

LIFE GROUP GUIDE – Week Starting Sunday 5th May 2024

Key passage: 1 Corinthians 9:1-23

This Week's BIG IDEA: This week Paul presents his credentials as an example of someone who does not assert his rights but who willingly lays them down rather than hinder the gospel message. We will consider how God may call us to do the same, particularly in the social networks that we build.

Focusing on God.

Suggested song: I Surrender All - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xSPcuV5Sli8>

Spend time expressing to Jesus your decision and desire to live for him (remind one another that you don't have to pray this from an emotional high – expressing this choice even when we are struggling is a very powerful act of worship).

Opening God's word.

- 1) Please read 1 Corinthians 9:7-14
 - a) What principles does Paul give to back up his claim that he has a right to expect material support from the church in Corinth?
 - b) What reason does Paul give for declining to claim these rights in Corinth? V12
 - c) Why do you think he might have reached a different decision about accepting support elsewhere – e.g Philippians 4:14-19.
 - d) How might the principles in this passage be abused by church leaders?
 - e) How might they be abused by church members?
 - f) What advice would you give to a new believer in deciding how much they should give to the church that they are part of? (e.g 2 Corinthians 9:7).
 - g) Given that most serving at Everyday Church is done by unpaid volunteers (including most of the Elders), what factors might prompt us to offer a salary to some servers?

- 2) Please read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23
 - a) In what ways does Paul's statement in v19 reflect Jesus' character?
 - b) How would the same characteristic affect our attitude to our rights?
 - c) What do you think Paul meant by saying that he became "*all things to all people*" (v22)?
 - d) How might this principle apply to the friendship circles we build and our social interactions with colleagues and neighbours? To what extent are your social interactions limited to a Christian bubble?
 - e) How do you ensure that your social interactions with unbelievers don't result in compromising the credibility of the gospel?
 - f) Note: You might think about Jesus' teaching about salt that has to be well mixed in but still distinctive (Matthew 5:13).

Time to pray.

Spend time praying for family, colleagues and neighbours. Pray that God will show you ways to get close enough to be heard and remove all barriers to the gospel.