

1 Corinthians 9:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

Analysis

Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? Having argued from natural reason (v. 7), Paul now anticipates an objection: "These are merely human arguments (Greek *kata anthrōpon*, κατὰ ἄνθρωπον, "according to man")." Paul counters that divine law confirms what nature teaches. He is not imposing human wisdom but expounding God's revealed will.

The phrase "saith not the law" refers to the Torah, specifically the command Paul will quote in verse 9. By anchoring his argument in Scripture, Paul elevates ministerial support from pragmatic custom to theological principle. This rhetorical strategy is crucial: the Corinthians must see that supporting gospel workers is not Paul's personal preference but God's design woven into creation and codified in Mosaic law.

Historical Context

In rabbinic argumentation, appealing to Torah carried ultimate authority. Greek rhetoric valued logos (reasoned argument), but for Jews—and for Paul, trained under Gamaliel (Acts 22:3)—Scripture was the final court of appeal. By citing Deuteronomy 25:4 (v. 9), Paul places ministerial support on the same level as divinely revealed moral law, not merely human convention.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. Why does Paul need to ground his argument in Scripture rather than leaving it at common sense?
2. How does the phrase "according to man" function as an objection Paul preemptively answers?
3. What is the relationship between natural law (observable in creation) and revealed law (Scripture)?

Interlinear Text

Mή	κατὰ	ἄνθρωπον	ταῦτα	λαλῶ	ἢ	οὐχὶ	καὶ	ό		
as	G2596	a man	G444	the same	G5023	Say I	or	not	also	G3588
G3361						G2980	G2228	G3780	G2532	

νόμος	ταῦτα	λέγει
the law	the same	saith
G3551	G5023	G3004

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