

Letters to the church in...



Corinth

Focus: 1 Corinthians 9:1-27

Lesson 9-Faithful Ministry and Tithe Matters

- **Paul now meets the charge of some who spoke against his Apostleship (v.1-6)**
 - (v.1) **“Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord” (in vision).** Paul had been specifically called by God to be an Apostle to the Gentiles [non-Jewish people]. His **conversion experience** is related to us in Acts 9:1-9, Ananias was then commissioned to help Paul receive fully receive Christ by being baptized, v.15-18.
 - (v.2)—some had accused Paul of not being an Apostle... But if not unto others Paul says, “...doubtless, I am one to you!...” O Corinthians. **(The work Paul had done among them made it clearly evident that any such talk by some of the Corinthians was foolishness!!)**
- **Full time gospel ministry workers and the need of financial support (v.7-14)** *The Lord Himself makes a provision for them.*
 - (v.7-10) —we’re laboring for the Lord all day every day. Is it right for a man to pocket all of that expense himself? Who goes to war at their own expense? “Don’t muzzle the ox...”—**let him eat as he treads. It is his work, and his reward to keep in health.** (The Lord said this for us). “The worker is worthy of his hire” Jesus tells us (Matthew 10:10).
 - (v.11-14) —If we sow for you spiritual things, is it a big deal for us to reap your carnal things (for our everyday needs)?! —**and yet we haven’t done it** says Paul! (We don’t want you to think any of this is about money at all! **The Gospel is about saving souls for eternity!!** It’s NOT some kind of money business!!!)
 - **“The Lord has ordained that those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel” (v.14). Tithes and offerings still stand among God’s people** (contrary to what some have thought, taught, and done). **The Gospel work calls for support!!!** (More than any other line, this work is of chief value to receive our support—eternal investments are at stake!!—souls are hanging in the balance! Will they be lost for lack of means? **Jesus gave all for us on the Cross to save souls. What are we willing to give for Him, and for those who are perishing? Will we give nothing?**)
 - **Notice Malachi 3:6-11.** Will anyone dare to rob the Lord God? (He gave all for us, shall we rob Him even?) **“...Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house...” (v.10).** God “...has ordained that those who preach the gospel should live of the Gospel” (1 Cor. 9:14). The Lord’s house and pastoral ministry needs funding just as much as ever...especially in these times as we’re trying to reach the world with the good news of Jesus Christ! **(we should bring the money to the storehouse of God’s faithful church, so that the ministry work can be properly funded). 90 % of our paycheck, WITH God’s blessing, will go FARTHER THAN 100% without God’s blessing** (if we selfishly keep back the 10% that belongs to God).

- **SOME TODAY have polluted and corrupted God's plan.** (Some kinds of Pastors at some big churches are flying around in personal leer jets, etc. **That is non-sense and SIN!** Christ never called anyone to live that way in His service! **"The Son of man had no place to even lay His head"** (Matthew 8:20). And shall a minister of Christ live in luxury while so many in the world are suffering for want? No way!! (Personally, I like the system at SDA. It doesn't matter how many people are in a church, whether big or small, the pastor makes the same amount as any other SDA pastor would. Not much, but a fair living wage to take care of the family's needs, etc.) **Now, what if there is some kind of corruption in the church?** You and I must do OUR faithful part to give the tithe and offering into God's church. If some other man misuses any of those funds, he will be the one to answer to God for his sin!! Jesus commended the poor widow who gave her last two mites [pennies] to the true church in His day (even though the church at that time had plenty of corruption in it). (ref. Luke 21:1-5).
- **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob gave tithes unto the Lord** (and that was before there was even an organized church!). The tenth portion of everything was given to God (see **Genesis 14:18-20; 28:22**). The followers of Christ are counted as Abraham's children (Galatians 3:29). The Lord calls for our faithful tithes and offerings even in these very days!!! **The Priests and Pastors are to be paid with the tithe (Numbers 18:24).**
- **Preaching the gospel for the necessity and joy of saving souls—Paul was not going around to try and make some kind of money—and his work testified to that (v.15-18)** It was Paul's glory and gladness to preach Jesus Christ "without charge" or expense to these people in Corinth.
- **Paul was not afraid to associate and to identify with the people of any group inasmuch as was possible, to save souls (v.19-23)** Paul was made as "all things unto all men." He did not compromise the truth or the commandments of God in the slightest! He only identified with them on the points where he could consistently do so. (This is obvious as you look at his teachings and his labors. You cannot win souls from evil if you pretend to support their evil! Paul was very outspoken against all sins and evils!)
- **The discipline and focus needed to be faithful in God's work and any line of life (v.24-27)**
 - (v.25)—"...he who strives for the mastery is temperate in all things."
 - (v.27)—**we can never give up the fight!!** Let us never go half way in anything! Let us not fall short of the prize or be lost in the way! Rather, let us choose to be faithful unto death! (discipline, perseverance, and firm adherence to the right are needed in the Christian life—we must be determined to be victorious at all costs and to cultivate these things in our lives)

Question (s) for the Heart:

Is it your desire to be faithful in returning the tithes that belong to God? ____ Are you willing to give for the cause of Jesus Christ? ____ Is it your desire to be victorious by the grace of Jesus Christ? ____ If you have not yet received Jesus Christ as the Savior of your life, will you do so now? ____