, and the happiness of the people, and the honor of religion, intimately connected with obeying the rule of the Lord Jesus in this respect?

In your view, does aggressive fundraising from the pulpit help or hurt the credibility of the Gospel message?



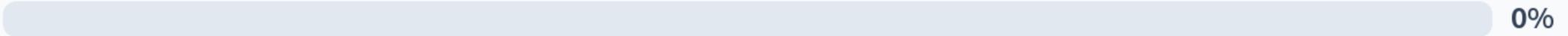
Do you believe a minister's lifestyle and spending habits should reflect the financial sacrifices he asks of his congregation?

Absolutely — integrity demands it



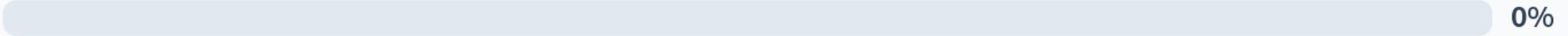
0%

Mostly, with some reasonable exceptions



0%

It's a personal matter between them and God



0%

Not necessarily — their calling is separate from finances



0%

Something else _____



0%

Has financial coercion or public begging by church leadership ever caused you or someone you know to leave a church or abandon faith?

Yes, it drove me away personally

0%

Yes, I've seen it drive others away

0%

Not directly, but it created serious doubt

0%

No, I've been fortunate to avoid this

0%

Contextual Reading 1 Corinthians 9:15-23

He waives his rights for the Gospel's sake

¹⁵But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me, for I would rather die than allow anyone to deprive me of this boast. ¹⁶For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me. ¹⁸What then is my reward? Just this: that in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not make full use of my rights as a preacher of the gospel. ¹⁹Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. →

Contextual Reading 1 Corinthians 9:15-23

He waives his rights for the Gospel's sake

²⁰To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. ²¹To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. ²²To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. ²³I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

1 Corinthians 9:15

- He wishes it to be understood that he does precisely what he thinks to be right, but does not wish the peculiarity of his conduct to be made a model for others. There are things in life concerning which each man must make his own individual stand, upon which he may find himself compelled to take an individual and exceptional line. ...St. Paul found sufficient reason for the adoption of a singular course of conduct in relation to his apostleship or ministry. He would receive nothing in a way of payment or reward from the Churches among whom he labored.

Pulpit

- **1 Corinthians 9:15**
But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me, for I would rather die than allow anyone to deprive me of this boast. 37

1 Corinthians 9:16

- For though I preach the Gospel - I have cause of glorying that I preach the Gospel free of all charges to you; but I cannot glory in being a preacher of the Gospel, because I am not such either by my own skill or power. I have received both the office, and the grace by which I execute the office, from God. I have not only his authority to preach, but that authority obliges me to preach; and if I did not, I should endanger my salvation: yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel. As every genuine preacher receives his commission from God alone, it is God alone who can take it away. Woe to that man who runs when God has not sent him; and woe to him who refuses to run, or who ceases to run, when God has sent him.

- **1 Corinthians 9:16** For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!

1 Corinthians 9:17

- In this exposition of motives we have two great principles actuating the Apostle—one, his profound sense of obligation, and the other his desire, **if it might be, to do more than he was bound to do, because he loved his work so much**. And though he is speaking here as an apostle, and his example is not to be unconditionally transferred to us, yet I think that the motives which actuated his conduct are capable of unconditional application to ourselves. →

MacLaren

- **1 Corinthians 9:17**
If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me.

