

Rights or Wrongs

I Corinthians 8:1-9:18

I. OUR RIGHTS MUST ALWAYS BE VIEWED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST (vv. 1-6)

cf. Philippians 2:5-11 While not giving up anything of His Person and attributes, the Lord Jesus willingly gave up His rights and privileges and humbled himself to the extent He died on the cross for us.

Any discussion of our rights as believers must always be undertaken within the context of the humiliation and exaltation of the Saviour. We are called to follow in the footsteps of the Saviour. It is incongruous for a believer to demand personal rights when we are called to love and service.

II. WE SURRENDER OUR RIGHTS FOR THE SAKE OF THE WEAK/IMMATURE BELIEVER

(vv. 7-13)

The weak/immature person is the one who acts against their own conscience and engages in behaviour that he/she believes is sinful, solely because a mature believer engages in the same conduct.

A. What Surrender Is: Giving up anything and everything for the sake of immature believers.

B. What Surrender is NOT : Giving up anything and everything for the sake of another's preference.

III. WE SURRENDER OUR RIGHTS FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL (9:1-18)

Paul clearly had the scriptural grounds to receive payment from the Corinthians for the work he had done on their behalf. He was an apostle, had worked hard among the Corinthians and had a right to expect remuneration. Nonetheless, he refused compensation lest anyone accuse him of "being in it for the money".

Paul uses 2 points to make his case:

A. Given that he is an apostle (vv. 1-2), he should have the same rights as other apostles (vv. 3-6). He then asks 3 rhetorical questions as illustrations:

1. "Who serves as a soldier at his own expense?"
2. "Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit?"
3. "Who tends a flock without getting any of the milk?"

B. Remuneration for work is outlined in the Law (vv. 8-14)

1. The ox was not to be muzzled when it tread out the grain. (vv. 8-12)
2. Priests serving in the temple received food/meat (vv. 13-14)