

PROTECTING YOURSELF AGAINST MATERIALISM

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1 Corinthians 9:1-18

Intro:

- * Many people today struggle to find meaning & purpose by the things that they possess.
- * In other ages people sought significance by searching for universal truth for the answers to life's deep questions.
- * Many others today seek significance in shopping in the mall (we have come a long way).

Review:

Chapter 8- We learned that many believers in Corinth came out of idolatry and that it is not much different than today's materialism.

- * Materialism is MORE than clothing and things -it comes from the INSIDE.

Materialism has to do with an **ATTITUDE**...

It has to do with the WAY we seek meaning & purpose, & value.

- * **Materialism** can create in a very short time a **very selfish spirit**.
- * We get an attitude of. "I have MY rights!" (To **protect my things & my interests**)

- * Paul never backs up from the liberty he had in Christ- he believed in that so strongly.
- * But Paul in chapter **8 taught the Corinthians that our LOVE for God & for our weaker brothers & sisters in Christ had to put self ASIDE, & pose limits on our liberty.**

*** Now in chapter 9 Paul will use a very personal illustration from his own life...

To show this truth that love limits liberty.

- * The illustration that he will use will hurt the Corinthians where it hurts the most- Pocketbook. (They weren't that much different than we are today.)

- Even though Paul was the founder of that church in Corinth after he left **false teachers** infiltrated the church & began to seek POWER & PERSONAL GAIN.

- They began smear tactics against Paul- even calling into question his Apostleship.
- Saying things like, "Paul is only in it for the money".

- * So chapter 9 is to address that issue head on. (To the fact that when he started the church he made tents to take care of himself & never took a salary from them) EVEN though he had every right to do so.

* 1 Cor. 9 is a continuation from the theme in chapter 8 of MATERIALISM & it will continue for another couple of chapters.

- * Same attitudes they had with idolatry are the ones we are dealing with in the 21st century.

* Tonight how we can protect ourselves & our children from the tyranny of MATERIALISM.

- * Tonight learn **three types of spirit that you can foster in yourself & your children.**

I. WE NEED A SUBMISSIVE SPIRIT 9:1-6

(Paul's defense of his apostleship shows why we need a submissive spirit)

(Remember there were false teachers that had infiltrated this church they brought into question Paul's apostleship)

9:1-6

Understand something that Paul is admonishing them BECAUSE rather than having a sweet submissive spirit to Paul as the Apostle (leader, founder of that church) they had allowed themselves to be drawn out from the PROTECTION of being under biblical SUBMISSION to AUTHORITY!

A. Biblical authority is for our PROTECTION

1. Mom's & Dad's are to have authority over children in order to protect & provide for them.
2. Same in every other "organization" to guide & protect those under them

3. Paul asks **four rhetorical questions of** them because biblical authority is very easy to figure out.
 - a. (v1) "Am I not an apostle?" (they knew he was) (An apostle had more authority than a pastor)
 - b. (v 1) "Am I not free?" they played up big time that they were free (Gentiles) Paul was saying I have as much freedom as anyone.
 - c. (v 1) "Have I not seen the Jesus Christ our Lord?" (Acts 1 req. to be an apostle)
 - d. (v 1) "Are not ye my work in the Lord?" If I am not what you say - then what are you? (v 2) seal of my apostleship- they were.

NOTE: Submission to biblical authority helps us think clearly & avoid many pitfalls as materialism.

4. (v 3) Paul saying **if you were to put me on trial** this would be my defense. More rhetorical questions: **Put me on trial here is my response.**
 - a. (V 4) Apostles even have to eat once in a while
 - b. (v 4) A wife the other apostles did also (Paul widowed had a wife) basically the other apostles have families. (1st century travel required that the families traveled with them. (Paul trying to get them to think logically)

Note: The Corinthians were not even thinking straight. Today we are so barraged with data that we have a hard time not being self-centered and have a materialistic view of life. We sometime don't think straight.

- * That will give us an improper view of the church- "what is in it for me."
- * **We must be proactive against the materialistic church-** (like the Laodiceans Church) How? With ministry, prayer & the WOG.
- * **Submission protects from selfishness!**

II. WE NEED A GENEROUS SPIRIT 9:7-

- A. Paul gives 5 reasons why he should have received a salary from the Corinthians
 1. (v 7a) "War" soldiers don't serve at their own expense.
 2. (v 7b) "Farmers" don't just raise it for sale- but to eat of it (v 7c) "Herdsman" drink of the milk
 3. (v 8-11) The Law- required it - that the farmers cared MORE about their oxen than the Corinthians did about their leaders. (not to be muzzled)

NOTE: God made provision for the oxen as they plowed the fields. They teach us that is common sense.

4. (v12a) Even common practice was logical. You & I expect to pay other professionals for services rendered. This is how LIFE works. (v 12b) But we have not used this power.

NOTE: Some in our church have still NOT caught on to this principle. Look for a reason NOT to give. Some have gotten it and are generous to the Lord's work. (Look for a reason TO give.

5. (v 13) The priests of the OT - was required (v 14) cp Luke 10:7 Jesus said, "The laborer is worthy of his hire."

- * When we allow God to develop a generous spirit it helps us to avoid materialism.
- * A generous & a selfish spirit CANNOT co-exist.
- * Learning to give helps us to establish good habits (**children \$1 give \$.10**)

III. WE NEED A CONSECRATED SPIRIT 9:15-18

(v15a) Paul is saying I just gave you 5 good reasons to get a salary, BUT I didn't!

- A. Paul uses himself as an example - (v 15)
 1. I showed you my RIGHTS but I didn't exercise those rights then & I don't exercise them NOW.
 2. (v. 15b) Because there is something more important than my rights. WOW!

- Paul understood the limits that love puts on liberty. (the ministry above his own life)
- B. (v 16-17) Paul counted his calling as MORE than a profession or a job.
Paul, "I am not in the ministry because it is a FUN profession.
* Why he didn't care about the money.
* Because he was called- it was a privilege to preach the gospel.
- C. (v 18) That is my reward - **a clear conscience a complete accounting of the mission God has given to me.**

Conclusion:

- * De we understand why we need a **spirit of submission?**
Maybe just floating around.
- * God designed the local church to be a home.
Where we could center our lives for our families.
- * God didn't design the local church to be an oasis that we pop into from time to time in order to survive.
- * He designed it to be a place where we could raise our children to be like Him.
- * We need a **generous spirit**
- * We need a **consecrated spirit.**