

Series: 1 Corinthians

“The High Cost of Effective Evangelism”

(Sunday Morning June 14th, 2026)

Passage: 1 Corinthians 9:19-27

O.S. Anyone Who Has Been Involved in Church Life for Very Long Should Know That There is a Cost Associated With Evangelism

a. There is a Financial Cost Associated With Evangelism

-> **We Invest Quite a Bit of Money, for Example, in Our Vacation Bible School Event Every Year, and We Have Chosen to do This for a Couple of Different Reasons**

i. To Begin With, We Want to Reach Out to Young Couples With Children

-> **The Future of Our Church Really Depends on This; and So, We are Hoping That Young Couples Will Come Into Contact With Our Church Thru This Event...**

ii. In Addition to This, We Know That the Potential for Evangelism is Very High

-> **Children are Naturally More Receptive to the Gospel Than Any Other Group**

-> **We Need to be Very Careful Not to Manipulate Children Into Making Decisions; But Listen, Jesus Himself Said That Children are More Humble and More Receptive to the Gospel Message**

-> **In *Matthew 18:3*, Jesus Said, “...’Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.” (BTW...)**

-> **This Same Principle Applies to Youth Camps; Because Listen, a Youth Camp Can be a Lifechanging Experience for Young (BTW = This is a Great Investment)**

-> **And the Fact of the Matter is That the Odds of Someone Coming to Know Jesus Christ as Their Lord and Savior Goes Down Exponentially With Age**

. **Nearly Half of All Americans Who Accept Jesus Christ as Their Savior 43% do so Before Reaching the Age of 13 (Now, Let That Sink In)**

. **Two Out of Three Americans Who Accept Jesus Christ as Their Savior, 64% do so Before Their 18th Birthday**

. **And Less Than 1 Out of Every 4 Americans Who Accept Jesus Christ as Their Savior, 23% do so After Their 21st Birthday (55 = 1 in 300,000)**

b. There is a Physical Cost Associated With Evangelism

- > **Our Vacation Bible School Event is a Lot of Work, as Well as Our March With a Mission Outreach Effort, and Our Regular Church Visitation Program**
- > **And Listen, One of the Unsung Heroes in Our Church is Darrell Shannon; Darrell Manages Our Website; He is a Professional, and He Does Not Charge Us Anything to do This**
- > **And Yet, I Know That It Takes a Lot Man Hours to Build & Maintain All of This**
- > **In 2 Cor 11:27, Paul Said That He Had “...been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure”**

c. There is a Personal Cost Associated With Evangelism

- > **I Hope You Will Receive This Graciously, Because I am Going to Use My Own Son as an Illustration at This Point**
- > **For You See, My Youngest Son Samuel is a Very Special Young Man, and Many of You Know That**
- > **He is Twenty Six Years Old and Highly Educated; He Has a Bachelor’s Degree From Wayland Baptist University, and He Also Has a Masters Degree in Education From the University of Alabama**
- > **Most Young Men His Age Would be Interested in Using These College Degrees to Make More Money**
- > **But Sam Knows That There are 23 Million People Who Live in and Around Mexico City, and He Knows That the Need for Evangelism There is Very Great**
- > **And So, He Wants to Use His Spiritual Gifts, and His Education, and His Talents for the Purpose of Reaching More People Where the Need is Very Great**
- > **The Apostle Paul Was Like That, and Frankly, I Don’t Think Paul Would Have Spent His Time in the Bible Belt, Because He Said This in *Romans 15:20***
- > **Paul Said, “*And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, so that I would not build on another man's foundation*”**

T.S. The High Cost of Evangelism is What This Passage of Scripture is All About; And So, With This in Mind, I Have Divided This Sermon Into Three Parts