1 Corinthians 9:17

- That Paul preached the gospel willingly, that he esteemed it his highest joy and glory, is abundantly evident ([Ro 1:5](#); [11:13](#); [15:15-16](#); [1Co 15:9-10](#); [Ga 1:15-16](#); [Eph 3:8](#)). The difference, therefore, here expressed between "willing" and "unwilling," is not the difference between cheerfully and reluctantly, but between optional and obligatory. He says he had a "dispensation" or stewardship committed to him. Stewards were commonly slaves. There is a great difference between what a slave does in obedience to a command, and what a man volunteers to do of his own accord. And this is the difference to which the apostle refers. So Paul was commanded to preach the gospel, and he did it with his whole heart; →

1 Corinthians 9:17

- but he was not commanded to refuse to receive a support from the churches. The former, therefore, was not a ground of boasting, not a thing for which he could claim the reward of special confidence; the latter was. He could appeal to it as a proof, not only of his obedience, but of the purity of the motive which prompted that obedience. A physician may attend the sick from the highest motives, though he receives a remuneration for his services. But when he attends the poor gratuitously, though the motives may be no higher, the evidence of their purity is placed beyond question. Paul's ground of glorying, therefore, was not preaching, for that was a matter of obligation; but his preaching gratuitously, which was altogether optional.

1 Corinthians 9:17

- **Paul Refused Payment from Corinth to Protect the Gospel's Integrity** - By waiving his right to Corinthian support specifically, Paul was saying — *the message is too important to let money become a stumbling block*. This wasn't a blanket refusal. He openly accepted support from Philippi and other Macedonian churches ([Php 4:15-16](#), [2 Co 11:8](#)) – but refused Corinth deliberately. In a church where his authority was being challenged, any payment would have handed his opponents a weapon: "*He's just in it for the money.*" His refusal wasn't false humility; it was strategic holiness.



1 Corinthians 9:18

- The apostle was sent by the Lord to preach, and it was ordained by the Lord that he had a right to be supported. He did not, however, use this right as if it were a possession that he could use as he liked. He thought of Christ and His glory, and so used, or refrained from the use of, this right according as he judged he had the mind of the Lord in carrying out his service in a way that would be best for the glory of Christ.
HSmith
- This passage cannot be urged *by a people* to prove that ministers ought not to have a support. Paul says they have a *right* to it. ...
Barnes

- **1 Corinthians 9:18**
What then is my reward? Just this: that in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not make full use of my rights as a preacher of the gospel. **43**

1 Corinthians 9:19

"I have enslaved myself unto all." That is,

(1.) I *labor* for them, or in their service, and to promote their welfare.

(2.) I do it, as the slave does, without reward or hire. I am not paid for it, but submit to the toil, and do it without receiving pay.

(3.) Like the slave who wishes to gratify his master, or who is compelled from the necessity of the case, I comply with the prejudices, habits, customs, and opinions of others as far as I can with a good conscience. The *slave is subject to the master's will.* →

- **1 Corinthians 9:19**
Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.

1 Corinthians 9:19

That will must be obeyed. The whims, prejudices, quirks of the master must be submitted to, even if they are *mere* impulse, and wholly unreasonable. So, Paul says that he had voluntarily put himself into this condition, a condition making it necessary for him to suit himself to the opinions, prejudices, caprices, and feelings of all men, so far as he could do it with a good conscience, in order that he might save them. We are not to understand here that Paul embraced any opinions which were false in order to do this, or that he submitted to anything which is morally wrong. But he complied with their customs, and habits, and feelings, as far as it could lawfully be done. He did not needlessly offend them, or run counter to their prejudices.

That I might gain the more. →

1 Corinthians 9:19

That I might gain more to Christ; that I might be the means of saving more souls. What a noble instance of self-denial and true greatness is here! How worthy of religion! How elevated the conduct! How magnanimous, and how benevolent! No man would do this who had not a greatness of intellect that would rise above narrow prejudices; and who had not a nobleness of heart that would seek at personal sacrifice the happiness of all men. It is said that not a few early Christians, in illustration of this principle of conduct, actually sold themselves into slavery in order that they might have access to and benefit slaves--an act to which nothing would prompt a man but the religion of the cross.

