

Scripture Paths Bible Studies
Discovering the Treasures of the Word
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1 Corinthians Part Two
Lesson #3, Chapter 9:19-27

Stop! Drop! And roll! *Stop* what you're doing, *drop* to your knees, and *roll* everything to the Lord. Ask Him to help you focus your mind on His Word and put aside all distractions. Now read Chapter 9 before beginning this lesson.

1. In Chapter 9 Paul illustrates how he gives up certain freedoms for the sake of his weaker brothers and sisters in Christ. Review verses 1-18 and explain how Paul governs his liberties in Christ for the sake of others.
2. What motivates Paul to the point that he says no to freedoms or rights accorded to him? How does he put that into practice in his life? See verse 19.
3. What does Paul mean in verse 19 when he says he's *free from all*? See 1 Cor. 8:8-9; 9:1; Gal. 5:1, 13; Col. 2:16-23; 1 Pet. 2:16.

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4. Based on what we've read so far in 1 Corinthians Chapters 8 and 9 explain how Paul made himself a slave to all.
5. What does Paul mean in verse 20 when he states, *And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, though not being myself under the Law*, when he was still a Jew? See Acts 16:3; 17:2; 18:18; 21:20-26; Rom. 10:4; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:20.
6. What did Paul mean in verse 21 when he said that he sought to win those to Christ who were *without law* by being *without law*? See 1 Cor. 10:27; Gal. 3:2; 5:1.

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7. Explain what Paul means when he says that though he was free from the Law of God (the Law of Moses) he was still subject to God's commands under the Law of Christ. See Rom. 3:8-10; 8:12-13; Gal. 5:13-25; 6:2.
8. How does understanding our identity as slaves of Jesus Christ influence how we live and how we respond to other believers? How is that a different mindset than the “Christian libertinism”¹ so many adhere to today?
9. Warren Wiersbe writes, “It is unfortunate that the phrase “all things to all men” (1 Cor. 9:22) has been used and abused by the world and made to mean what Paul did not intend for it to mean. Paul was not a chameleon who changed his message and methods with each new situation. Nor was Paul a compromiser who adjusted his message to please his audience. He was an ambassador, not a politician! ...In his personal life, Paul so lived that he did not offend either the Jews or the Gentiles. He did not parade his liberty before the Jews, nor did he impose the Law on the Gentiles. Was Paul behaving in an inconsistent manner? Of course not. He simply adapted his approach to different groups.”² What are some ways you have or have not followed Paul's example of reining in or using your freedoms wisely in order to win people to Jesus Christ and strengthen them in the faith?

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¹ A *libertine* is someone who acts without moral restraint and casts off moral codes of conduct. So a *Christian libertine* would be someone who pushes their freedoms to the point of sinning. They consider grace as a free pass for engaging in sinful or even questionable behavior, and which would cause others to stumble.

² Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996), 1 Co 9:15.

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- a. What is a runner like during a race that he has *no* intention of winning?

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b. What does Paul want us to understand about that example when it comes to the Christian life?

14. What distinguishes those who run to win in the Christian life?

a. In what ways are those qualities evident in your life?

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b. What changes, if any, would you like to introduce to your life so you can run to win?

c. What obstacles do you face in doing so?

15. What do we learn about those who compete in the games from verse 25? See also verse 26.

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a. What is a competitor like as he prepares for and competes in games he is intent on winning?

b. What does Paul want us to understand about that example when it comes to the Christian life?

16. What distinguishes those who compete to win in the Christian life?

a. In what ways are those qualities evident in your life?

b. What changes, if any, would you like to introduce to your life so you can compete to win?

c. What obstacles do you face in doing so?

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22. What things would disqualify us in this race of the Christian life according to the subjects covered in Chapter 9?

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23. How would you summarize the focus of Paul's life and the effort he's willing to invest in it? How would you summarize the focus of *your* life and the effort you're willing to invest in it?
24. Look up the following verses and then summarize how the prize makes all the discipline and effort worth it: see 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 5:8-9; Phil. 3:7-11, 14, 20-21; Col. 3:23-24; Heb. 11:6; 1 Pet. 1:6-9; 1 Jn. 3:2.

RUN IN SUCH A WAY THAT YOU MAY WIN
LET US RUN WITH ENDURANCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US.