

## I Corinthians 9:1-14 – Summary Notes

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## B. He Defends His Apostleship &amp; Rights, (1-6)

1. His Apostleship: <sup>1</sup> Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? <sup>2</sup> If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.
  - a. 'Am I not free' – echoes back to chapter 8, on liberty
  - b. 'Am I not an apostle' – his voluntary restriction of his liberty, 8:13, is not to be taken as evidence to claim Paul does not have apostolic authority
  - c. 'Have I not seen ...' – though not specifically stated in Acts 9:1-9, where he was struck blind, his use of 'Lord' then, these words, and his account to Agrippa (Acts 26:12-19) of this vision, make it certain he saw the risen Lord Jesus Christ.
  - d. 'If to others ...' – To Corinth, Paul came alone to plant a church there.
2. His Rights: <sup>3</sup> My defence to those who examine me is this: <sup>4</sup> Do we not have a right to eat and drink? <sup>5</sup> Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? <sup>6</sup> Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working?
  - a. 'Right to eat ...' – another echo back to chapter 8, on liberty in eating
  - b. Paul seems to have been celibate, but that was not an apostolic requirement as other apostles were married, and specifically Peter was (Matthew 8:14).
  - c. Paul and Barnabas seem to have made it a practice not to solicit funds for themselves from the young churches: this was specifically the case in Corinth where he worked at first at his tent-making trade (Acts 18:1-5)

## C. His Right to Support (7-14)

1. Secular Examples: <sup>7</sup> Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard, and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock?
  - a. One obvious example from the Empire: soldiers
  - b. Two universally familiar examples from agriculture:
    - i. crops: vinedressers
    - ii. husbandry: shepherds
2. Biblical Examples
  - a. The Human Analogies (8-10) – <sup>8</sup> I am not speaking these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does not the Law also say these things? <sup>9</sup> For it is written in the Law of Moses, "you shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing." God is not concerned about oxen, is He? <sup>10</sup> Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to *thresh* in hope of sharing *the crops*.
    - i. '... human judgment ... the Law ...' – from the natural to supernatural
    - ii. The agricultural theme continues
      - (1) the Law concerning the threshing ox
      - (2) justice to the ploughman
      - (3) justice to the thresher
    - iii. 'God is not concerned about oxen, is He?' is what is called a rhetorical question; the question expects the answer, 'No, He is not concerned.'. This answer is a grammatical requirement of the language used
      - (1) is not affected by the fact that God does show Himself concerned with His natural creation, Psalm 104:10-18, 25-28; 147:8-9; etc.
      - (2) directs our attention to this Law as a principle to be followed.
  - b. The Spiritual Analogies (11-13) – <sup>11</sup> If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you? <sup>12</sup> If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ. <sup>13</sup> Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the *food* of the temple, *and* those who attend regularly to the altar have their share with the altar?
    - i. The agricultural theme is carried into the spiritual realm
    - ii. Spiritual sowing is just as worthy of payment as is agricultural sowing
    - iii. It was specified in Leviticus for OT; so also here in the NT age
3. The Definitive statement (14) – <sup>14</sup> So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.
  - a. Lest there be any misunderstanding, it is clearly stated that Christian workers are covered by 'The labourer is worthy of his wages,' 1 Timothy 5:18