

Carrying The Torch: By Spreading The Word Of God

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I Corinthians 9

Using This Study

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

② EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

③ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.

Guest Speaker:

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A graduate of Biola University, Talbot Seminary, and Southwestern Theological Seminary with a Doctor of Ministry degree in Mission and Evangelism, Willie Bolden is an adjunct professor at Dallas Christian College and Dallas Seminary. After planting two churches in California, Willie came to DeSoto, Texas, to found These Are They Community Church, where he is now senior pastor. Willie and his wife, Loretta, have seven children. He is also the founder of W.J. Bolden Ministries.

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the passage.

Read I Corinthians 9 (NET)

¹Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?

²If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you, for you are the confirming sign of my apostleship in the Lord.

³This is my defense to those who examine me.

⁴Do we not have the right to financial support?

⁵Do we not have the right to the company of a believing wife, like the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas?

⁶Or do only Barnabas and I lack the right not to work?

⁷Who ever serves in the army at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit? Who tends a flock and does not consume its milk?

⁸Am I saying these things only on the basis of common sense, or does the law not say this as well?

⁹For it is written in the law of Moses, "***Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.***" God is not concerned here about oxen, is he?

¹⁰Or is he not surely speaking for our benefit? It was written for us, because the one plowing and threshing ought to work in hope of enjoying the harvest.

¹¹If we sowed spiritual blessings among you, is it too much to reap material things from you?

¹²If others receive this right from you, are we not more deserving?

But we have not made use of this right. Instead we endure everything so that we may not be a hindrance to the gospel of Christ.

¹³Don't you know that those who serve in the temple eat food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar receive a part of the offerings?

¹⁴In the same way the Lord commanded those who proclaim the gospel to receive their living by the gospel.

¹⁵But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing these things so that something will be done for me. In fact, it would be better for me to die than—no one will deprive me of my reason for boasting!

¹⁶For if I preach the gospel, I have no reason for boasting, because I am compelled to do this. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!

¹⁷For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward. But if I do it unwillingly, I am entrusted with a responsibility.

¹⁸What then is my reward? That when I preach the gospel I may offer the gospel free of charge, and so not make full use of my rights in the gospel.

¹⁹For since I am free from all I can make myself a slave to all, in order to gain even more people.

²⁰To the Jews I became like a Jew to gain the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) to gain those under the law.

²¹To those free from the law I became like one free from the law (though I am not free from God's law but under the law of Christ) to gain those free from the law.

²²To the weak I became weak in order to gain the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that by all means I may save some.

²³I do all these things because of the gospel, so that I can be a participant in it.

²⁴Do you not know that all the runners in a stadium compete, but only one receives the prize? So run to win.

²⁵Each competitor must exercise self-control in everything. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one.

²⁶So I do not run uncertainly or box like one who hits only air.

²⁷Instead I subdue my body and make it my slave, so that after preaching to others I myself will not be disqualified.

EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN?

1. How do you understand what the Bible says about evangelism?
2. How did Paul demonstrate his heart to reach people with the Gospel?
3. When Paul says he has an obligation to preach the Gospel, what do you think he means?
4. When you think of your responsibility to preach the Gospel, how does it make you feel?
5. If you were giving yourself a grade in terms of how well you feel you are carrying out the command of Jesus to make disciples, what grade would you give yourself?
6. What does Paul mean when he speaks of the “law of Christ?”

7. What does Paul mean by the phrase “to the weak I became weak?”

8. As a collective church body how are you doing in making disciples by spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

③ EMBRACE His Word

Why does this MATTER to me?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage:

Write about what God wants you to KNOW, to FEEL, and to DO...

Sermon Notes
