

# 1 CORINTHIANS: LESSON 20

## Chapter 9: Care for Ministers and Missionaries

3 November 2017

Selfishness plagued the church at Corinth and was reflected in all their relationships with other people. In chapter nine, the Apostle Paul rebuked the Corinthian believers for their maltreatment of those who ministered unto them. He then established some biblical doctrine for giving and proper care of ministers and missionaries.

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- Vs 1** Paul reminded the Corinthians that he had a right to correct them. He had introduced them to the Lord.
- Vs 2** The Corinthians' conversion is proof that God honored Paul's apostleship and his ministry.
- Vss 3-5** It is right for a minister of God to eat and drink whatever they want, with pure conscience (chapter 8). It is right for a minister to marry (chapter 7).
- Vs 6** It is right for a minister of God to expect to be supported financially by those who benefit from his ministry personally or by those who have sent him to a foreign land to minister to others. "**Forbear working**," indicates that a pastor or missionary should not have to seek secular employment to support his family. He has liberty to work a job if necessary under extreme conditions, but he also has "power to forbear working."
- Vs 7** A soldier goes to war at the command of his government. The government is expected to provide whatever the soldier needs (food, clothing, ammo) to accomplish the mission.
- A worker in a vineyard or a shepherd in the field should be compensated for his labor. No man would work for free.
- Vss 8-9** Paul points out that his words are biblical. God established this principle in the Law that the laborer is worthy of his hire (Luke 10:7). Even the ox is fed for its labor (Deut. 25:4). The better you treat those who work for you, the more you will benefit from their labor (you reap what you sow).
- Vs 10** A man that labors, should be able to hope (to rest assured) that he'll receive the compensation he was promised for his work.
- Vs 11** The Lord's minister sows spiritual things (salvation, knowledge, blessings, instruction, etc.) for the benefit of others. In exchange, he ought to "**reap...carnal things**" (money, food, lodging, etc.) from those who reaped spiritual things. Those spiritual things involved a lot of hard work, time, and planning (in case you thought sermons and studies are delivered straight from heaven).
- Vs 12** Paul had earned the right to expect support from these believers. He's the one who personally cared for them in their times of need. Christians who choose to "tithe" to a TV ministry have failed to understand the principle of sowing carnal things to the one who visits you in your time of need and who truly cares for you.
- Though Paul had the right to expect support, he chose to "suffer all things" instead so that there was no chance of hindering the gospel of Christ.
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- Vss 13-14** Paul referred to the Levitical system established by God in the Old Testament. Special provisions were made for the tribe of Levi so that the priests could give full attention to the ministry of the Tabernacle and the Temple (Num 18, Lev 6-7, 27). The eleven other tribes were required to support the Levites.
- Vss 15-18** Paul made personal sacrifices to avoid giving wrong impressions so that he could further the gospel. He wasn't interested in earthly rewards; he wasn't in the ministry to make money. He knew his reward was in heaven. He was willing to preach the gospel "without charge" and trust that God would reward him in glory.
- Vs 19** When people see that you are interested in serving them by preaching the gospel; when they see that you're not in the "ministry business" for profit, you will "gain the more."
- Vss 20-22** Paul explained how he was enabled to meet people on their own terms. He did not partake of their sinful practices to win them. He found a way to introduce the gospel to any man, regardless of his background. He didn't try to make people think he was just like them. God made him whatever he needed to be to win them without violating the Law of God.
- Vs 23** Whatever your method of ministering the gospel to others, make sure your motives are right. Do it for the glory of God and "for the gospel's sake." Your ministry ought to enable others to further the gospel.
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**LUKE 10:7** The labourer is worthy of his hire.

**1 TIM. 5:18** The labourer is worthy of his reward. (Where is your money going?)

**GAL. 6:6-10** Give to him that taught you the word. You reap what you sow. If you give, you get.

**PHIL. 4:15-19** God will supply all the needs of the one who gives sacrificially to further the gospel (context is important). This is not a promise that God will provide for the needs of all men. There is a qualifying condition.

**2 COR. 11:8** God touches the hearts of believers to fulfil the needs of the ministry. Where there is a shortage from one church, God can move another church to step up and meet the need.

**2 THESS. 3:6-10**

Paul set the example for others to follow concerning the work ethic. He didn't eat anything he didn't work for.

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