

I Corinthians 9:15-23 **Adapting Our Ministries**

Introduction:

When we think of the word “adaptation” we are thinking of making an adjustment or modification to some thing or someone. A good mechanic knows how to make the proper adjustments for the engine to run smoothly and efficiently. A good military general knows how to adapt his troops depending on the enemies’ capabilities and his weaponry. A good baseball player knows how to adjust his swing to increase his batting average. A good mother of many children knows how to keep them playing without toys in harmony without being stingy.

We all have to adapt our lives in one way or another; especially in the Christian life we make any necessary changes that will be a blessing to others. When it comes to the good news of God’s grace we do not use a canned approach to teach about the redemption of Christ because God’s people come from various backgrounds, religions and temperaments and personalities.

I. Paul’s Necessity to Preach the Gospel – v.15-22

A. Paul’s emphatic statement v. 15

1. He would rather die than to be guilty of the wrong motives
2. No boasting v.16
3. Fire in his bones – Like Jeremiah, (Jer. 20:9)
4. Undefined disaster – “woe is me” – Acts 4:19,20

B. Paul’s reward – v.17

1. A voluntary servant merits reward
2. The true nature of a steward – Note. 4:1; 7:22; Rom. 1:1; Turn To: Luke 17:7-10

II. Paul’s Strategy to Preach the Gospel – v. 19-23

A. Paul’s preaching was not aimless

1. Jews –Phil. 3:5; II Cor. 11:22; Rom. 6:14; 10:4
2. Example: Timothy to appear before Jews – Acts 16:1-3
3. Example: Paul and four other men following the laws of purification – Acts 21:21-26

B. Important Questions:

1. How do we win followers of Islam to Christ? I Thess. 5:17
2. How do we win followers of Roman Catholicism? Heb. 10:10-12
3. How do we win liberal Protestants? Acts 17:23-34

C. The Law of Christ:

1. It does not mean the civil or ceremonial law.
2. It means the moral law remains but we need a substitute
3. The moral law must still be obeyed by the power of the Holy Spirit
4. The law of Christ is rooted in the new Covenant – Matt. 26:28
5. The law of Christ has practical aspects in the Christian’s life – Gal. 6:1-2

Conclusion:

1. *Paul comes full circle as stated in the context for the case of the weaker brother – v.22*
2. *Paul’s ministry is described by the word “adaptation” v.22*
3. *Paul’s heart goes out for the “weak” Rom. 14;; 15:1*