

**“The Right Way!”**  
**1 Corinthians 9:1-7**

**Introduction:**

1. **IE: As Americans, We Love Our Rights!**
  - In Fact - The First 10 Amendments To Our Constitution:
    - We Call: The Bill Of **Rights!**
  - Some Of The Rights We Have – We Are Exercising Today:
    - The Right To Worship According To Our Own Conscience!
      - “Congress Shall Make No Law Respecting An Establishment Of Religion, Or Prohibiting The Free Exercise Thereof!”
    - The Right To Speak Freely!
      - “No Law – Abridging The Freedom Of Speech!”
    - The Right To Assemble Together!
      - “No Law Respecting – The Right Of The People Peaceably To Assemble!”
    - And All Of These Rights:
      - Come From Just The First Amendment To The Constitution!
  - As Christians - We Appreciate These Rights!
    - As Americans - We Relish Our Rights!
    - Another Right That We Have:
      - Will Happen In Just Over A Week - If Not Sooner - And That Is Your Right To Vote!
  - We Take Pride In These Rights!
    - Nationally! Politically!
    - And This Often Carries Over Into Our Spiritual Lives As Well!
2. And Spiritual Liberty & Christian Rights Became An Issue Within The Corinthian Church!
  - In 1 Corinthians 8:
    - Paul Was Dealing With The Issue:
      - “Now As Touching Things Offered Unto Idols!”
    - Some Christians Felt Strong About The Matter:
      - And Had No Problem Eating The Meat Offered To Idols!
      - They Had Freedom & Liberty In Christ To Do So!
    - But Other Christians Were Struggling In The Matter:
      - And Their Conscience Was Grieved Even When They Just Saw Another Christian Eating Meat That Had Been Offered In Sacrifice To Idols!
    - Paul Instructed The Christians Who Had The Stronger Conscience:
      - To **Limit Their Liberty Out Of Love** For Their Brothers & Sisters In Christ – Who Were Still Struggling With That Issue!
        - In Fact - Remember Paul’s Strong Statement In 8:13 - “Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend!”
      - It Was His Conviction:
        - To Limit His Liberty Out Of Love For Others!
        - This Was His Focus!
3. And This Is To Be The Focus Of Every Christian!
  - **To Limit Your Liberty Out Of Love** For Your Brothers & Sisters In Christ:
    - Who May Still Be Struggling With An Issue That Is Not Specifically Dealt With In The Bible!
  - But This Is A Hard Truth!
    - And Because Of Pride - It Is A Difficult Instruction To Hear & Obey!
  - I Can Imagine Some Of Those Christians In Corinth:
    - Who Took Pride In Their **Right** To Eat The Meat Offered To Idols:
      - Say To Paul - Who Do You Think You Are?
        - To Tell Us To Limit Our Liberty!
        - And To Tell Us That If We Don’t – We Are Even Sinning Against Christ! (8:12)
        - After All - We Are Christians - And We Have Our Freedom! And We Have Our **Rights!**
4. In Answer To This Objection:
  - Paul Writes Chapter 9!
    - And We Will Look At 9:1-7 This Morning - “Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? / 2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord. / 3 Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, / 4 Have we not power to eat and to drink? / 5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as

other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? / 6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? / 7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?"

- In These 7 Verses:

- We Find **10 Questions** That Paul Asks To Those Who Might Object To Limiting Their Liberty Out Of Love!

- And All 10 Of These Questions:

- Come Out Of Paul's Own Life & Experience!

- You See - Paul Had Rights Too - As A Christian!

- But Instead Of Relishing Those Rights!

- And Holding On To Those Rights, No Matter What The Cost!

- He Would Often Relinquish Those Rights, So That He Could Better Serve The Lord & His People!

- And Through Paul's Example:

- We Will Learn **The Right Way To Use Your Rights As A Christian!**

5. What Were Some Of Paul's Rights?

### 1. **The Position Of Paul's Authority:**

- 9:1-2 - "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? / If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord!"

- In These First 2 Verses:

- We Learn That Paul Held A Position Of Authority!

