

## Chapter 9 – Concerning Meat Sacrificed to Idols: The Illustration and The Importance

Once Paul addresses the specific issue of meat sacrificed to idols, he goes on to use himself as an illustration of the principle behind his instruction. In reality, the issue with the Corinthians church is less about meat and idolatry, and more about how to restrain oneself for the good of others (cf. 1 Cor. 8:13). Thus, Paul explains an area in his life in which he implements this principle: financial compensation for preaching. In order to explain how he resists the right to be paid for his ministry, he first must establish that he actually has the right to be paid for it. To that end, 1 Corinthians 9:1-14 represents a series of arguments that explain why Paul indeed deserves to be paid for his services in ministry. Match the description of each argument below with the verses that it represents.

1 Cor. 9:1-6

1 Cor. 9:7

1 Cor. 9:8-10

1 Cor. 9:11-12

1 Cor. 9:13-14

### Description

### Passage

*Ministerial right.* Under the Old Covenant, the Levitical priests who served in the temple would not only offer sacrifices on behalf of the people, but were compensated by partaking of part of the animal that was sacrificed (cf. Num. 18:8-24). In the same way, God instructed ministers under the New Covenant to earn wages by preaching and being compensated for it.

*Customary right.* Common vocations such as serving in military, managing a crop, or tending to animals illustrates that the worker receives payment from the fruit of his labor; they are supported by the very thing that they are serving. The same should be true for pastors.

*Scriptural right.* The Old Testament demonstrates that laborers ought to receive benefit from their labor. Thus, this concept is not simply a human convention; it is of divine origin as well. This lesser-to-greater argument based on Deuteronomy 25:4 shows that if animals shouldn't be prevented from eating while working, God is certainly more concerned that laborers shouldn't be prevented from whatever nourishment their own job offers.

*Apostolic right.* As an Apostle, the churches that Paul established prove the legitimacy of his ministry. Thus, just like the other Apostles, Paul deserved to refrain from working a secular job in order to support himself. Not only that, but he ought to be paid so much that he can bring along a non-working wife as well.

*Logical right.* Arguing from the greater to the lesser, common sense would say that if a preacher invests spiritually in people, they should compensate him materially for it. This was true for others such as Apollos and Cephas who partook of this right, and it was true for Paul as well.

Despite having the right to be paid for his Gospel ministry, Paul says that he “did not use this right, but we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ” (1 Cor. 9:12). What is one way in which compensation could cause a “hindrance to the gospel of Christ?”

## Chapter 9 – Concerning Meat Sacrificed to Idols: The Illustration and The Importance (continued)

After describing his right to compensation, Paul says, “But I have used none of these things” (1 Cor. 9:15). He then explains why, expressing the importance of limiting his own freedom. In this case, Paul’s self-restraint *expresses commitment* (1 Cor. 9:15), *earns rewards* (1 Cor. 9:16-18), *enhances evangelism* (1 Cor. 9:19-23), and *encourages holiness* (1 Cor. 9:24-27). Select one of these four aspects and explain it according to the associated verses.

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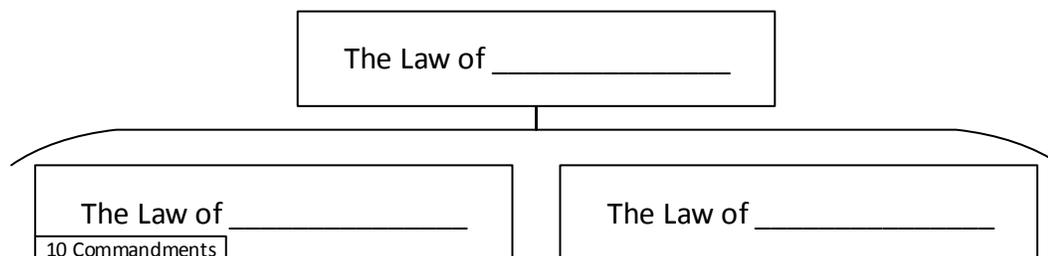


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In 1 Corinthians 9:20-21, Paul says that when witnessing to those “under the Law” (Jews under the Law of Moses), he lives as under the Law, and when witnessing to those “without the Law” (Gentiles without the Law of Moses), he lives as without the Law. But even when it comes to living as the latter group, he makes it clear that he is still under the Law of God by being under the Law of Christ. Based on those distinctions, fill in the blanks in the chart below and answer the related questions:



Are Christians <i>under</i> the Law of Moses (cf. Rom. 7:6, Heb. 8:13)?	Yes	No
Are Christians <i>under</i> the 10 Commandments?	Yes	No
Are Christians <i>guided</i> by the Law of Moses (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17, Rom. 3:31)?	Yes	No
Are Christians <i>under</i> the Law of Christ (cf. Gal. 6:2)?	Yes	No
Are Christians <i>under</i> the Law of God (cf. Rom. 7:25)?	Yes	No

When it comes to evangelism, *contextualization* is the practice of adapting the Gospel message in order to suit the cultural tastes and expectations of a particular people group. This concept is errantly defended, in large part, from 1 Corinthians 9:22-23, in which Paul says, “I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.” According to that phrase, those who seek to contextualize the Gospel often take pragmatic approaches to evangelism, using methods and phrases that seem to “work” to win converts.

What is one inherent problem with the practice of contextualization?

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Explains why 1 Corinthians 9:22-23 does not justify the practice of contextualization:

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