

- I) V15 INTRO: But I have used none of these things, nor have I written things that it  
In our last study we examined Paul's teaching concerning support for ministers  
**WE CLOSED WITH V12-14**
- II) V12 If **others** are partakers of this right over you are we not even more?  
The fact is there are others who regularly benefit from your finances  
**APPLICATION**
- III) You support other ministries (super apostles) and you support other people  
Support and generosity is something that you are aware of and practice  
This is because it is a biblical command (V14)
- IV) When done so responsibly and with discernment, this is a good thing  
The fact is, the question that is being posed to you is something regarding me
- V) It is being said that you shouldn't support me because I am not worthy of support  
V12 I need to remind you that **we have not used this right** (freedom; privilege)  
I have not partaken of this right to be supported by you
- VI) Paul refers to the fact that he had not received support **from the Corinthians**  
**IMPORTANT**
- VII) This is not saying that Paul did not receive ministry support, **because he did**  
As he has stated, ministers have the privilege of being supported  
**IN HIS CASE**
- VIII) He was supported by the churches of **Macedonia**: Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea  
Phil 4:15-16 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your  
acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared  
with me in the matter of giving and receiving, **except you only**; for even when I was in  
Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need.  
2 Co 11:7-9 Was it a sin for me to lower myself in order to elevate you by  
preaching the gospel of God to you free of charge? I robbed other churches by receiving  
support from them so as to serve you. And when I was with you and needed something,  
I was not a burden to anyone, for **the brothers who came from Macedonia** supplied what  
I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to  
do so.  
**PAUL HUMBLY RECEIVED SUPPORT**
- IX) He **was** saying I have not asked for your support nor am I profiting from the gospel  
**AT THAT TIME**
- X) Ministers were not only skilled in teaching, but also worked at a trade

- I) Rabbis often were bi-vocational, so they did not have to charge for their teaching  
Paul worked so he could offer the gospel without charge, and model hard work

**IN HIS CASE**

- II) Paul was a tentmaker, as the Corinthians would know

Ac 18:2-3 And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation, they were tentmakers

This craft speaks of working with linen and leather

- III) Paul often worked, providing for his needs as well as the needs of others

Ac 20:34 Yes, you yourselves know that **these hands** have provided for my necessities, and **for those who were with me**.

1 Th 2:9 For you remember, brethren, **our labor and toil**; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God

1 Co 4:12 (He told the Corinthians) we labor, **working with our own hands**

**WITH THAT SAID**

- IV) This doesn't mean that he or other genuine ministers should not receive support

**HE ASKED**

- V) V13 Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of  
Those who serve God have always been supported in their service

Dt 18:1 The priests, who are Levites --indeed the whole tribe of Levi --are to have no allotment or inheritance with Israel. **They shall live on the offerings** made to the LORD by fire, for that is their inheritance.

- VI) V14 Even so the Lord **has commanded** that those who preach the gospel should

- VII) When Jesus sent His men out to minister, He gave them commands

Mt 10:9-10 Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your moneybelts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for **a worker is worthy of his food**

**I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE SUPPORTED**

- VIII) V15 **But** I have used **none of these things** nor have I written these things that it  
I have the right to receive support from you, but have not

- IX) V15 Neither have I written these things that it should be done so to me  
I am not using manipulation to guilt you into giving support  
I am simply reminding you that I have not taken advantage of you