1 Corinthians 9:20

- The ceremonial law died with Christ, [Eph 2:15-16](#), wherefore Christians were not obliged to the performance and observation of it after the death of Christ; but it pleased God for a time to indulge the Jews in the observance of those rites, until they could clearly see, and be fully persuaded of, their liberty from it, with which Christ had made them free; and it was some good time before all those, who from Judaism had turned to Christianity, could be thus persuaded, as we may learn from [Ga 4:21](#), they desired to be under the law.

- **1 Corinthians 9:20**
To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law.

1 Corinthians 9:20

- To such, saith the apostle, *I became as a Jew*, that is, I observed some rites which the ceremonial law (peculiar to the Jews) required; an instance of which we have, [Ac 21:23-26](#), where we find Paul purifying himself (according to the rites of the ceremonial law) with four men which had a vow upon them. The Jews before Christ's death were *under the law*; many of them, though converted to the Christian religion after the death of Christ, apprehended themselves under the law, not as yet seeing the liberty with which Christ had made them free: saith the apostle, I, knowing the will of God, for a time, that the Jews should be indulged as to their weakness, *became as one of them under the law, that I might gain them*, that is, reconcile them to the Christian religion, →

1 Corinthians 9:20

- and in some measure prepare them for the receiving the gospel. We have an instance of this in Paul's practice, [Ac 16:3](#), where he circumcised Timothy, because his mother was a Jewess, that he might not irritate the Jews in those quarters, nor estrange them from the doctrine of the gospel. In all this Paul did nothing that was sinful, but only determined himself as to the liberty which God had given him, when he might do or forbear, either doing or forbearing to do, as he saw the one or the other made most for the honour and glory of God in the winning of souls.

1 Corinthians 9:21

- The Gentiles knew nothing about the law of Moses, cared nothing about it, and looked upon the Jewish rites and ceremonies as silly superstition. If Paul as a Jew had undertaken to prevail on the Gentiles to Judaize, he would simply have assumed the attitude of a mere Jewish evangelist, thus eclipsing the glory of Christ in what the Gentiles regarded as Jewish superstition. Now what a contrast. With the Jews he is a ritualized disciple of Moses, meek and lowly at the feet of the patriarchs and prophets, that he may win them to Christ. With the Gentiles he says not a word about all the vast routine of Jewish rites and ceremonies, but simply preaches Christ like a messenger from Heaven.

- **1 Corinthians 9:21**
To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. **50**

1 Corinthians 9:22

- I am made all things to all men - I assumed every shape and form consistent with innocence and perfect integrity; giving up my own will, my own way, my own ease, my own pleasure, and my own profit, that I might save the souls of all. Let those who plead for the system of accommodation on the example of St. Paul, attend to the end he had in view, and the manner in which he pursued that end. It was not to get money, influence, or honor, but to save Souls! It was not to get ease but to increase his labors. It was not to save his life, but rather that it should be a sacrifice for the good of immortal souls!
- **1 Corinthians 9:22** To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.

1 Corinthians 9:22

William Godbey

- *Unto the weak I became weak, in order that I may gain the weak.*"
When he was with illiterate, ignorant, superstitious people, he forbore the use of all his vast learning, coming down to the most consummate simplicity, adapting himself to all the limitations of their ignorance and superstition that he may achieve the one end in view, *i. e.*, win them for Christ. When I was presiding elder, twenty-five years ago, I preached nine hundred sermons a year, constantly in the saddle or the pulpit, the Lord rolling a Pentecostal flood over my whole district, wrapping every pastoral charge in a revival flame, and sweeping out into the missionary fields within our boundary like a Pentecostal avalanche during my quadrennium, doubling the entire membership of the district, and raising up →

1 Corinthians 9:22

William Godbey

- platoons of preachers on all sides. Frequently between Sundays I have gone away into some poor destitute field amid the mountains and preached to the ignorant peasantry, laying aside my laundered shirt and black clothing, and dressing in rural costume, eating and sleeping in their cabins, and thus making myself socially and fraternally one of them, that I might win them for my Savior, God invariably coming in a cyclone of conviction and giving us a sweeping revival, so that at the close of my four-year appointment I had twice as many members and preachers in my district as I began with. "I became all things to all men that I may indeed save some." Lord, help us to walk in the footprints of sanctified Paul. Twenty years ago, →

