

### Paul's Rights, Not Exercised | 1 Corinthians 10:3-15

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- Verses 3-11 included in session 19
- Verse 12 - This is often the approach of a missionary, who doesn't take a salary from those he serves, because doing so would **hinder the gospel of Christ**. As a ministry grows, the missionary would be fully within his rights to begin to draw a salary.
- Verse 13 - Once again Paul uses what appears to be a wholly Jewish illustration. The Levitical Priests lived off the offerings of the people, and even consumed much of the meat that was brought for sacrifices (Lev. 6:16).
- Verse 14 –
  - It is interesting that Paul uses such strong language, saying that this is **ordained** of the **Lord**.
    - Of course, the only way for this to happen is for those who benefit from the preaching to make financial donations.
    - The translation **ordain** is perhaps too strong. The word διατάσσω [diatasso] is to "thoroughly set in order." Thus, the Lord's plan of support for ministry is that **they which preach the Gospel** should make their living therein.
  - When did the Lord ordain this matter?
    - If Paul refers to the *Kingdom Gospel*, then Matthew 10:10 and Luke 10:7 would be in order.
    - If Paul refers to the Gospel of salvation, then the command is directly from God through Paul, as in Galatians 6:6 and (by implication) 1 Timothy 5:17.
    - The statement could also be used in a general sense for all dispensations.
- Verse 15 –
  - How can Paul refuse that which **the Lord ordained** (v. 14)?
    - First, there is no indication that this is a *command* of the Lord, but rather a *plan* of the Lord. To refuse to take advantage of this plan is not a sin.
    - Second, Paul's role as an apostle and missionary was not the role of a local pastor.
      - Paul did receive offerings from the church at Philippi (Phil. 4:15-16), but not as their Pastor.
  - The second part of this verse, **it were better for me to die...** connects with the thoughts of vv. 16-17, and should *not* be taken as hyperbole. It was fully and completely in order that Paul should have a **glorying** that would not be made **void** by a few dollars of income.

### Paul's Dispensation | 1 Corinthians 9:16-18

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- Verses 16-17 –
  - These verses are often spiritualized and applied to every preacher, but they do not belong with every preacher. Paul uses the personal pronoun **I** and does not include the rest of us.
  - Placing the end of v. 15 and the beginning of v. 16 together, Paul says, in effect, "If I were to draw a salary from you, my boasting in my apostleship would be taken away."
  - He is solidifying the point that he is not working for a salary, because **necessity is laid upon me**.

- If Paul was like those in 1 Timothy 3 who **desire the office of a bishop** and thus **do this thing willingly** (v. 17), then the **reward** would be both the joy of the ministry and the sustenance that the ministry provides.
    - But Paul was not doing the work of a pastor or even of a missionary who desired the office, rather, He was cast into service **against my will** on the road to Damascus.
  - The fact that Paul was dragged into service **against my will** and forced into ministry to the point he says **woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel** (v. 16) is evidence that a **dispensation...is committed unto me**.
  - Do we really believe that a dispensation was committed to Paul? The word **committed** is πιστεύω [pisteuo], the verb form of *faith*, thus *a dispensation is "faithed" unto me or entrusted to me*.
  - **Dispensation** is οἰκονομία [oikonomia], which is literally the *house law*, thus the *economy* or *administration*, but *dispensation* is the most descriptive term.
    - Compare Luke 12:42, and where the **faithful...steward** is the πιστός οἰκονόμος [*pistos oikonomos*], and was made **ruler over his household**."
    - Paul is the *oikonomos* of this *oikonomia*.
    - To see the difference between the ministry of Paul and Peter, compare Galatians 2:7, in which Paul uses very similar terminology.
    - Was a **dispensation** entrusted to Paul? Compare Ephesians 3:2, Colossians 1:25, 1 Corinthians 4:1.
  - Many translations avoid the clarity of **dispensation** (KJV), using terminology that could be true of any minister of the Gospel.
    - NASB, ESV, NKJV, HCSB - a stewardship
    - NIV - the trust committed to me
    - NRSV - I am entrusted with a commission
    - NLT - God has given me this sacred trust
    - NET - I am entrusted with a responsibility
  - Most commentaries fail to take the full measure of these words.
    - Ironside simply speaks of the nobility of doing ministry without expectation of payment.
    - Baker Exegetical Commentary has a footnote, saying "Paul is not talking about ministry in general but about his own calling as an apostle."
    - The Holman New Testament Commentary says Paul "voluntarily gave up his right to remuneration" in order "to raise his preaching above the level of mere obedience" and says nothing about his apostleship.
    - Matthew Henry says that all "Ministers have a dispensation of the gospel...committed to them."
  - If these words mean nothing more than what is applicable to any minister, then shouldn't every ministry aspire to the same level of commitment, and reject any financial reward?
- Verse 18 - Again emphasizing the dispensation that is his, the Apostle speaks of **my power in the gospel**, literally *authority* in the Gospel. I know of no other Scripture which speaks of this authority in general terms for either ministers or laity.