I. Effective Evangelism Involves Giving Up Our Privileges

1) Paul Gave Up His Moral Liberties

- > **The Primary Thrust of Chapters 8, 9 and 10 of This Epistle Involves How We Should Handle Our Christian Liberty**
- > **It's About How We Should Handle Those Grey Areas That are Not Specifically Promoted or Prohibited in Scripture** (Ex = Can Baptists Dance?... Some Can Some Can't)
- > **The Big Issue in That Day Involved Eating Meat Offered to Idols; and Personally, Paul Had No Problem With Eating This Meat – Verse 4 (Read)**
- > **This Didn't Bother Paul's Conscience in the Least, But He Knew That It Was Offensive to Some Jews and to Some Gentiles (Non-Jews);**
- > **And So, for Their Sake, Paul Decided to Abstain From Eating It** (More Than Barbecue)
- > **Paul Even Took on Some Jewish Traditions at Times That He Did Not Have to Take on Just so That He Could be More Effective in His Efforts to Reach the Jews**
- > **In Acts 16:3, for Example, We are Told That “Paul wanted this man (Timothy) to go with him; and he took him and circumcised him (Listen) because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek”**

Q.n = Why Did Paul Insist on This Grown Man Going Through What I am Sure Was a Very Painful Procedure? (Ex. Timothy = “Is This Really Necessary?”)

Ans = In Order to be More Effective in His Efforts to Reach the Jews

- > **In Acts 21:23-25, We are Told That Paul Even Took on a Nazirite Vow, and He Shaved His Head so That He Could Silence a Rumor That Was Being Circulated Which Suggested That He Was Teaching the Gentiles to Forsake the Law of Moses**

vs 20 (Read) = BTW That Word “Win” Appears Five Times in This Passage of Scripture

Pt = Paul Was a Liberated Man; He Was in No Way Obligated to Keep the Ceremonial Law of Moses, But He Did so Only Because He Wanted to be Able to Reach Jews

- > **He Could Have Protested (Elaborate); But Then, He Would Have Been Less Effective**

T.S. 1) He Gave Up His Moral Liberties

2) Paul Gave Up His Domestic Companionship

vs 5 (Read)

-> **I Believe That Paul Would Have Been the First to Say That This is Not for Everyone and, in Fact, He Did Exactly This in 1 Corinthians 7:8-9 When He Said,**

“8 I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I (That is to Remain Single). 9 But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion”

-> **But Then, Paul Went on to Say, as We Saw Last Week, That Because of the Current Distress, He Preferred to Remain Single**

-> **Paul Was Probably a Widower, and I Can Say That Because We Know That Paul Was at One Time a Member of the Sanhedrin**

-> **Marriage Was a Requirement for Being a Member of the Sanhedrin; So, We Can Assume That He Was Married at Some Point in His Life**

-> **But Paul Chose Not to Get Married Again for This Reason, He Chose to Stay Single, Because He Knew That He Was Going to be Facing a Lot of Difficult Hardships as a Missionary in That Hostile First Century World**

-> **He Did Not Want to Drag Some Poor Christian Lady Thru All of That; He Wanted to be Able to Concentrate All of His Energies on Serving the Lord Instead, and He Did Not Want to be Distracted From This in Any Way**

-> **So, He Deliberately Set This Privilege Aside Just so That He Could be More Effective in the Area of Evangelism**

-> **That Was a Big Sacrifice in My Opinion, and I'm Glad That I Was Not Called Upon by the Lord to Make This Sacrifice**

-> **But Paul Was Willing to do That so That He Would be Able See More People Come Into the Family of God**

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- T.S. 1) Paul Gave Up His Moral Liberties
2) Paul Gave Up His Domestic Companionship
3) Paul Gave Up His Financial Benefits
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3) Paul Gave Up His Financial Benefits

vs 6-7 (Read)

