

1 Corinthians 9:1-27 **Evidence of Apostleship – Ministerial rights to support**

Evidence and Seal of Apostleship

¹ Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? ² If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

Answer to those who challenge Paul's Apostleship

³ My defense to those who examine me is this:

⁴ Do we have no right to eat and drink?

⁵ Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

⁶ Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working?

⁷ Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?

⁸ Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also?

⁹ For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about? ¹⁰ Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope.

Right to reward for ministry

¹¹ If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? ¹² If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more?

Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.

¹³ Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? ¹⁴ Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.

Paul's voluntary stewardship in Ministry without charge – Servant to all to save some

¹⁵ But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void. ¹⁶ For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷ For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. ¹⁸ What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.

¹⁹ For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; ²⁰ and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; ²¹ to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; ²² to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. ²³ Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.

Reward and Crown

24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

Evidence and Seal of Apostleship [1 Corinthians 9:1-2]

- ✚ Qualifications of Apostleship, that they have been with Jesus and are eyewitnesses of His resurrection. [Acts 1:21-22]
- ✦ Paul was with Jesus for three years in Arabia. [Galatians 1:11-17]
- ✦ Paul was an eyewitness of the resurrection of Jesus having seen the resurrected Christ. [Acts 9:1-9]
- ✦ The Churches Paul planted are the seal of his Apostleship. [Acts 9:10 – 28:31]

Answer to those who challenge Paul's Apostleship – Right to reward for ministry [1 Corinthians 9:3-14]

- ✚ Ministers of the Gospel message have a right to make their living from their efforts.
- ✚ All the Apostles, the brothers of Jesus, and Cephas (Peter) were married and took their wives with them in their ministry.
- ✚ Paul and Barnabas were the only Apostles who were single.
- ✚ Everyone who works in any field of endeavor lives by the fruit of their labor.
- ✚ The Law, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain" applies to the ministers of the Gospel.
- ✚ The Priests and Levites who serve in the Temple make their living from the work they do.
- ✚ Jesus commanded that those who preach the Gospel should live from the Gospel. [Matthew 10:9-10, Luke 10:7]
- ✚ Paul and his companions have not exercised their right to material support as they endure all persecution for the purpose that the Gospel of Christ might not be hindered.

Paul's voluntary stewardship in Ministry without charge – Servant to all to save some [1 Corinthians 9:15-23]

- ✚ Paul feels a stewardship toward his ministry and is thereby compelled to preach the Gospel.
 - ✦ Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!
- ✚ Paul is moved to preach the Gospel free of charge, that he may not abuse his authority in the Gospel.
- ✚ If he is faithful to this stewardship, Paul expects a reward in the end.
- ✚ Paul has voluntarily made himself a servant of all, meeting each person with complete empathy toward their circumstances in life.
- ✚ By relating to the peoples circumstances, Paul desires to demonstrate his understanding of them in order to save some of them.

Reward and Crown [1 Corinthians 9:24-27]

- ✚ Paul compares himself to sports figures who are competing for a crown.
- ✚ Paul's goal is not a perishable crown but an imperishable crown.
- ✚ Success requires a great amount of self discipline, determination and endurance.
- ✚ Paul's greatest concern is that after he has preached to others, he might find himself disqualified.