

# The Case for Christian Responsibility

1 Corinthians 9

Paul makes a case  
for his “rights”

1Co 9:1-27 ESV Am I not free? Am I not an apostle?  
Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my  
workmanship in the Lord? 2 If to others I am not an  
apostle, at least I am to you, for you are the seal of my  
apostleship in the Lord. 3 This is my defense to those  
who would examine me. 4 Do we not have the right to  
eat and drink? 5 Do we not have the right to take  
along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and  
the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? 6 Or is it only  
Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from  
working for a living?

7 Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? 8 Do I say these things on human authority? Does not the Law say the same? 9 For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? 10 Does he not certainly speak for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop.

His comments in the 2nd  
letter to the Corinthians  
give insight into his  
thinking

2Co 11:7-9 ESV Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached God's gospel to you free of charge? 8 I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. 9 And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way.

The LORD has placed a  
financial responsibility on  
the church

11 If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? 12 If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. 13 Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? 14 In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.

But Paul chose to NOT  
use those rights - and he  
was not cajoling them to  
give

15 But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing these things to secure any such provision. For I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of my ground for boasting

The stewardship of the  
gospel - this is his sense  
of responsibility

16 For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship. 18 What then is my reward? That in my preaching I may present the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.

We have Christian  
responsibility, financial  
yes, but also a  
responsibility of the  
gospel

19 For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. 20 To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. 21 To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. 23 I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

Whatever happened to  
the the responsibility of  
hot pursuit of God? Run  
the race to win!

1Co 9:24-27 ESV Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. 25 Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 26 So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. 27 But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

- Responsible to give money to God's work
- Responsible to preach the gospel
- Responsible to run well