- > Paul Had Every Right to Receive Some Financial Support; the Other Apostles Received Some Financial Support, and the O.T. Law Made Provisions for the Priests and the Levites to Receive Financial Support
- > This is Why Paul Quoted *Deut 24:4* Which Says “*You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing*”
- > Paul Was Telling These Corinthians That This Verse Was Not Referring Primarily to Oxen, But Rather, to Supporting the Priests and the Levites
- > And It Was Common Knowledge That the Sacrificial System of the Old Testament Provided Abundantly for the Priests and the Levites
 - . They Received a Portion of the Grain and the Wine Offerings
 - . They Received ALL of the Meat From the Sin Offerings
 - . They Received ALL of the Meat From the Trespass Offerings
 - . They Received the Breast and the Right Shoulder From the Peace Offerings
 - . And They Received ALL of the Hides
- > So, They Had a Thriving Leather Business From Which They Could Draw Their Monetary Income
- > But the Gentiles Were Not Accustomed to Providing Financial Support for Their Religious Leaders, Therefore, Paul Voluntarily Set This Privilege Aside
- > The Greek Here, in Fact, Literally Means “*To Pass Over in Silence,*” and This Tells Us That Paul Rarely or Never Said a Word About His Financial Compensation
- > This is How Serious Paul Was About Being Able to Reach More People for the Lord
- > And This is Why I Cannot, Listen to Me Now, I Cannot Picture the Apostle Paul Shaking His Fist in a Non-Believers Face and Demanding His Financial Rights
- > And I Cannot Envision the Apostle Paul Hagging Over a Few Dollars the Way That Most of Us Will Do, While Knowing That in the Process, He Would Alienate Himself From Someone Who Needed Christ in Their Life (Can I Get a Witness?)

T.S. I. Effective Evangelism Involves Giving Up Our Privileges

II. Effective Evangelism Involves Giving Up Our Prejudices

1) Paul Gave Up His Racial Prejudices

vs 19-21 (Read)

- > Now, It is Obvious That Paul is Referring to One Group of People, the Jews, and to Another Group of People, the Gentiles, or the Non-Jews
- > And This Represented a Huge Racial Gap in Those Days
- > When the Assyrians Conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel, Many of Those Jews Intermarried With the Assyrians; And So, They Were Considered to be Half-Breeds
- > And the Jews Despised Them so Much That They Would Not Even Travel Through the Gentile Area of Samaria; They Would Take the Long Way Around Instead
- > The Apostle Paul, on the Other Hand, Was Always Working to Try to Break Down These Racial Barriers
- > This is One Reason, for Example, That Paul Strongly Promoted an Offering From the Gentile Christians in Macedonia on Behalf of the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem
- > He Knew That Once These Jewish Christians Received This Financial Help From These Gentile Christians That They Would Begin to Feel Differently About Them
- > In Fact, He Expressed His Optimism About This in *2 Cor 9:13-15* When He Said This; Listen Carefully, He Said,

“13 Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all, 14 while they also, by prayer on your behalf, yearn for you because of the surpassing grace of God in you” (Elaborate = Yearn = Want to Meet You)
- > Paul Wanted to Break Down Those Racial Barriers for Several Reasons, and One of Them Certainly Involved Evangelism
- > And I Want You All to Know That I Would Love to be Able Break Down These Same Barriers in Our Day and Time for the Same Reason (Elaborate = Racial Diversity)

T.S. 1) Paul Gave Up His Racial Prejudices

2) Paul Gave Up His Social Prejudices

- > There Has Been a Lot of Emphasis on Breaking Down Racial Prejudices in Our Country Since the 1960's; and Unfortunately, It is Still an Issue for Some
- > But Listen, the More Difficult Prejudices for Many People to Get Past, in My Opinion, are Social Prejudices
- > And We Have a Scriptural Example of This Given to Us in *James 2:1-4*

Q.n = Do You Remember That Story?

Ans = James Said,

“2 My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism.”

-> **And Then, He Gave Us This Hypothetical Story of a Rich Man Coming Into the Worship Service and Everyone Gives Him Some Special Attention (Elaborate)**

-> **And Then, This Poor Man Comes in and Everyone Treats Him With Contempt (Elaborate = The Ushers Treated Him Very Differently)**

-> **And BTW, James Also Exposes Their Motives by Saying “have you not...become Judges with evil motives?”, and I Have Experienced This First Hand (Elaborate)**

Q.n = Listen to Me, are You Listening?

