

3. The surrender of privileges of leadership does not mean the surrender of authority. (1 Corinthians 9:12b-14)

Table Talk

- 1) What rights does Paul have? Why do you think that these rights would be in question? What four ways can a person who proclaims the Gospel gain a living? Why would the Corinthians doubt that Paul has the rights to eat, drink, and marry? (vv. 1-6)
- 2) What challenges do those in vocational Christian ministry face today in regard to these rights? Why do you think people are dropping out of ministerial and missionary service and very few are joining those ranks? Is there a double standard of expectations for Christians regarding money—one for those in vocational service and one for everybody else?
- 3) Let's say you see one of our missionaries or pastors driving a new car. What do you think?
 - I wonder how he/she can afford that.
 - What a waste of money. He/she could have spent that money more wisely.
 - We should drop their support, if they can afford that.
 - Praise the Lord for His goodness to our missionary/pastor!
- 4) What three main illustrations does Paul give for why he ought to be financially supported? Why do you think that Paul is so direct to the Corinthians on this matter of financial support? (vv. 7-12a) What are two more reasons that Paul gives in verses 12-13 for financial support?
- 5) Though Paul is very blunt about his rights and freedoms, he does not assert those for himself. Why? (v. 12b) What is one way that you can live this way of enduring anything rather than putting an obstacle for the Gospel? When is an appropriate time to assert one's rights and freedoms, and when is it better not to assert them?