



Studying 1 Corinthians Together

Chapter 9 Study Guide

This guide is designed to help you slow down, meditate on God's Word,
and listen to the Holy Spirit.

Feel free to move through this study guide at your own pace. Be sure to
write down your own insights and questions as they arise. Pay attention
to how God meets you in His Word.

If you would like to share what you are discovering, return to the article
connected with this week's study and join the conversation in the
comments. Your reflections may encourage someone else.

How to Use This Guide:

Before you begin, take time to find a quiet spot as free of distractions as possible. Turn off all notifications on your computer, silence your phone, and open the Word of God. Ask the Holy Spirit to come and speak to you.

Each day focuses on a different portion of the chapter for this week's study. It begins with a series of questions to help you dig deeper for the meaning of the verses for that day. Take time to really digest them and then physically write your answer to each question. Physically writing the answers slows you down and allows God to actively engage with you and increase your understanding. He may remind you of related passages, connect it to other concepts in your mind, or speak directly into your life as you write.

If your study raises questions not listed, write them down and ask the Holy Spirit to help you find the answers. You may not receive answers immediately, and that's very normal. God will answer your questions in His own time and way. Return to your questions as the Lord brings insight and write the answers He gives you.

You may choose to write your answers in a spiral-bound or loose-leaf notebook rather than in the space provided here. Or you could type them into your own document on your computer. Whatever works best for you.

Following the questions is an opportunity to put what you learned into your own words through paraphrasing the verses being studied. Remember, this is not a translation and it's not for publication, so write it in a way that communicates the message you have captured.

Each study closes with a prayer. Please use this as a springboard for your own prayer.

You are welcome to share insights, questions, or reflections on the article page on my website to engage with fellow Christians on this journey. Or you may send me a private email at the address in the footer.

I'm looking forward to learning and growing with you.

Day One: _____

1 Corinthians 9:1-15

Questions:

1. Write an answer to each of Paul's questions in this section.

2. What rights did God Himself give Paul by calling him to be an apostle in verses 1–5? See also, 1 Corinthians 1:1; Romans 1:1

3. What rights does Paul show belong to anyone who preaches the gospel?

4. According to Paul, is he exercising any of his rights as both an apostle and a preacher of the gospel? Why or why not?

Paraphrase It:

Try to express the message as you understand it. Don't worry about perfect wording—focus on the message.

[illegible]

Application:

1. Can you think of a time when giving up a legitimate right or preference strengthened a relationship or advanced God's work?

2. What principles do these verses teach about supporting those who devote their lives to gospel ministry?

3. In what practical ways can you encourage and support those who minister in your church or community?

Prayer:

Dear Jesus,

Thank You, first and foremost, for being willing to come to this earth and minister to us humans. Thank You for being willing to give up all Your rights as God and Creator, to come here and live in poverty. You willingly gave up Your right to being served, honored and glorified, to come to earth where You would serve and honor people who rejected You, misunderstood You, didn't understand Your mission, abused You, and finally killed You. So ultimately, You as the life-giver, chose to give up Your right to live. All out of Your love for us and Your desire to save us from the devil's clutches, and from ourselves.

Thank You for those who choose to follow in Your footsteps: missionaries, ministers, and church leaders. Thank You for those who willingly sacrifice comfort, family time, free time, and often personal interests, in order to meet our needs, to minister, to teach, to console, to exhort us so that we can grow closer to You.

Help me to value them and their choice to serve. Help me to find ways to verbally let them know I appreciate them and how they have helped me. Help me find ways to show them through my actions that they are appreciated and valued for their choice to serve. Amen.

Day Two: _____

1 Corinthians 9:16-23

Questions:

1. According to verses 16–18, why does Paul preach the gospel?

2. What is the only thing Paul feels he can boast about as a preacher of the gospel?

3. Why does Paul willingly give up his rights and freedoms?

4. How did Paul adapt his methods to reach different people without compromising biblical truth? What principles can we learn from his example for winning others to Christ?

