

rights out of sympathetic consideration for the convictions of others (Rom. 14:15-21), in order not to limit his ministry or hinder the gospel (v. 12). This does not mean that Paul compromises Christian principles or seeks to please others for the purpose of winning their esteem (Gal. 1:8-10). What he affirms is that he is prepared to conform to the standards and convictions of those whom he is trying to help, provided it does not violate Christian principles. He understands that if he offends them by disregarding the conviction of their conscience, his ministry to them for the sake of Christ could be seriously hindered (vv. 12, 19-23). ¹

2. (a) According to Paul, is there a reward for preaching the gospel? (I Corinthians 9:17,18)

(b) What do you think this reward is? (John 4:36; I Corinthians 3:8,14) _____

3. What does Paul say he made of himself to all? (I Corinthians 9:19) _____

Paul did not want to hinder the gospel nor the ministry in any way, so at times he would renounce his rights (I Corinthians 9:20), that he might gain the weak. Saving souls was his priority (I Corinthians 9:22); and this for the gospel's sake (I Corinthians 9:23).

1. Full Life Study Bible, p. 366.

SPIRITUAL ATHLETICS (I Corinthians 9:24-27)

Here, Paul compares the Christian life to a foot-race and then a boxing match.

1. (a) Who runs in this race? (I Corinthians 9:24)

(b) Who receives the prize? (I Corinthians 9:24)

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2. (a) In the natural, what prize does the race winner receive for his efforts? (I Corinthians 9:25)

(b) But what do we as Christians receive for winning the spiritual race? (I Corinthians 9:25)

This incorruptible crown can only be won by giving up some of our rights for the interest or sake of others (I Corinthians 8:7-13); and by forsaking those things that would take us out of the race altogether (I Corinthians 10:5-20).

3. (a) In I Corinthians 9:26, is Paul talking, about physically boxing someone? or is he referring to spiritual warfare? _____

(b) To do this spiritual warfare, what does Paul say he has to do? (I Corinthians 9:27; Romans 8:13) _____

(c) Why? (I Corinthians 9:27) _____

If even a preacher fails to exercise self-control, self-denial, and love; he would be rejected by God.