- And Because Of This Position:

- He Could Have Easily Demanded Their Submission To Him & To His Instruction!

- This Was His **Right!**

- See: His Position:

- "Am I Not An Apostle?"

- The Way This & All Of The Other Questions Are Written, Is To Give A Not-So-Subtle Hint At The Answer! The Answers Are Always Affirmative! The Answers Are Always Yes!

- When Paul Asks: "Am I Not An Apostle?"

- The Answer Is Without A Doubt - Yes, Paul, You Are An Apostle!

- What Is An "Apostle"?

- "Apostle" - Means To Send / Or Someone Sent!

- A Person Who Was Specifically Chosen By & Sent By Jesus Christ To Deliver His Message Of The Gospel!

- In 1:1 - "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God!"

- Paul's Position Was Not One Of His Own Choosing, But Of The Calling Of Jesus Christ!

- And With This Position:

- Came Authority! Not His Own, But The Authority Of Jesus Christ!

- He Had The Right To Demand Their Submission!

- See: His Possession:

- "Am I Not Free?"

- Again - Like The Rest Of The Questions - The Answer Is Going To Be / Has To Be Affirmative! A Yes!

- When Paul Asks: "Am I Not Free?"

- The Answer Is - Yes - I, Paul, Am Free!

- His Possession Was Freedom!

- He Was As Free As Those Other Christians Were!

- Same Christian Freedom! Same Spiritual Liberty!

- But He Was Free To Use His Freedom:

- Not Selfishly, But Selflessly!

- 9:19 - "For though I be free from all [men], yet have I made myself servant unto all!"

- And With This Possession Of Freedom:

- Came Authority To Set The Example For Others To Follow!

- He Had The Right To Demand Their Submission!

- See: His Proof:

- The Proof Of His Authority!

- The Evidence That He Should Be Listened To!

- "Have I Not Seen Jesus Christ Our Lord?"

- This Was A Qualification In Order To Be An Apostle!
  - Seen In Acts 1:21-22 - “Ordained To Be A Witness With Us Of His Resurrection!” (Peter)
- Paul Did See The Risen Lord!
  - And This Was Proof Of His Authority!
- In Acts 9:4-6 - On The Road To Damascus - “Suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: / And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? / And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. / And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?”
- In Acts 18:9-10 - In Corinth Itself - “Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: / For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city!”
- He Had The Right To Demand Their Submission!
- “Are Not Ye My Work In The Lord?”
  - Another Proof / Evidence Of His Authority!
    - That He Should Be Listened To!
  - They Were The Proof That God Used Paul:
    - In Founding & Growing That Church!
  - In Fact - In Verse 2 - Paul Says:
    - If My Authority Does Not Extend To Any Other Church – It Does To You!
  - “If I Be Not An Apostle Unto Others, Yet Doubtless I Am To You: For The Seal Of Mine Apostleship Are Ye In The Lord!”
    - They Were The “Seal” That Proved The Apostleship & The Authority Of Paul!
    - **IE:** Seal Of Authenticity! Of A Collectable / Antique / Coin!
- Because Of Paul’s Position Of Authority:
  - He Had The Right To Demand Their Submission To His Teaching & To His Instruction!
  - But His Desire:
    - Was More About Their Surrender To The Lord!
    - It Wasn’t About Him!
    - It Was About The Lord & The Gospel!
  - Remember What Paul Said:
    - In 2:1-5 - “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. / 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. / 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. / 4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: / 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God!”
  - And This Is The Right Way To Use Your Rights As A Christian!
    - It Is Not About Demanding Your Rights!
    - But About Sometimes Denying Those Rights:
      - For A Greater Surrender To The Lord!