1 Corinthians 9:22

William Godbey

- while at home resting a little from evangelistic labor, a respected and godly Baptist pastor sent a man to my house with conveyance and orders not to return without me. So I accompanied him ten miles to a country Baptist church with four hundred members. On arrival, good pastor B — met me with glad salutations and hearty welcome. "Oh! Brother Godbey, I am so glad you have come; Brother S — and myself have been preaching our best ten days and crying to God for a revival, but it seems without effect, and all hope has fled. I know you have revivals everywhere you go, therefore I sent for you; and praise the Lord you have come! Now take this meeting into hand, and be as free as the Lord can make you, and I will say' amen' to everything you say and do, →

1 Corinthians 9:22

William Godbey

- and help you with all my might; anything, Brother Godbey, for a revival! My church is ruined if God don't revive His work!" Leaving the two Baptist pastors in the pulpit, walking out in front I preached to the crowded house as best I could. I know there was already much conviction, though the brethren did not recognize it. During my first sermon the Holy Spirit "fell on all who heard," turning the sanctuary into a flood of tears and repentance. Responsive to the altar call about fifty rushed forward, apparently tumbling over one another. Soon the sacred walls around are reverberating the shouts of new-born souls, which have come like a swelling flood. I can remain but five days; meanwhile the mighty work sweeps on with accumulating momentum, →

1 Corinthians 9:22

William Godbey

- forty grown up people having been gloriously converted and added to the Baptist church, the membership wonderfully revived, and not a few entering Beulah land. On my departure, some of the leading members, perhaps official, take me aside and beg me to accept the pastoral charge of their church, stating that they believe it will be for the glory of God, as their good and venerable pastor has been with them long enough. I respond, "Brethren, do you not know that I am a Methodist preacher, and if you were to give me the pastorate of your church you would be excommunicated from the Baptist denomination?" "Oh! we know you are a Methodist preacher, but we know another thing, you have preached the Baptist doctrine better than we ever heard it, →

1 Corinthians 9:22

William Godbey

- and we want you to become our regular preacher." Why was that? Because, while I preached the gospel as freely as if I had been in a Methodist church, I said nothing about Methodism nor John Wesley, but much about John the Baptist and the mighty men of their denomination as John the Baptist said, "I indeed baptize you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire." So I preached to them the whole gospel, and they received it gladly, and mighty works were wrought. Since the Lord sanctified me thirty years ago, I have found it exceedingly refreshing to go away from my Methodist people and see the mighty works of God, enjoy

Godbey



1 Corinthians 9:22

William Godbey

- by the variety I enjoyed in adapting myself to them in their religious and social peculiarities, at the same time preaching the whole gospel with the utmost freedom, and the people receiving it joyfully and appreciatively. Only two years ago I had a delightful and exceedingly profitable time preaching twenty-eight days with the Baptists in Tacoma, Washington, having been called thither by the pastor of the First Baptist Church in the city. There is no reason why trine immersion, foot-washing believers and non-ritualistic Quakers should not hold membership together in the same church, worshipping and laboring in perfect harmony and Christian affection. →

1 Corinthians 9:22

William Godbey

- **God made religion, and it is the same regardless of race, sect, color or nationality. Hence all Christians, like Paul, should be all things to all men, with a single eye to their salvation.**
- The devil made sectarianism for a greased plank on which to slide people into Hell. Consequently he is perfectly willing that they shall all have their own way..
- **Reverend William Baxter Godbey, Wesleyan Methodist Evangelist and Holiness Preacher**

1 Corinthians 9:22

Scenario – The Bridge Builder

- Marcus is a 45-year-old successful contractor who recently became a Christian. His crew is entirely unchurched, uses rough language, and spends Friday evenings at a local sports bar reviewing the week. Marcus has been joining them — ordering a Coke, listening more than talking, and slowly earning their trust. Over six months, two crew members have started asking him questions about his faith. His pastor has gently suggested Marcus is "compromising his witness" by being in that environment.

