**Sermon Title: The Proper Motives in Limiting Christian Liberty**

**Sermon Text: 1 Corinthians 9:15-22**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to practice the proper motives of limiting Christian Liberties.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 4 motives for limiting Christian Liberties.**

**Introduction: “**The story is told of Martin Luther one day answering a knock at his door. ‘Does Dr. Martin Luther live here?’ the man asked. ‘No, Luther answered,’ he died. ‘Christ lives here now.’

[**Larry Christenson, The Renewed Mind, Swindoll’s Ultimate Book of Illustrations and Quotes, p.77**]

**I. The pure motive for limiting Christian liberty. V.15**

**II. The passion motive for limiting Christian liberty. Vv.16-18**

**III. The primary motive for limiting Christian liberty. Vv.19-22**

**IV. The persuasive motive for limiting Christian liberty. V.23**

**I. The pure motive for limiting Christian liberty. V.15**

Paul is reflecting back on the previous section (v.14). He is demonstrating a love that edifies others and not himself.

He is not trying to manipulate the Corinthian believers by hoping, that in spite of the example he is setting, they would feel obligated to provide pay for him.

**2 Corinthians 11:8-9** I robbed other churches, taking wages *from them* to minister to you. **9** And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep *myself*.

**1 Thessalonians 2:9** For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God.

**2 Thessalonians 3:8** nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you,

Paul would prefer death over the idea of someone thinking or accusing him of serving with financial motives being the motivating factor of ministry.

**1 Peter 5:2** Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

**Acts 18:3** So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.

**Acts 20:33-35** "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. **34** "Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. **35** "I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, `It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

**II. The passion motive for limiting Christian liberty. Vv.16-18**

A. The passion of **attitude**. V.16a

The passion was not personal. Paul always had the attitude that it was a privilege to be preaching the gospel.

B. The passion of **appointment**. V.16b

**Acts 9:15** But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.

**Acts 9:3-6** As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. **4** Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" **5** And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It *is* hard for you to kick against the goads." **6** So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord *said* to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

**Acts 26:13-19** "at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. **14** "And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language,`Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? *It is* hard for you to kick against the goads.' **15** "So I said,`Who are You, Lord?' And He said,`I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. **16** `But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. **17** `I will deliver you from the *Jewish* people, as well as *from* the Gentiles, to whom I nowsend you, **18** `to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'  **19** "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

**Galatians 1:15** But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called *me* through His grace,

**Colossians 1:25** of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God,

Paul preached of divine drive. Jesus Christ had chosen him, and set him apart for service.

a. “necessity is laid upon me” meaning “an obligation is or has been placed on me.”

b. “woes” Paul speaks a “woe” this is a warning and concern of God’s servent chastening, which is reserved for unfaithful servants, stewards and slaves.

**Hebrews 13:17** Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

**James 3:1** My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

C. The passion of **assignment**. V.17

Paul realized he was given a stewardship to proclaim the message of the gospel to the nations.

**1 Corinthians 4:1** Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Paul had not chosen missions and church planting work as a profession. Rather, Jesus Christ chose it for him. A stewardship is a valuable non-negotiable responsibility or duty that is to be carefully managed. Paul was willing to voluntarily sacrifice his personal rights to fulfill his assignment of proclaiming the Gospel to all people.

**Romans 1:1** Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated to the gospel of God

D. The passion of **availability**. V.18

In order to fulfill his appointment and assignment, Paul needed to free from all that would keep him from being available to preach the gospel. This was his reward.

**1 Corinthians 10:33** just as I also please all *men* in all *things*, not seeking my own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved.

**III. The primary motive for limiting Christian liberty. Vv.19-22**

A. To **win** people to Christ. V.19

Paul was a free man, shared his primary motive for making himself a slave [lit. “I enslaved myself] by giving up his rights. He did this in order “to win more people to Christ.”

**Galatians 5:13** For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

**Matthew 18:15** "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.

B. To **wave** personal rights. V.20

1. To win Jews, I became a Jew. V.20 (**Acts 21:20-26**)

**Acts 16:1**-3 Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, *the* son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father *was* Greek. **2** He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. **3** Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took *him* and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek.

**Acts 18:18** So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila *were* with him. He had *his* hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow.

**Romans 9:3** For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymenaccording to the flesh,

**Romans 10:1** Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israelis that they may be saved.

**Romans 11:14** if by any means I may provoke to jealousy *those who are* my flesh and save some of them.

2. To win those under the law, I became under the law.

There were people “under the law” in an oppressive “legalistic” sense, in that rules and regulation became a relentless slave master. These people often turned God’s Torah (instruction) into a set of rules that must be rigorously followed.

**Acts 16:3** Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took *him* and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek.

**Acts 21:23-26** "Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. **24** "Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave *their* heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but *that* you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law.

**25** "But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written *and* decided that they should observe no such thing, exceptthat they should keep themselves from *things* offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality." **26** Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, entered the temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them.

3. To win those without the law, I became without law.

Paul understood he was not free to display the moral law of God.

Toward the Gentiles, Paul would put himself in their position, empathizing with their needs and aspirations, their strengths and weaknesses, their opportunities and constraints, their ideas and feelings, and values. Having established common ground with those he was trying to reach, he could proclaim the gospel.

**1 Corinthians 7:22** For he who is called in the Lord *while* a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called *while* free is Christ's slave.

Kings, rulers, Centurion, soldier, etc.

4. To win the weak, I became weak. V.22

This carries the idea of making the gospel clear at the lowest level of education and comprehension. (**1 Corinthians 2:1-5**)

**IV. The persuasive motive for limiting Christian liberty. V.23**