## 2. ***The Privileges Of Paul’s Authority:***

- 9:3-6 - “Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, / 4 Have we not power to eat and to drink? / 5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? / 6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?”
  - In These Next 4 Verses:
    - We Learn That Paul Had Some Privileges That Came With His Authority & Freedom In Christ!
  - And Because Of These Privileges:
    - He Could Have Easily Demanded The Same Treatment & Expectations That They Demanded!
  - These Were His ***Rights!***
    - Three Times He Talks About His Rights / His Power & Authority To Have Something Or To Do Something!
  - The Privilege To Eat & To Drink! (9:4)
    - “Have We Not Power To Eat And To Drink?”
      - Of Course He Does!
        - As Well As All Of The Other Apostles & Ministers Of The Gospel!
  - This Was His ***Right!***

- As Well As The Right Of All Other Christians!
  - He Had The Same Knowledge As They Did!
  - He Had The Same Freedom As They Did!
  - But Even Though This Was His Right:
    - What Did He Do With That Right?
    - 8:13 - "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend!"
  - But Those Who Were "Examining" Him:
    - Might Have Said - That Is OK For You To Limit Your Freedom To Eat & To Drink - After All - You Are An Apostle - You Have A Greater Responsibility!
  - But He Had The Right To Demand:
    - The Same Freedoms & Expectations That They Had!
  - The Privilege To Marry! (9:5)
    - "Have We Not Power To Lead About A Sister, A Wife?"
      - Of Course He Does!
    - This Too Was His **Right!**
      - To Marry A Sister In Christ!
        - Christians Are Only Permitted To Marry Other Christians!
      - And To "Lead [Her] About!"
        - To Bring His Wife With Him, As He Traveled And Served!
        - This Also Implies That Whatever Support The Church Gave Would Need To Be Enough To Completely Support The Minister & His Wife & Family!
    - This Was His Right:
      - Because The Other Apostles Were Married!
      - Because The Brothers Of Christ Were Married!
        - Half-Brothers, Really - Sons Of Joseph & Mary - Know Of Four From Mark 6:3!
      - Because The Apostle Peter Himself Was Married!
        - In Matthew 8:14 - Jesus Himself Heals Peter's Mother-In-Law From A Fever!
  - But Even Though This Was His Right:
    - What Did He Do With This Right?
    - He Relinquished His Right To Be Married, And Remained Single! 7:8 - "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I!"
  - He Had The Right To Demand:
    - The Same Freedoms & Expectations That They Had!
- The Privilege Of Devotion:
  - To The Work Of The Ministry!
  - 9:6 - "Or I Only And Barnabas, Have Not We Power To Forbear Working?"
    - Implied Answer - Of Course They Have This Right!
  - This Too Was His **Right!**
    - And The Right Of Barnabas, His Partner In Ministry! And Other Ministers Of The Gospel!
    - The Right To Not Have To Work Another Job:
      - While They Do The Work Of The Ministry & The Preaching Of The Word Of God!
    - We Will Look At This In More Detail Next Week:
      - In 9:8-14!
    - But It Was Paul's Right:
      - And The Right Of Every Pastor / Preacher / Missionary To Be Devoted To Their Work & Be Supported By Their Church!
  - But Even Though This Was His Right:
    - What Did He Do With This Right?
    - He Kept Working As A Tent-Maker In Order To Provide For His Personal Needs, To Not Burden The Church, And To Not Receive Any Glory!
    - And The Corinthians Saw This & Knew This!
    - Acts 18:3 - It Was In Corinth Where Paul Met Aquila & Priscilla - "And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers!"
- Because Of Paul's Privileges Of Authority:
  - He Had The Right To Demand The Same Freedoms & Expectations That Other Christians Enjoyed!
  - But His Desire:
    - Was More About Their Support & Strength In The Lord!
    - It Wasn't About Him!

- It Was About The Lord & The Gospel!
- And This Is The Right Way To Use Your Rights As A Christian!
  - It Is Not About Demanding Your Rights!
  - But About Sometimes Denying Those Rights:
    - To Provide Greater Support To The Lord's People!