-> **I Believe That These Social Barriers are More Common Than Racial Barriers, Especially, in Our Area, Because We are Used to Racial Diversity**

-> **It is a Well-Known Fact, However, That Every Church in Our Country Has a Tendency to Reach People of the Same Social Status**

-> **And in Most Southern Baptist Churches This Means That We are Doing a Pretty Good Job of Reaching Those in the Middle Classes, But We are Not Doing Very Well When It Comes to Reaching Those in the Upper Classes or in the Lower Classes**

-> **What I Find Paul Telling Us in This Passage is That He Was Willing to do Whatever It Takes to Reach Everyone He Could Including the Rich and the Poor**

T.S. 1) Paul Gave Up His Racial Prejudices

2) Paul Gave Up His Social Prejudices

3) Paul Gave Up His Cultural Prejudices

-> **This Should be Obvious, Because He Said, in Essence, That to the Jews He Became Like a Jew in Order to Win the Jews and to the Gentiles He Became Like a Gentile in Order to be Able to Win the Gentiles**

-> **He is Not Talking About Moral Compromise; He Did Not Say, for Example, “To the Thief, I Became Like a Thief in Order to Win the Thief”**

-> **But in Those Areas That We Would Consider to be Non-Essentials, He Was Flexible**

**Q.n = What About Those Who are Described as Being “The Weak Ones” Here?
Ans = Well, if We are Going to be Consistent With Pauline Theology, We Have to Say
That This Refers to Those Who Have a Lot of Moral Scruples**

-> **This Means That Paul Was Even Willing to Yield at Times to Some Unnecessary Moral Scruples in Order to be Able to Reach a Certain Group of People**

Ill: Back in the 1960’s Some Young People Started Acting Really Strange; They Started Dressing Strange, and Some of These Young Men Would Let Their Hair Grow Out

-> **And Many Churches Either Turned Them Off or They Turned Them Away**

-> **There Was Even One Church in the Deep South That Had a Barber’s Chair Inside of It and a Motto on the Wall That Said, “My Jesus Saves and Shaves”**

-> **But a Pastor Named Chuck Smith Began Reaching Out to These Young People, and What Came Out of That Was “The Jesus Movement,” and Eventually, an Entire Christian Denomination Called “The Calvary Chapel”**

Ill: Dr. Roy Fish Was a Professor of Evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary While I Was a Student There

-> **He Told a True Story One Time About Another Seminary Professor by the Name of Daniel Sanchez, and I Have Never Forgotten It**

-> **Dr Sanchez Had a Strange Way of Relaxing; He Liked to go Walk About Cemeteries**

-> **And One Day as He Was Strolling Around a Seminary, He Noticed a Woman That Was Weeping; So, He Tried to Offer Her Some Comfort (Elaborate)**

T.S. I. Effective Evangelism Involves Giving Up Our Privileges

II. Effective Evangelism Involves Giving Up Our Prejudices

III. Effective Evangelism Involves Giving Up Our Preferences

1) Paul Gave Up His Selfishness

vs 19 (Read)

-> **Paul Served Others Just so That He Could Gain the Right to Share the Gospel With Them**

-> **He Even Took on a Secular Job, and He Took on the Added Burden of Being Bi-Vocational so That He Would be Able to Witness More Effectively to the Gentiles**

-> And That is Why Paul Was Able to Say This in *1 Thessalonians 2:9-10*; He Said,

“9 For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God”

Q.n = So, Let Me Ask You This, Would You be Willing to Serve Others Just so That You Could Gain the Privilege of Witnessing to Them More Effectively?