1 Corinthians 9:22

Scenario – The Bridge Builder

- A. Is Marcus living out 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 or rationalizing worldly participation?
- B. What would Paul's test be for evaluating Marcus's approach — what's the determining factor?
- C. At what point does strategic presence become spiritual erosion?
- D. What would William Godbey say to Marcus's pastor?

1 Corinthians 9:23

- All this self denial had in view a single object--the promotion of the gospel. Would that all Christians, from the same motive, would adapt themselves to all classes, in order to reach them.
- You hope to be saved. You regard yourselves as Christians; and I wish to give evidence also that I am a Christian, and that I shall be admitted to heaven to partake of the happiness of the redeemed. This he did, by so denying himself as to give evidence that he was truly governed by Christian principles.

PNTC

Barnes

- **1 Corinthians 9:23**
I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

Contextual Reading 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

The race-course and the crown

²⁴Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. ²⁵Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. ²⁶Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. ²⁷No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

1 Corinthians 9:24

- In the remainder of this chapter, Paul illustrates the general sentiment on which he had been dwelling-- the duty of practicing self-denial for the salvation of others-- by a reference to the well-known games which were celebrated near Corinth. Throughout the chapter, his object had been to show that in declining to receive a support for preaching, he had done it, not because he was conscious that he had no claim to it, but because by doing it he could better advance the salvation of men, the furtherance of the gospel, and, in his peculiar case, could obtain better evidence, and furnish to others better evidence that he was actuated by a sincere desire to →
- **1 Corinthians 9:24** Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.

1 Corinthians 9:24

honor God in the Gospel. He had denied himself. He had voluntarily submitted to great privations. He had had a great object in view in doing it. And he now says, that in the well-known athletic games at Corinth, the same thing was done by the racers, and by wrestlers, or boxers. If they had done it, for objects so comparatively unimportant as the attainment of an earthly garland, assuredly it was proper for him to do it to obtain a crown which should never fade away. This is one of the most beautiful, appropriate, vigorous, and bold illustrations that can anywhere be found; and is a striking instance of the force with which the most vigorous and self-denying efforts of Christians can be vindicated and can be urged by a reference to the conduct of men in the affairs of this life. →

1 Corinthians 9:24

By the phrase, "know ye not," Paul suggests that those games to which he alludes, were well known to them, and that they must be familiar with their design, and with the manner in which they were conducted. The games to which the apostle alludes were celebrated with extraordinary pomp and splendor, every fourth year...

1 Corinthians 9:25

- *Strenuous effort.*—If people would work half as hard to gain the highest object that a man can set before him as hundreds of people are ready to do in order to gain trivial and insignificant objects, there would be fewer stunted and half-dead Christians among us. "That is the way to run," says St. Paul, "if you want to obtain."
 - Everybody knows about the athlete, and knows that whatever he goes in for, there is no mistake about it. You cannot play cricket, or football, or anything else—to any purpose—with half your strength, or with half your heart. →
- **1 Corinthians 9:25**
Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

1 Corinthians 9:25

- To do anything, to distinguish yourself in the least, you have to give yourself up to it. Everything else must give way; and everything that hinders, or enfeebles, or injuriously affects the play, must be given up. Everybody knows that.
- Every man that is striving for the mastery is "temperate in all things." The discipline for runners and athletes was rigid. They had ten months of spare diet—no wine—hard gymnastic exercises every day, until not an ounce of superfluous flesh was upon their muscles, before they were allowed to run in the arena. And, says St. Paul, that is the example for us. They practiced this rigid discipline and abstinence by way of preparation for the race, and after it was run they might dispense with the training. →