**3. *The Provision For Paul's Authority:***

- 9:7 - "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?"
  - In This Last Verse This Morning:
    - We Learn That Paul Had The Authority To Receive Support & Provision From The People He Served!
  - And Because Of His Authority:
    - He Could Have Easily Demanded That Support!
  - That Was His Right!
    - And He Used 3 Natural Examples To Prove It!
- The Provision For A Soldier:
  - Is Expected!
  - "Who Goeth A Warfare Any Time At His Own Charges?"
    - Does A Soldier Go To War:
      - And Expect Have To Pay His Own Way?
  - The Answer Is No!
    - A Soldier Expects To Have Some Provision:
      - When He Gets Called Up For Active Duty!
      - Doesn't Normally Have To Come Up With His Own Rations!
    - A Soldier Expects To Have Some Payment:
      - For The Work & Service That He Does!
  - A Soldier Has The Right To Get Paid!
    - And To Be Provided For!
    - And Paul Uses This To Illustrate & To Show:
      - That The Minister Of God Has The Right To Get Paid & To Be Provided For!
  - Paul Had The Right To Demand:
    - Support! Just As A Soldier Does!
- The Provision For A Farmer:
  - Is Expected!
  - "Who Planteth A Vineyard, And Eateth Not Of The Fruit Thereof?"
    - Does A Farmer Plant His Field:
      - And Expect To Not Enjoy The Fruits Of His Labor When It Is Harvest Time?
    - Do You Plant & Tend To A Garden:
      - So That You Won't Get To Enjoy What You Have Grown? Sweet Corn / Beans / Potatoes / Etc?
  - The Answer Is No!
    - A Farmer Expects To Enjoy Some Of What He Grows!
      - Either The Fruit Of It Or The Payment For It!
    - A Farmer Expects Some Kind Of Payment & Fulfillment For The Work & Service That He Does!
  - A Farmer Has The Right To Get Paid!
    - And To Be Provided For!
    - Through What They Grow!
    - And Paul Uses This To Further Show:
      - That The Minister Of God Has The Right To Get Paid & Provided For Through His Service & Ministry!
  - Paul Had The Right To Demand:
    - Support & Provision! Just As A Farmer Does!
- The Provision For A Shepherd:
  - Is Expected!
  - "Or Who Feedeth The Flock, And Eateth Not Of The Milk Of The Flock?"
    - Does A Shepherd Tend His Sheep:
      - And Expect To Not Enjoy The Benefits Of Those Sheep? Their Milk? Their Wool? Even Their Meat?

- The Answer Is Again: No!
  - A Shepherd Expects To Receive Some Benefit From His Work With Those Sheep!
- A Shepherd Has The Right To Get Paid!
  - And To Be Provided For!
  - And So Do You - Work Is One Of God's Blessings In Order To Provide For Your Needs!
    - You Don't Work For Free!
- Because Of Paul's Provision For His Authority:
  - He Had The Right To Demand Their Support & Provision As Their Shepherd!
  - But His Desire:
    - Was More About His Service To Them!
  - And This Is The Right Way To Use Your Rights As A Christian!
    - It Is Not About Demanding Your Rights!
    - But About Sometimes Denying Those Rights:
      - For A Greater Service For The Lord & For Others!

**Conclusion:**

1. These First 7 Verses Of 1 Corinthians 9:
  - Were Paul's "Bill Of Rights" – So To Speak!
  - Because Of His Authority As An Apostle:
    - And A Minister & A Pastor:
    - He Had The Right:
      - To Demand Their Submission!
      - To Demand The Same Freedoms & Expectations!
      - To Demand Their Support!
2. But Instead - What Did He Do?
  - 9:15 - "But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me!"
  - Instead Of Demanding His Rights:
    - Paul Often Denied Himself & His Rights!
  - Instead Of Relishing His Rights:
    - Paul Often Relinquished His Rights!
    - In Order To Serve The Lord & His People More Effectively!
3. And Isn't This What Jesus Himself Did For You & For Me?
  - Philippians 2:5-8 - "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: / 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: / 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: / 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross!"
  - Instead Of Demanding His Rights:
    - As The Son Of God!
    - Jesus Denied Himself & His Rights!
  - Instead Of Relishing His Rights:
    - As The Savior Of Men!
    - Jesus Relinquished His Rights!
    - In Order To Die For Our Sins!
4. And If Jesus Did This For You & For Me:
  - What Rights Will You Relinquish:
    - For The Lord, For His People, And For His Work?
  - This Is The Right Way To Use Your Rights!

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