

MESSAGE.

Paul uses his own life to demonstrate that following Jesus is not about insisting on our rights, but using our freedom to serve others. Although he had every right to receive support and exercise his freedoms, Paul willingly laid them aside so that more people could hear the Gospel. He adapted to the people around him without compromising God's truth because reaching people mattered more than protecting his preferences. The Gospel calls us to lay down our preferences so that others can experience the love and saving grace of Jesus Christ.

ENGAGE.

Read 1 Corinthians 9:1–18.

- Paul willingly gave up rights he had as an apostle. Why do you think he chose not to exercise those rights?
- What is the difference between giving something up out of love and giving something up because someone forces you to?
- What are some personal preferences or comforts that can sometimes get in the way of sharing the Gospel?

Read 1 Corinthians 9:19–22.

- Paul says he became “all things to all people.” What do you think he means by that? What do you think he does *not* mean?
- Why is empathy such an important part of sharing the Gospel?
- How can we relate well to people who have different backgrounds or beliefs without compromising biblical truth?

Read 1 Corinthians 9:23.

- Paul says he does everything “for the sake of the gospel.” What motivated that kind of sacrifice?
- Who has God placed in your life who may need someone willing to meet them where they are?
- What is one preference, comfort, or routine you could lay down this week so someone else might experience the love of Christ?

PRAY.

Lord, thank You for the freedom we have in Christ. Help us to use that freedom not for ourselves, but to serve others in love. Give us hearts that are willing to lay down our preferences so that more people can know You. Teach us to be compassionate, wise, and faithful as we share the Gospel, without compromising Your truth. Show us who we can reach this week, and give us courage to meet them where they are. In Jesus' name, Amen.

For these cities. For all people.