- I) Taking financial advantage of others is the mark of a **hireling**, or a **false teacher**  
Jesus made this clear when speaking of the Pharisees  
Mt 23:14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you *devour* widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore you shall receive the greater damnation.
- II) The apostles warned believers to be aware of charlatans  
Often they were simply after the money  
2 Pe 2:3 In **their greed** these teachers will **exploit you** with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.  
Titus 1:10-11 For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and **deceivers**, especially those of the circumcision group. They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach --and that for the sake of **dishonest gain**.
- III) This is something that the Corinthians were allowing to happen to them  
The false apostles were exploiting them, taking financial advantage of them  
2 Co 11:20 In fact, you even put up with anyone who enslaves you or exploits you or takes advantage of you or puts on airs or slaps you in the face.  
(Aunt Irene, mortgaged her home and lost it)
- IV) V15 For it would be **better for me to die** than that anyone should make my boasting  
Boasting: his grounds of glorying in what God has done on his behalf  
This is a way of making a deep, personal claim to the purity of his heart
- V) What was he boasting in? The progress of the gospel and his **personal integrity**
- VI) His integrity made ministry fruitful, because his reputation was spotless  
Ac 20:33 I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing.  
Heb 13:18 Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way
- VII) V16 For if I preach the gospel I have nothing to boast of for **necessity is laid upon**  
Internal compulsion: He **must** preach the gospel  
The ground of my boasting is that God has empowered and inspired me

- I) V16 There is a **necessity** laid upon him  
I have a clear call from God to preach the message of the gospel  
I did not call myself and I did not propel myself: it is driven by the Spirit
- II) This is an internal drive that is birthed by the Spirit  
It is a divine pressure to speak  
Jer 20:8-9 Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So the word of the LORD has brought me insult and reproach all day long. But if I say, "I will not mention him or speak any more in his name," his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.
- III) V16 We unto me if I do not preach the gospel  
I would be miserable if I didn't preach: I am
- IV) Paul had a divine commission, one that he would not reject  
**I dare not** play with you, sinner. **I dare not** tell you sin is a trifle. **I dare not** tell you that the world to come is a matter of no great account. **I dare not** come and tell you that you need not be in earnest. I shall have to answer for it to my Master.  
We also have a commission to share the good news
- V) **His motivation** was God's mercy toward him, a love for Jesus, and a sense of duty  
This was his call and he was determined to fulfill it  
Ro 15:20 It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation.
- VI) For Paul to live **was** Jesus, and preaching His gospel was all that mattered to him  
He was entrusted with the gospel and he would faithfully deliver its message  
2 Co 5:14-15 **For the love of Christ constrains us**, because we judge thus; that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again
- VII) Men need to be born again because we are spiritually dead
- VIII) We need the life giving power of the Spirit  
Titus 3:5 He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life **through the Holy Spirit.**

- I) Paul's compelling drive was God's love  
It was not a love that originated within him, but was from God for lost humanity  
It moved him to go anywhere and do anything for Jesus  
**HIS POINT?**
- II) There is a greater reason to preach than **financial reward**, or material benefits  
These benefits are temporary: I have **an eternal reward** for faithfulness to Jesus
- III) V17 If I do this **willingly** I have **a reward** but if against my will I have been entrusted  
His reward is more valuable than any compensation he receives
- IV) Even when it is difficult, I will continue to do so because I have been trusted  
1 Th. 2:3-4 Our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:  
But as we were allowed of God to be *put in trust* with the gospel, even so we speak; not  
as pleasing men, but God, which tries our hearts
- V) V18 What is my reward then  
It is to be able to preach to you without any compensation from you  
I have not and will not take advantage of you, which answers any charges
- VI) I have proclaimed God's message without charge to you  
2 Co. 2:17 Unlike so many, **we do not peddle the word of God** for profit. On the  
contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God.
- VII) V19 For though I am free from all men I have made myself a servant to all that I  
Since I am compelled to preach and do not plead for money, I can reach many
- VIII) My most valued reward will come from God and is not material  
I have learned to be content, trusting in God for the ultimate reward  
Phil 4:12 I know how to make do with little, and I know how to make do with a lot.  
In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being content—whether well  
fed or hungry, whether in abundance or in need.
- IX) I do not depend on any man, but on Christ  
By trusting in Him, He supplies what is needed for me to continue to preach
- X) V20 And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are  
It is this dependence on Jesus that I have that energizes me to evangelize