1 Corinthians 9:25

- You and I have to practice rigid abstinence as part of the race, as a continuous necessity. They did not only abstain from bad things, they did not only avoid criminal acts of sensuous indulgence; they abstained from many perfectly legitimate things. So, for us it is not enough to say, "I draw the line there, at this or that vice, and I will have nothing to do with these." You will never make a growing Christian if abstinence from obvious sins only is your standard. You must lay aside every sin, of course, but also every weight. Many things are weights that are not sins; and if we are to run fast we must run light; and if we are to do any good in this world we have to live by rigid control and abstain from much that is perfectly legitimate, because, if we do not, we shall fail in accomplishing the highest purposes for which we are here.

1 Corinthians 9:25

- The Apostle refers to the great and ungrudging *self-restraint* while under training. So, and more, should the servants of Christ who strive for an unfading crown.
- **I. A man exercises self-restraint who is under a master.**—He submits, and must submit, to many inconveniences, many things which are not in a line with his own inclinations. We serve the Lord Christ.
- **II. A man exercises self-restraint who has work to do.**—He must, if the work is to be done. It is *not* play. If a man is to do it honestly and well, he must deny himself ease and pleasure; must sacrifice anything that stands between him and it. If we are Christ's followers, we have work to do. →

1 Corinthians 9:25

- **III. A man exercises self-restraint who lives for the future.**—The scholar, the man who looks forward to an honorable career, the man who bears in mind coming years of weakness, and old age, etc., all exercise self-restraint. *We* are living for the future—for heaven, for eternity. Let us cheerfully bear privations, labors, crosses, which the worldling can evade, knowing that these things are not worthy to be compared with the glory which awaits.

1 Corinthians 9:26

- I so run, not as uncertainly - I look straight to the goal; I run straight toward it. I cast away every weight, regard not any that stand by. I fight not as one that beateth the air - This is a proverbial expression for a man's missing his blow, and spending his strength, not on his enemy, but on empty air.

Wesley

- **1 Corinthians 9:26**
Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air.

1 Corinthians 9:27

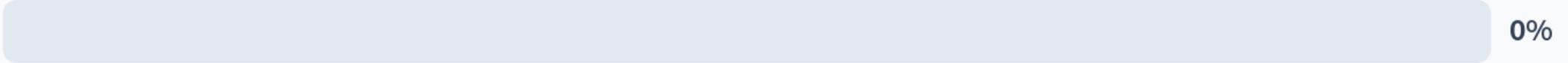
- Ministers should be solicitous about their personal piety. Paul, one might suppose, might have rested contented with the remarkable manner of his conversion. He might have supposed that that put the matter beyond all possible doubt. But he did no such thing. He felt that it was necessary to have evidence day by day that he was then a Christian. Of all men, Paul was perhaps *least* disposed to live on past experience, and to trust to such experience. Of all men, he had perhaps most reason to trust to such experience; and yet how seldom does he refer to it, how little does he regard it! →
- **1 Corinthians 9:27**
No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

1 Corinthians 9:27

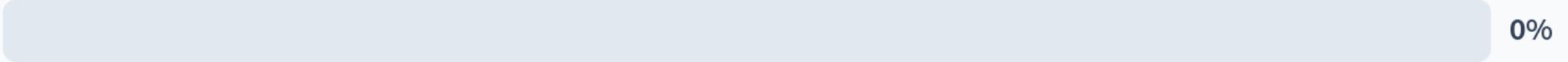
- The great question with him was, "Am I *now* a Christian? am I living as a Christian should *now*? am I demonstrating to others, am I giving to myself daily, constant, growing evidence that I am actuated by the pure principles of the gospel, and that that gospel is the object of my highest preference, and my holiest and constant desire?"
- Oh, how holy would be the ministry, if all should endeavor every day to live and act for Christ and for souls with as much steadiness and fidelity as did the apostle Paul!

