

Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

The Rights of an Apostle

1 Corinthians 9:3

This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me.

 As we study chapter 9, remember this question that is implied in 1 Corinthians 9:3: what did some Corinthians accuse Paul of doing? (See Question 8.)

 "Some Corinthians were questioning Paul's authority and rights as an apostle, so Paul gave his credentials – he actually saw and talked with the resurrected Christ, who called him to be an apostle (see Acts 9:1-20, below). Such credentials make the advice he gives in this letter more persuasive. In 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul defends his apostleship in greater detail." [©1986 Life Application Bible, NIV version, Tyndale/Zondervan Publishing, Page 2074]

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?

Q1. When did Paul see Jesus?

Acts 9:1-20

¹ Meanwhile, Saul [Paul's original name before his conversion to a Believer in Christ Jesus] was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. ³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

⁷ The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So, they led him by the hand into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

¹⁰ In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord," he answered.

¹¹ The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹² In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

¹³ "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

¹⁵ But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name." [continued next page]

¹⁷ Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord -- Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here -- has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

¹⁸ Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

²⁰ Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.

Galatians 1:11-12, 15-18

¹¹ I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. ¹² I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ... ¹⁵ But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man, ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus. ¹⁸ Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Peter and stayed with him fifteen days.

Q2. What did Paul mean when he asked the question in verse 1, "Are you not the result of my work in the Lord?"

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.

Q3. How do you define "Apostle"?

 apostle 1. (a) one of a group made up especially of the 12 disciples chosen by Jesus to preach the gospel. (b) A missionary of the early Christian Church. (c) A leader of the first Christian mission to a country or region. [http://www.thefreedictionary.com/apostle]

Q4. Why would Paul consider himself an apostle to the Corinthians?

Q5. How could the Corinthians be a "seal" from the phrase "seal of my apostleship"?

Day 2

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³This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me.

Q6. Paul doesn't seem to be repudiating the Corinthians for judging him. Is it okay to judge others and, if yes, under what circumstances?

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1 Corinthians 5:12-13^a [Paul wrote:]

¹² What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside?

¹³ God will judge those outside . . ."

Q7. What were the complaints, the accusations, brought against Paul?

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Q8. Were the complaints valid? Why or why not?

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⁴Don't we have the right to food and drink?

Q9. Why do you think Paul asked this question?

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Q10. Are there any precedents listed in the Bible where worshippers provided food and drink to church leaders?

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Numbers 18:8-13

⁸ Then the LORD said to Aaron, "I myself have put you in charge of the offerings presented to me; all the holy offerings the Israelites give me I give to you and your sons as your portion and regular share.

⁹ You are to have the part of the most holy offerings that is kept from the fire. From all the gifts they bring me as most holy offerings, whether grain or sin or guilt offerings, that part belongs to you and your sons. ¹⁰ Eat it as something most holy; every male shall eat it. You must regard it as holy.

¹¹ "This also is yours: whatever is set aside from the gifts of all the wave offerings of the Israelites. I give this to you and your sons and daughters as your regular share. Everyone in your household who is ceremonially clean may eat it.

¹² "I give you all the finest olive oil and all the finest new wine and grain they give the LORD as the firstfruits of their harvest. ¹³ All the land's firstfruits that they bring to the LORD will be yours. Everyone in your household who is ceremonially clean may eat it..."

Luke 10:1-2, 4-7

¹ [Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-two] After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. ² He told them, "... ⁴ Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

⁵ "When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' ⁶ If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. ⁷ Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house..."

⁵ 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 [the Apostle Peter]?

Q11. Do we know if any disciples or apostles were married?

Matthew 8:14-15 [we know of one with certainty]

¹⁴ When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.

Q12. Do we know by name any of the Lord Jesus' half-brothers?

Matthew 13:54-56

⁵⁴ Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they asked. ⁵⁵ "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶ Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"

⁶Or is it only I and Barnabas who must work for a living?

Acts 18:1-4

¹ After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ² There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, ³ and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. ⁴ Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

Q13. Why do you think Paul (and Barnabas) worked at his tent-making craft by day and preached by night?

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Day 3

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⁷Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk?

Q14. By asking these questions in verse 7, what point is Paul emphasizing?

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⁸Do I say this merely from a human point of view? 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. [Deuteronomy 25:4]” Is it about oxen that God is concerned?

Q15. It seems like good business sense to muzzle the ox, so that it doesn’t eat the profits. Why do you think God forbade the Jewish farmers from muzzling their oxen?

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Q16. Verse 9: how would you answer Paul’s question, “Is it about oxen that God is concerned”?

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1 Timothy 5:17-18

¹⁷ The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. ¹⁸ For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," [Deuteronomy 25:4] and "The worker deserves his wages." [Luke 10:7]

 "What is the point of the Old Testament regulation? Oxen were often used to tread out the grain on a threshing floor. The animal was attached by poles to a large milestone. As it walked around the millstone, its hooves trampled the grain, separating the kernels from the chaff. At the same time, the millstone ground the grain into flour. To muzzle the ox would prevent it from eating while it was working. Paul used this illustration in the New Testament to argue that people productive in Christian work should not be denied its benefits – they should receive financial support (1 Corinthians 9:9-12:1 and 1 Timothy 5:17-18). The fact that a person is in Christian ministry doesn't mean he or she should be unfairly paid. There is also a broader application: don't be stingy with those who work for you." [©1986, Life Application Bible, NIV version, Tyndale/Zondervan Publishing, Page 313]

¹⁰ Surely, he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest.

Q17. How might a farm worker share "in the harvest"?

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Day 4

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¹¹ If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?

Q18. What is the "material harvest"?

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Q19. What is "spiritual seed"?

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^{12a} If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more?

Q20. Why would Paul ask, "shouldn't we have it all the more"?

^{12b} But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ.

Q21. What did Paul mean when he said that "we did not use this right"?

Q22. Why did he think that asking for financial support might "hinder the Gospel of Christ"?

¹³ Don't you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? ¹⁴ In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

Q23. In verses 13-14, Paul seems to be repeating the points he made in verses 4-6. Why would he repeat himself?

Luke 10:7

"... Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house..."

Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

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. I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of this boast.

Q24. Why would Paul establish his right to receive payment for sharing the Gospel of Christ and then in verse-15 remind them that he didn't accept any payment from the Corinthians?

Q25. Why would Paul be boasting? Shouldn't we be humble?

¹⁶ Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!

Q26. How would you compare Paul's life prior to his encounter with Jesus on the Road to Damascus to his avocation as explained in verse 16?

Q27. What does "compelled" mean to Paul?

¹⁷ If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me.

Q28. How would you explain the difference between Paul's voluntary preaching and involuntary?

¹⁸What then is my reward? Just this: that in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not make use of my rights in preaching it.

Q29. Why is it important to Paul to not “charge” for the Gospel?

Day 6

-  Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s reading.
-  Please reread 1st Corinthians 9.

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