

The Heart of Evangelism

Big Idea—If we truly understand that our lives belong to Jesus, how are we actively involving ourselves in winning others to Jesus?

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 (ESV) For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. [20] To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. [21] To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. [22] To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. [23] I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

1. To be involved with the gospel—we must see ourselves as a servant. Paul was free in Christ, but made himself a servant of all, so that he might win more of them.

- We noticed last week that necessity was laid upon Paul to preach the gospel. Because he belonged to Jesus, the Lord had placed a task upon him of taking the gospel to as many as he could.
- **Do we feel that same gospel necessity?**
- **How are we making ourselves active participants in the necessity of the gospel?**
- Now with these words we see Paul's active participation with the Lord. He understood the necessity of the gospel and we see his willing participation in the gospel mission.
- He “made himself a servant to all” with the expressed aim of reaching them with the gospel message.

- Because he was a servant to all he denied himself to reach as many as he could. He adapted his methods in order to have gospel conversations with Jews. He cut across social boundaries that a normal Jew would not cross in order to have gospel conversations with Gentiles (9:20-22).
- Do we see ourselves as servants to Christ and as servants to those around us in order to “win” them with the gospel?
- Matthew 23:11 (ESV) The greatest among you shall be your servant.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (ESV) Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. [25] Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. [26] So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. [27] But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

2. To be involved with the gospel—we must discipline ourselves and prepare.

A. We are running a gospel race (9:24).

- How are we running?

B. We must be diligent to train (9:25-26).

- Are we preparing and training ourselves both in righteousness and in equipping ourselves for the good work of sharing the gospel with others?

C. People are the “prize” (9:25).

- Crown of righteousness, Crown of life, Crown of glory...
- Philippians 4:1 (ESV) Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.
- 1 Thessalonians 2:19 (ESV) For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?

Life Group Discussion Guide

1. Do we see ourselves as “servants to all?” How do we get better at this?
2. How can we help each other get better at partnering together for the sharing of the gospel?
3. In what ways are you actively sharing the gospel? If not, what is holding you back?
4. Paul uses the image of an athlete in training to get the point across of discipline and preparation in sharing the gospel. How can we help each other train to share the gospel?