Ill: Dr. David Jeremiah Tells a Story About a Pre-Med Student Coming to Know Christ as His Savior, Because a Christian Student Ministered to Him in a Time of Need

-> He Became Seriously Ill, and One of His Peers, a Christian Young Man, Took It Upon Himself to Bring This Young Man's Assignments to Him and to Personally Help Him to Keep Up With His Studies

-> Afterwards, This Pre-Med Student Gave His Testimony, and He Said, *“People Just Don't do Those Kinds of Things for Each Other; And So, I Knew That He Had Something Special That I Did Not Have”*

-> This Doesn't Mean That We Should Make Someone Our Quote *“Project”* Unquote, Because No One Wants to be Another Person's *“Project”*

-> It Simply Means That We Should Find Some Ways to Love and to Serve Others

-> And When Others See Us Doing This as Individuals and as a Church, I Believe They Will Take Note of It, and They Will Respond in a Very Positive Way

T.S. 1) Paul Gave Up His Selfishness

2) Paul Gave Up His Sinfulness

vs 24-27 (Read)

-> These Verses are All About Two Things: Self-Disciple and Self Control, and No One Ever Became a Great Athlete, for Example, Without Self-Discipline

-> They Didn't Get There, in Other Words, by Resting in the Shade, and Those Who Competed in the Isthmian Games Were Required to Follow Some Very Strict Guidelines

i. They Endured Ten Months of Intense Training

ii. And During the Last Month, They Were Under Close Supervision

- > **No One Could Get There Without a High Level of Commitment and Self-Discipline, and Only One of Them Could Win the Prize Represented by a “Perishable” Wreath**
 - > **The Point Paul is Making, of Course, is This**
 - > **Every One of Us Who is a Christian Can be a Winner, and We are Not Pursuing a Perishable Wreath; We are Pursuing an Eternal Wreath**
 - > **And the Joy of Rescuing the Souls of Men and Women is What We Have at Stake Here as Well as the Joy of Celebrating Those Victories for All of Eternity**
 - > **Which is Why Daniel Said, “...those who lead many to righteousness will shine like the stars forever” (Dan 12:3)**
 - > **And as We All Should Know, the Presence of Sin in Our Life Can Greatly Diminish Our Ability to Influence Others for Christ**
 - > **Therefore, Paul Changes His Metaphor to That of a Boxer, and Not a Shadow Boxer, But One Who Makes His Blows Count**
 - > **When It Comes to Sin, Paul Was Saying, in Essence, “I Simply Refused to be Easy on Myself.”**
 - > **He Was Like Billy Sunday Who Said This About Sin; He Said, “As Long as I Have a Fist I Will Hit It, as Long as I Have a Foot I Will Kick It, as Long as I Have a Tooth I Will Bite It; and When I am Fistless, and Footless and Toothless, I Will Gum It Until It is in Hell and I am in Heaven”**
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III: David Livingstone Was a Man Who Understood the High Cost of Effective Evangelism, and He Was Willing to Pay the Price

- > **At the Age of 20, He Went to School and Studied Theology; After That, He Went to Glasgow University and Graduated With a Degree in Medicine**
- > **He Was Brilliant, and He Could Have Done Anything He Would Have Wanted to Do, But He Felt Led to Go to the Mission Field**
- > **We Know That He Certainly Knew What It Was Like to Overcome Racial & Cultural Prejudices, Because He Chose to go to Interior of Africa at a Time When No Other White Man Had Ever Stepped Foot There**
- > **Robert Moffatt Had Established Some Missions on the African Coast, But No White Man, and Certainly No Missionary, Had Ever Been to the Interior Areas**

- > **While Moffatt Was on Furlough, Livingstone Went to Hear Him Speak, and He Heard Robert Moffatt Make a Statement That Grippped His Heart; Moffatt Said,**