Paraphrase It:

How did you understand the message Paul is writing? Put it in your words.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Prayer:

Dear Jesus,

Paul lived a life dedicated to reaching people in all walks of life. But he was a poor imitation of You. You definitely lived a life of self-denial in order to reach people in all walks of life: from poor to rich, spiritual bigots to the spiritually humble, desperately wicked to sanctimoniously pious, the society rejects to the rich and famous. No one was considered unreachable or unlovable by You, no matter who they were or what they had done.

Thank You for coming to love us. You loved us first when You created us. You loved us first when You chose to come here to live a life that would demonstrate God's love for us in such tangible ways. You loved us first when You chose to die on our behalf so that we might live.

Lord, open my heart and mind to truly grasp that amazing fact. To catch a glimpse of just how deep and wide and long and tall Your love for me is. Wake me up to it. Remove the lies that darken it. Remove the selfishness that blocks it. Remove the pride that keeps it at arm's length. Transform me with it.

Then, help me share it with everyone I come in contact with.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day Three: _____

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Questions:

1. How does Paul's personal example reinforce the principle that love should govern Christian freedom?

2. What point is Paul making to the Corinthians that is relevant to their question about eating meat offered to idols?

Application:

1. Paul's primary concern was winning people to Christ rather than preserving his own comfort. What does this reveal about Paul's priorities? How do your priorities compare?

2. When sharing biblical truth, are you more naturally inclined to focus on being right or on winning people? Why is maintaining both truth and love essential?

3. Paul viewed every interaction as an opportunity to advance the gospel. How might your daily life change if you adopted that same perspective?

Prayer:

Dear Jesus,

Your passion is to save everyone in this world. Every person is Your son or daughter and You desperately want all of them to know You, to learn to love You, and to be with You forever. I can't imagine the pain You feel as You watch Your children living lives of self-destruction and often harming others spiritually, emotionally, or physically.

I need Your eyes and Your love for all Your children. I confess my inability to love as You love. I tend to equate the sinner with the sin. I tend to judge and criticize rather than seek to bring them to a knowledge of You and Your immense love for them. I don't look at people as potential members of Your household, unless they fit my definition of those that are worthy. I don't know how to reach those outside my social circle, outside my comfort zone. But I want to learn, Lord.

Fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Grow me. Teach me. Give me a willing heart. Give me Your love for others. Help me to be as passionate about the souls of others as You are.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day Four: _____

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Questions:

1. What parallels do you see between these verses and Jesus' teaching in Matthew 7:13–14?

2. How does Peter's description of spiritual growth in 2 Peter 1:5–11 help us understand Paul's illustration of the race?

3. How does this analogy of the race relate to the question of eating meat offered to idols?

Paraphrase It:

Translate Paul's message in your own words.

Application:

-
-
-
-

-
-
-
-

-
-
-
-

Dear Jesus,

There is no doubt that I need You every hour, every minute of every day. I am incapable of maturing as a Christian without You. Help me never to become self-sufficient or complacent in my relationship with You. Give me a deep hunger and thirst for Your righteousness. Grow my

love for Your Word. Open my mind to understand it better every day. Write them on my heart and mind, etch them into my soul so they transform me into a true disciple of You.

Thank You for giving me everything I need to live a godly life through my relationship with You and Your Word. Thank You for Your great and precious promises that give me hope. Thank You that You never leave me and Your mercies are new every single morning. Thank You that You will complete the good work You have begun in me. Thank You that You never slumber or sleep, that the devil can never defeat You and thus You are my strong tower, my shelter that I can run to and be safe.

Thank You that You chose me before the foundation of the world. Thank You that I did not choose You, but You chose me and You chose me so that I can bear fruit, fruit that will last.

Give me a humble heart to follow You wherever You lead and to see those around me as Your beloved children. Give me the desire to see them experience Your love and salvation.

In Jesus' name, Amen.