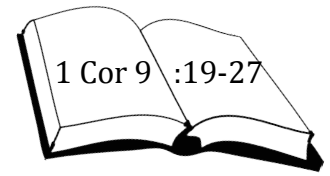


All things to Teach Others

1 Corinthians
Lesson 18
Weds 7/4/2018



From the first part of chapter 9 we learn a lot about Paul's apostleship and the support of evangelists. But with tonight's text we see how these thoughts also tie back in to chapter 8, regarding consideration of our impact on others by what we do (specifically in ch 8, eating meat that had been sacrificed to an idol.) Martin Luther summarized Paul's thoughts here this way – "A Christian man is a free lord over all things and subject to nobody. A Christian man is a ministering servant in all things and subject to everybody."

1. In verses 20-21, Paul lists 3 different groups of people that he "became" like, in order to try to win them to Christ. List each of these 3 groups, and explain who you think each group is. (That is, how are they different?)
2. Does this mean that anything goes – that we can and should do anything or go anywhere in order to potentially impact sinners? What helps us determine what to do and not do?
[Consider – Paul had Timothy circumcised in Acts 16:3 so he wouldn't be a stumbling block to teaching Jews; yet he refused to have Titus circumcised when the Jews demanded it in Gal 2:1-5; Paul also kept some Jewish vows and rituals - Acts 18:8, 21:26; and confronted Peter for eating with Jews and avoiding Gentiles in Gal 2:11-14]

In vs 22 Paul lists the "weak" – while this might be referring to those with physical ailments, it seems to better fit those he talked about in chapter 8 – the spiritually weaker brother, whose conscience and knowledge doesn't understand all the freedoms God allows.

3. How does this thought tie vs 19-21, AND all the prior verses, into the message of chapter 8?
4. Paul makes a transition in vs 23 – from giving up his own liberties for the sake of others, to giving up his liberties for whose sake?

We are very familiar with the Olympics – which began in Ancient Greece. The Isthmian Games were a similar athletic contest held every other year, and were on the isthmus by Corinth – the Corinthians would have been very familiar with these games and the intense effort and training these athletes gave in an attempt to gain the glory of winning. You can find a lot about these games on-line.

5. Given what you know of how athletes sacrifice and train, what is the point of vs 24-27?
6. Considering questions 4 & 5 together – and vs 27 – if we are exercising self control and sacrifice for the sake of our brother and of the gospel, who ELSE are we helping?

PERSONAL THOUGHT: Are you making the same effort and self-discipline *spiritually* that Olympians do for their sport?