“Often, as I Have Looked to the Vast Plains of the North From the Southern Tip of Africa, I Have Seen the Smoke of a Thousand Villages Where No Missionary Has Ever Been”
- > **When David Livingstone Heard Those Words, He Decided That He Would be That Man Who Would Take the Gospel Into Those Areas and He Did**
- > **But Not Without Paying a High Price for Doing It**
- > **For You See, He Walked Not Only Through a Jungle of Wild Beasts and Poisonous Snakes and Thick Brush; He Also Walked Thru a Personal Jungle of Heartache**
- > **On One Occasion, for Example, He Got Mauled by a Lion, and He Lost the Use of One of His Arms as a Result of This**
- > **They Took Him to the Coast so That He Could be Recover From This Injury, and He Fell in Love With a Nurse While He Was There Named “Mary”**
- > **They Had Five Children; But While Crossing One of the Vast Plains of Africa, One of Their Children Died; So, They Chose to be Separated for Five Years**
- > **Eventually, Mary Was Able to Rejoin Her Husband in Africa, But the Trip Proved to be Too Strenuous for Her**
- > **She Contracted African Fever; and Even Though He Tried Everything He Could to Save Her; His Wife Died**
- St = **At One Point, Some Natives Stole All of His Food, and His Goats, and His Medicine**
- > **So, All He Could do at That Point Was Cry Out to the Lord; So, He Cried Out to God in Prayer; He Said, “Lord, You Know That w/o This Medicine I Will Die”**
- > **And That is Precisely When He Heard a Voice and Those Now Famous Words “Dr. Livingstone I Presume”**
- > **Those Words Were Spoken by a News Reporter Named Henry Stanley Who Had Been Hired by the New York Herald to Track Down Dr. David Livingstone, and to Write a Story About Him**
- > **Stanley Was an Atheist; But as He Lived With Livingstone for a Four Month Period of Time, His Heart Became Softened, and He Prayed to Receive Christ**
- > **Stanley Begged David Livingstone to Come Back With Him, But Livingstone Refused and He Pressed Deeper Into the Interior of Africa**

- > **For Months, He Had Nothing to Eat But Maize, and All of His Teeth Loosened and Fell Out**
 - > **Then, He Got Boils on His Feet, and He Could No Longer Walk; So, the Natives Began Carrying Him From Village to Village on a Stretcher**
 - > **While He Was on His Deathbed, Somehow Livingstone Found the Strength to Get Down on His Knees and Pray, and That is How They Found Him**
 - > **His Body Was Shipped Back to His Homeland; But Before They Could Get Him on the Boat Some Natives Came and Insisted on Doing an Operation**
 - > **They Took Out Livingstone's Heart, and They Said, "*Livingstone's Body May be Buried in England, But His Heart Belongs to Africa; So, They Took It and Buried It Under a Tree*"**
 - > **25 Years After His Death, There Were 10 Million Christians in Africa, and Today, There are Over 700 Million Christians in Africa**
 - > **And of Course, This is Due, in Part, to the Fact That Dr. David Livingstone Was Willing Pay a High Price so That These Men and Women From an Entirely Different Culture From His Own Could Come to Know Jesus Christ as Their Personal Lord and Savior**
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Invitation:

- > **Now, in Closing, I Want to Remind Us All of the One Who Paid the Highest Price so That We Would be Able to be Effective in the Area of Evangelism**
- > **David Livingstone Loved People so Much That He Sacrificed a Great Deal and He Worked Incessantly so That He Could Bring More People Into the Kingdom of God**
- > **And I Believe That the Apostle Paul Loved People so Much That He Sacrificed Even More Than David Livingstone and He Worked Even More Incessantly to do This**
- > **But Their Sacrifices and Their Commitments Both Pale in Comparison to Someone Else's**
- > **For You See, Jesus Loved All of Us so Much That He Left His Throne in Glory and He Came to This Earth in Order to be a Servant and to Provide an Atonement for Our Sins**
- > **In *Mark 10:45*, the Bible Says, "*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many*"**

-> **He Served Us; and Then, He Gave the Greatest Sacrifice Anyone Could Give for Us**

-> **And He Did This so That We Would Have a Gospel Message That We Can Share With Others**

Q.n = And Why Did Jesus Do All of This?

Ans = To Increase His Joy

-> **In *Hebrews 12:2*, the Writer of Hebrews Said, “...for the joy set before Him (Jesus) endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”**