

“When Being Right Goes Wrong”

1 Corinthians 9:1-14

Fractured: How God Restores a Broken Church

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“Yeah, well, I’m right!” True, but at what _____?

- How about the cost of a close relationship. Was it worth it?

We live in a culture... that encourages us to stand up for ourselves, demand that we’re treated fairly, and making sure no one takes advantage of us. *And there’s nothing inherently wrong with that!*

Yet... and here’s the million-dollar question:

*Could insisting on getting what I deserve actually keep me
from accomplishing what God has called me to do?*

Take, for _____... The restaurant mistake, the workplace recognition, the neighbor’s property, the customer service dispute, the family gathering, the church music preference, the parking space, the employee’s schedule, the financial disagreement, the social media argument...

Here’s what I’m building up to in the form of a question: *What if getting my way gets in God’s way?*



Instead of asking the following:

~~Am I entitled to this?~~

~~Is this fair to me?~~

~~Do I have the right to expect this?~~

Rather, the questions should be...

- 1) Is my right to be right going to interfere with what God desires to do in someone else? And,
- 2) If yes, then how do I recognize that?

Those questions, along with some awesome insights... are in our main passage: 1 Corinthians 9:1-14

1. VV 1-7... Having the right to something doesn’t mean insisting on it is _____. (Phil 2:3-4; 1 Cor 6:7)

- Paul establishes that he has legitimate rights as an apostle. *And yet...*
- *Ask yourself:* Am I considering what God’s purpose is in any given situation?

2. **VV 8-12...** Consider what exercising your rights might ____ someone else spiritually. (1 Cor 10:32-33; Mt 18:6)

- Paul reinforces his rights through Scripture. *And yet...*
- *Ask yourself:* Would you follow Paul's example by refraining from your right for the sake of the Gospel?

3. **VV 13-14...** Let God's _____ for the lost determine how you exercise your rights. (Mt 6:33)

- Paul reaffirms that to be paid for preaching is a legitimate and God-given right. *And yet...*
- *Ask yourself:* Would you be open to considering surrendering your right in order to advance God's Gospel-centric purpose for someone else?

The question isn't simply, "What do I deserve?" but rather, "What does God desire?"

Calls to Action

Let's put Paul's teaching into practice in our relationships, workplaces, schools, families, and church community.

- ☐ **Choose peace over winning.** The next time you disagree w/ someone, ask, is proving you're right worth damaging the relationship?
- ☐ **Surrender a preference.** This week, willingly give up something you prefer so someone else can be blessed.
- ☐ **Consider your witness.** Before responding to someone who has treated you unfairly, consider how your response might influence their perception of Jesus.
- ☐ **Practice generosity.** Give something of value to someone who cannot repay you, w/out expecting recognition or compensation.
- ☐ **Choose humility over recognition.** When someone else receives credit for something you've contributed to, resist the urge to demand acknowledgment unless correcting the record serves a genuinely important purpose.
- ☐ **Exercise restraint.** The next time you have every right to express your frustration, choose a response that demonstrates the character of Jesus.
- ☐ **Practice patience.** When someone inconveniences you or makes a mistake, respond with grace and mercy rather than immediately demanding what you're entitled to.
- ☐ **Choose service over entitlement.** Look for an opportunity to serve someone without expecting anything in return.

GOING DEEPER

Go through this note sheet with your Growth Group and/or your family at the dinner table. Bring this note sheet to your work or school and discuss it with someone over lunch. Read the main passage and look up all of the supporting verses. Pray with one another.

1. Where specifically in your life might insisting on your rights interfere with God's purposes?
2. How exactly can you recognize when surrendering a right is the wiser choice?
3. How might exercising your rights negatively affect your Christian witness?
4. What's the difference between sacrificing a right and allowing mistreatment? (Paul's teaching does not mean that Christians should ignore injustice, tolerate abuse, or abandon appropriate boundaries.)
5. What specifically are you willing to surrender to help someone come to know Jesus? Circle one and discuss: time, comfort, convenience, preferences, recognition, personal plans, privileges, _____
 - a. Which of these are you most reluctant to surrender? What does that reveal about your priorities?