- I) V20 He identified with both Jew and Gentile that he might win them to Jesus  
He identified with them, but did not compromise the gospel  
When with Jews he did not intentionally offend their sensitivities  
**TO THOSE UNDER THE LAW**
- II) In order to minister to Jews he was willing to circumcise Timothy (Ac 16:3)  
This gave Timothy the ability to minister to Jews
- III) V21 To those who are **without law** as without law  
This referred to the Gentiles, who did not recognize Moses
- IV) He communicated to Gentiles using sources they understood  
This is clearly seen in Ac 17, when he was in Athens  
Ac 17:28 in Him we live and move and have our being.' As some of **your own poets have said**, 'We are his offspring.'
- V) He was willing to minister to those whom Jews thought to be unclean  
Ro 11:13 I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify (bestow honor upon) my ministry,
- VI) He ministered to Gentiles, even when Jews became upset for him doing so  
Like when he was in Galatia (Turkey), in Pisidian Antioch  
Ac 13:44-46 The following week almost the entire city turned out to hear them preach the word of the Lord. But when some of the Jews saw the crowds, they were jealous; so they slandered Paul and argued against whatever he said. Then Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and declared, "It was necessary that we first preach the word of God to you Jews. But since you have rejected it and judged yourselves unworthy of eternal life, we will offer it to the Gentiles
- VII) V22 To those who are weak  
To the weak of conscience, as those in Corinth with food concerns  
Ro 15:1 We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.  
**THOUGHT**
- VIII) V22 The desire for all men to be saved is what motivated him  
Pr 11:30 and he who wins souls is wise.  
Ps. 126:5-6 Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him.



- I) V23 Now this I do for the gospel's sake that I may be a partaker of it **with you**  
This reveals his humility, for even though he's an apostle, he is a saved sinner  
He hasn't forgotten that he too was once lost, but had been found
- II) V24-25 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run but one receives the  
The Greeks had 2 great athletic festivals: The Olympics, and Isthmian Games  
Corinth hosted the Isthmian games:  
Contestants trained 10 mos, abstained from foods and wines to be in top shape  
**ULTIMATELY**
- III) They won a pine wreath (along with fame, finances, and acclaim)  
**HIS POINT**
- IV) Christians are not running for short-lived fame or comfort  
We serve the Lord for **eternal rewards** (not salvation)
- V) In the NT, there are five crowns that are mentioned  
There is the **crown of rejoicing**, also called the soul winners crown  
1 Th 2:19 For who is our hope or joy or **crown of rejoicing**? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? For you are our glory and joy.
- VI) They had been saved through Paul's ministry (Ac 17:1-9)  
Also, when Jesus raptures the church, Paul will rejoice at their rescue
- VII) There is the **crown of righteousness** (Rev 2:10)  
2 Ti 4:8 there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have **loved His appearing**  
We stand in the righteousness of God now, but we still battle the flesh  
When we enter heaven we will no longer have any battles over the flesh
- VIII) The **crown of Life** given for enduring temptation and overcoming persecution  
Jas 1:12 Blessed is the man who **endures temptation**; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.  
This is for everyone who believes in Jesus as the Savior; the gift of salvation
- IX) The **crown of glory** (honor)  
1 Pe 5:4 When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory

- I) We will have glory when we are in heaven, received because of God's grace  
Jn 17:22 the glory which You gave Me **I have given them**, that they may be one just as We are one:  
It is an aspect of eternal life that is especially the result of **serving faithfully**
- II) V25 Here, we have the **imperishable crown**  
Perishable crowns deteriorate, but God's reward never fades  
Mt 6:33 **Seek first** the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you  
**APPLICATION**
- III) Seek and serve God with all that you are  
Eccl 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might  
Col 3:17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.  
Ro 12:11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord
- IV) V26 Paul's training tactic was incredibly rigorous  
He literally gave himself black eyes (picture of his war against his flesh)  
Ro 6:12-13 Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.
- V) V27 He did not want to be shelved  
They no longer are capable of serving, having disqualified themselves  
Many who start off well do not end well, because they don't have what it takes. They simply are unwilling to pay the price. The flesh, the world, everyday affairs, personal interests, and often simple laziness hinder spiritual growth and preparation for service.
- VI) Phil 3:13-14 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus