

Text: 1 Cor 9.1-27

As we move through Corinthians, we will keep our place by developing the broad outline we started with.

I. Introduction (1.1-9)**II. Conditions reported to Paul (1.10-6.20)**

- A. Divisions in the church (1.10-4.21)
- B. Lack of discipline in the church (5.1-6.20)

III. Questions asked of Paul (7.1-16.4)

¹ Cor 7.1 ¶ Now concerning the things about which you wrote...

“The remainder of the body of this epistle deals with questions that the Corinthians had asked Paul in a letter. Paul introduced each of these with the phrase *peri de* (‘now concerning,’ 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1, 12).”¹

- A. Questions about marriage (7.1-40)
- B. Questions about things sacrificed to idols (8.1-11.1)

My outline for the passage:

1. Weakness of the brother (8)
2. Worth of the gospel (9)
3. Wickedness of the heart (10)

Key to understanding: What is the issue?

“things sacrificed to idols” = εἰδωλόθυτος, “idol sacrifices”

¹ Cor 8.10 For if someone sees you, who have knowledge, **dining in an idol's temple**, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols?

“an animal sacrificed in the presence of an idol and eaten in the temple precincts.”²

¹ Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), 1 Co 7.1.

² Ben Witherington III, “Not So Idle Thoughts About Eidolothuton,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 44, no. 2 (1993): 240.

1 Corinthians 9

- Paul doesn't mention "things sacrificed to idols" at all in chapter 9

How are we justified in applying the teaching of chapter 9 to the "things sacrificed to idols" controversy?

1. Context: both chapter 8 and chapter 10 clearly discuss the issue, making an inclusion
2. Rhetoric: 9.1-4, Paul expresses his rights, including the right to eat and drink (in context connected with chapter 8)

"It seemed that the rumblings of doubt about his apostleship, which would later call forth an extended defense (esp. 2 Cor. 10–13), had already started."³

What rights does Paul list in vv. 3-7?

1. Right to eat and drink (4)
2. Right to have a believing wife (5)
3. Right to refrain from working (6)

Look over vv. 7-11. What is the basic concept Paul is discussing in this discussion of rights?

The right of men in full time ministry to be paid for their work

In v. 7 and v. 9 Paul uses "homely illustrations" of the concept. What are they?

1. Soldiers get paid for their service
2. Vineyard owners eat the fruit of their labours
3. Shepherds drink the milk of their flocks
4. Threshing oxen eat of the grain while they are threshing

³ David K. Lowery, "1 Corinthians," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983), 522.

In vv. 11-13 Paul gets very specific. Who does he list as having a right to be paid for rendering spiritual service?

- (11) himself and his coworkers
- (12) unnamed others (Cephas, Apollos??)
- (13) priests in the temple

In verse 14, Paul appeals to the Lord himself, who proclaimed this right. Can anyone think of a passage where Jesus affirmed this? **Mt 10.10, Lk 10.7**

In vv. 12b, 15-18, what does Paul declare about his own practice? **He forgoes the right to the pay he earns through preaching the gospel**

What does Paul mean in vv. 19-22 about his adaptability in ministry?

He means he adapts himself to his context in order to be more effective in giving the gospel

What overarching principle do we find in v. 23?

Everything sacrificed for the sake of the gospel

In his final comments on this subject, vv. 24-27, what is Paul exhorting the Corinthians to do?

Forego their rights for the sake of the gospel

How do we apply this teaching to the “things offered to idols” question?

The gospel is more important than exercising my “right” to eat and drink the things offered to idols, especially within the pagan temple precincts