**Winning our Neighbors**

*I Corinthians 9*

TheSignificance of the **Incarnation**

**John 1:14**—*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

**John 1:18**—*No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.*

**Hebrews 5:8**—*Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.*

**Hebrews 4:14–16**—*Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

**1 Timothy 2:5**—*For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*

**1 Corinthians 3:10-11**—*According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it.* ***11****For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

3 concentrations on making the gospel applicable

**I. The What—*I may win more***

A. The wisdom of winning souls

**1 Corinthians 9:19**—*For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more.*

**1 Corinthians 9:20**—*To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law…*

**1 Corinthians 9:21**—*…to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law.*

**1 Corinthians 9:22**—*To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.*

**1 Corinthians 9:24**—*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.*

**Proverbs 11:30**—*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who is wise wins souls.*

**1 Timothy 1:12–16**—*I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor...It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners [gospel], among whom I am foremost of all. Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.*

B. The wisdom of our entrusted ministry

The mission of Bridgewater Community Church is to glorify God by winning people to Jesus Christ and equipping them to be more faithful disciples.

**II. The How—*I made myself a slave to all***

**1 Corinthians 9:19**—*For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more.*

A. Paul’s apostolic authority was being undermined

B. Paul’s response

**v. 19**— *“I have made myself a slave”*

Greek phrase: edoulosa emauton [enslaving voluntarily]

C. Other Biblical examples

**Acts 7:6**— *“But God spoke to this effect, that his descendants would be aliens in a foreign land, and that they would be enslaved and mistreated for four hundred years.*

**Titus 2:3**—*Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good.*

D. The ways in which Paul became enslaved

**1 Corinthians 9:20-22**—*To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law;* ***21****to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law.* ***22****To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.*

E. Paul’s athletic example

**1 Corinthians 9:19**—*For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more.*

**III. The Why—for the sake of the gospel**

**1 Corinthians 9:23**—*I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.*