

1 Corinthians 9:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

Analysis

And this I do for the gospel's sake, Paul summarizes his motivation: everything is subordinated to gospel advance. Financial sacrifice (v. 12-18), cultural adaptation (v. 19-22), and personal hardship (v. 27) all serve one master: the gospel. The Greek euangelion (εὐαγγέλιον, "good news") is Paul's polestar—every decision is evaluated by whether it helps or hinders gospel proclamation.

That I might be partaker thereof with you. Paul does not view himself as superior dispenser of the gospel to inferior recipients. He is a fellow-partaker (Greek *synkoinōnos*, συγκοινωνός, "co-sharer, joint-participant") with the Corinthians. Both apostle and converts share in the gospel's blessings—forgiveness, adoption, resurrection hope. This humble posture prevents ministerial pride: Paul serves the gospel; he does not own it. He shares its benefits with all believers, from the newest convert to the oldest saint.

Historical Context

Greek *synkoinōnos* denoted business partners or co-heirs sharing an inheritance. Paul uses it to emphasize gospel unity: apostles and laypeople equally share Christ's riches (Eph 3:6). This countered hierarchical Greco-Roman patronage, where benefactors lorded over clients. Paul is not the Corinthians' patron; he is their brother, equally dependent on grace.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does "for the gospel's sake" function as a decision-making grid for ministry priorities?
2. What does it mean for ministers to be "partakers" of the gospel with their congregations?
3. How does this humble posture (co-participant, not superior dispenser) protect against ministerial pride?

Interlinear Text

τοῦτο δὲ ποιῶ διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἵνα συγκοινωνὸς
this And I do for the gospel's that partaker
G5124 G1161 G4160 G1223 G3588 G2098 G2443 G4791

αὐτοῦ γένωμαι
thereof I might be
G846 G1096

Additional Cross-References

2 Timothy 2:10 (Parallel theme): Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Mark 8:35 (Parallel theme): For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

Hebrews 3:14 (Parallel theme): For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

1 John 1:3 (Parallel theme): That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Galatians 2:5 (Parallel theme): To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

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