



Trait #15- "Non-Sacrificial Lives"

Day 1

When you hear the word "missions", what do you think of? Is it a person who went to theology school and then went to some remote place on earth to bring them the gospel? That's usually what most of 'us' tend to picture. **Missions** can be the world around YOU. (Your world meaning... your workplace, your school, the clubs you are involved in or the gym you go to to workout in). In that sense we all have a mission field. So the next step is **reaching out** to the lost world all around us.

Read 1 Peter 3:15; In this verse it says "be ready" (prepared) " to give a defense to **everyone** who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you".

What are some ways you think you can "ready" yourself to present the gospel in your surrounding world?

Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 (23); Now ask yourself, "how far am I willing to go (as far as personal sacrifice is concerned) to win a soul"?

Would you be willing to become "all things to all men, in order that you might by all means save some?" (As far as you doing the saving, thats not happening. This verse is referring to our "partnership" with Christ... Remember, we are His ambassadors or representatives. Therefore He allows us to be a part of the saving process in an individual but He does the actual drawing of a person to Himself.)

In the upcoming days we will dig a little deeper into what He's referring to in the above verses and even go back and see how it ties into what he's saying at the beginning of the chapter.

In the meantime ponder on what you think " I have become all things to all men, in order that I might by all means save some" means.



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Day 2

"God's method of binding souls to obedience is similar to His method of keeping the planets in their orbits- that is, by flinging them out free (representing our freedom and liberty in Christ). You see no chain keeping back these shining worlds to prevent them from bursting away from their center. **They are held in the grip of an invisible principle**....And it is by the **invisible bond of love- love to the Lord who bought them-** that ransomed men are constrained to live soberly, righteously and godly".--Arnot

The Key to this part of 1 Corinthians chapter 9 and chapter 8 (this latter part of chapter 9 is really a continuation of chapter 8) is **LOVE**. Love for our brother which stems from our love for our Savior.

Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Paul says he became all things to all men- that he might win the more to Christ.

To the Jew, he became a Jew, and to those under the law as under the law. (Both here referring in essence to the Jews. The first part, "to the Jew , I became as a Jew," is probably referring to the keeping of National customs. The second part, "to those under the law, as under the law" is referring to the religious customs. Things such as the Nazirite vow. Acts 18:18, not eating pork, and things of that nature). To the weak, he became as weak (1Cor. 8), meaning if for example eating meat offered to an idol offended his brother he would abstain from it for the sake of the brother....**THAT he might win the more to Christ. Its the Invisible principle of Love that is the focus in these passages.**

When it says he became one as without the law (meaning the Gentiles) he is referring to **cultural things**, not moral or doctrinal matters. As much as he could, without breaking "his law to Christ" he adapted and became like them (without sinning mind you) to win the more for Christ.

In what ways can you change to reach more people this week? What are some ways you can come out of your "culture" and enter into another "culture" that may not be like yours, with the hopes of reaching someone?



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Day 3

"I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be a partaker of it with you". 1 Corinthians 9:22,23

As we said in yesterday's devotions, Paul adapted (as much as he could without sinning) to the customs, manners, cultures, and habits of those he preached to, in order to convert and reach as many as possible. He did this without breaking doctrinal or moral standards. For he was still under law towards Christ.

Having said that, does this mean you are giving in to liberals, by conforming to certain cultural things around you, in order that you might win more to Christ? Absolutely not. If your purpose is truly in love towards your brother or a soul you hope will be won for Christ. In fact it is pure arrogance if you continue to do something that you know will hinder your chances of winning a soul to Christ!

There is a difference between doing something from ignorance and doing something from ignorance. Ignorance, in a case like this, is offending someone due to a lack of knowledge (not on purpose) (example: improper table manners). Arrogance, in a case like this, is offending someone in your knowledge. Whether it is on purpose or refusal to change out of stubbornness.

So are you ready to die to yourself? In order that you might be an ambassador for Christ?

Lets close with reading the central chapter in 1 Corinthians. Chapter 13. This chapter sums up our faith. How does this chapter help us in understanding how we can reach more people from love? What do each of these traits look like in the context of giving up something in order to reach more people?



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Day 4

Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Paul compares his spiritual training in these passages to that of the Isthmian games held at Corinth every two years (much like our Olympic games). So by using this analogy his readers were able to have a clear mental vision of what he was speaking of.

"Everyone who competes for the prize is temperate (exercises self-control) in all things". Do you have self-control in your life? How or how not?

When speaking of missions and reaching out to others, what does self-discipline have to do with anything?

As Christians, what are some ways of spiritually training ourselves?

"Therefore I run thus; not with uncertainty. Thus I fight; not as one who beats the air". **Spiritual training should be a part of our everyday lives...** looking unto the end (the prize) the author and finisher of our faith...Jesus, thus we run with certainty.

Read Romans chapter 6 (vs. 12-14 are important); bringing our bodies into subjection, as stated in the last verses of 1 Corinthians 9 and in Romans here, is disciplining ourselves not to give into the fleshly side of who we are

You see each of us are made up of two natures (like Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde). Here's an analogy:

There are two dogs. A brown one (representing the spiritual side of you) and a black one (representing the fleshly side of you). Both dogs are in a cage. Each day you start feeding the black dog less and less and giving more food to the brown dog. Over time the black dog begins to look gaunt. But the brown dog begins to look very healthy and strong. Now you lead both dogs out of the cages into a ring to fight each other. Which one is going to win?



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Day 5

Read Acts 8:26-40

Here we see an example of where Phillip looked for an opportunity to share his faith with a stranger. The result was that a man was saved, went back to his home country and there proclaimed the good news of Jesus.

When do you plan on sharing your faith today?

What do you plan on doing?

Who is it that you will come in contact with today that really needs to hear of what God has been doing in your life?

Spend time praying for courage to speak up where you need to. Also pray for that person that they turn to Jesus and are saved. Pray that the Holy Spirit guides, directs, and teaches you and that He convicts and draws the other person.