

FRESH ENCOUNTER

LEST THE GOSPEL BE HINDERED

May 1, 2024 | Tobi England

"Have we not power to eat and to drink?" (1 Corinthians 9:4)

INTRODUCTION

- Paul wrote letter to church at Corinth
- Paul defends himself as apostle to the Gentiles (Rom 11:13)
- Mature adults & physical needs - marriage (1 Cor 7:1-6)
- Question about idol worship (1 Cor 8:1-13; 10:7, 14, 18-22)
- Corinthian Christians lived in society with loose morals
- Several Christians struggled with sinful urges

1. THE Apostleship OF PAUL (v. 1-2)

- Paul had seen the Lord (Acts 9:3-9; 26:12-18)
- Gentile converts proof of his ministry
- Paul took 4 missionary journeys in eastern Mediterranean

"1 Am I am not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? 2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 9:1-2)

2. THE Authority OF PAUL (v. 3-17)

- Paul's right to marry a wife
- Paul's right to earn living from his ministry
- Paul used none of these privileges

"3 Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, 4 Have we not power to eat and to drink? 5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? 6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? 7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? 9 For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? 10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap

- Paul worked as a tentmaker to earn money for needs of his ministry team
- No one could accuse Paul for being in the ministry for greed or for the money

- Paul showed the signs of an apostle (2 Cor 12:12)
 - * mighty works
 - * signs
 - * wonders

your carnal things? 12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. 13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? 14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. 15 But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void. 16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! 17 For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me." (1Co 9:3-17 KJV)

2. THE Reward OF PAUL (v. 18-27)

- Paul offers the gospel free of charge to all
- Paul makes himself servant to all
- Paul's reward was to gain more Christian converts

"18 What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel. 19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. 22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. 23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with [you]. 24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." (1Co 9:18-27 KJV)

- Paul made himself a servant to all
- Paul keeps his body under control
 - * He is temperate in all things
 - * Let your moderation be known to all men (Philp 4:9)