Which one of these has been more true for you over the past week?

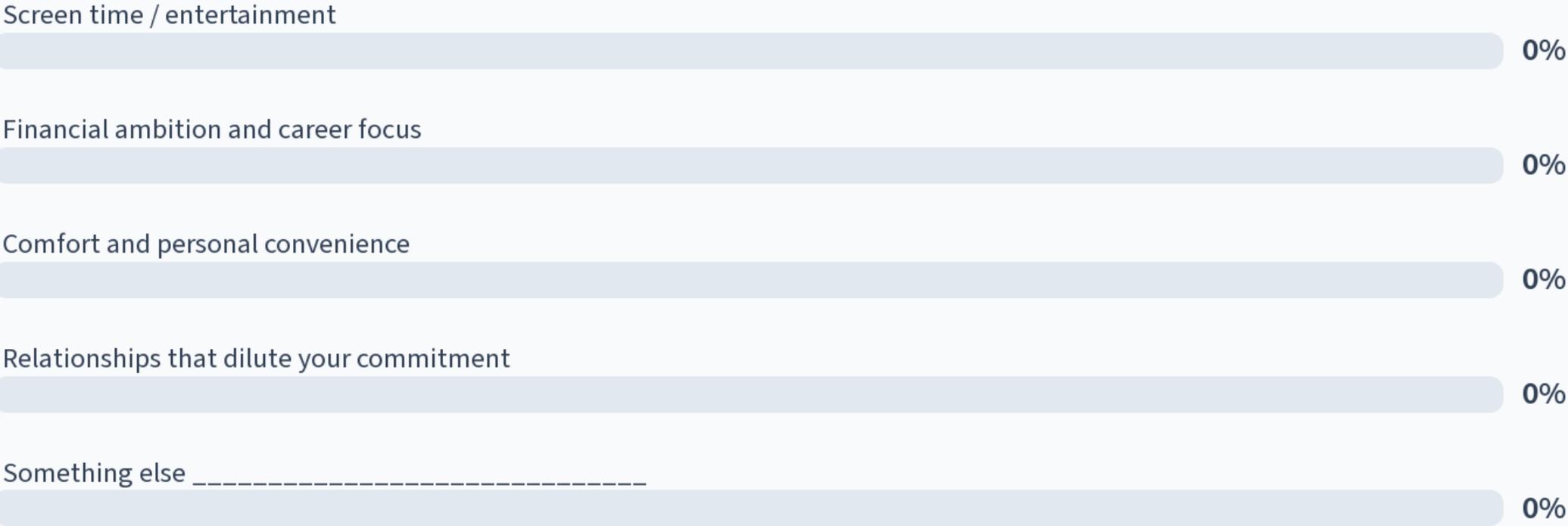
My body/flesh has been a slave to me



I have been a slave to my body/flesh



Paul says many things are "weights" that are not sins — legitimate things that slow you down spiritually. Which category do you find hardest to surrender?



Reference Scriptures

- **Acts 16:3 (KJV)** Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.
- **Acts 21:23-26 (KJV)** Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave *their* heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but *that* thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written *and* concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from *things* offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

Reference Scriptures

- **2 Corinthians 11:8 (KJV)** I robbed other churches, taking wages *of them*, to do you service.
- **Deuteronomy 10:9 (KJV)** Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD *is* his inheritance, according as the LORD thy God promised him.
- **Deuteronomy 18:1 (KJV)** The priests the Levites, *and* all the tribe of Levi, shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel: they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and his inheritance.
- **Deuteronomy 25:4 (KJV)** Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out *the corn*.

Reference Scriptures

- **Ephesians 2:15-16 (KJV)** Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:
- **Galatians 4:21 (KJV)** Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?
- **Numbers 18:20 (KJV)** And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I *am* thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.
- **Philippians 4:15-16 (KJV)** Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.