

BECOMING ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN

1Cor 9:19-23

INTRODUCTION:

- A. One of the greatest needs of our time is for Christians to have a greater interest in the salvation of others.
 - 1. Often misunderstood in efforts to exhort/encourage
 - 2. How concerned about a brother, employer, neighbor dentist. person checks you out at Wal-Mart?
 - 3. What priorities do we have in reaching the lost?
 - 4. To be effective - we must act upon our desires!
- B. We must be willing to adapt or make adjustments in interest of saving souls, willing to go out of our way to serve?
- C. **(TITLE)** Paul all things to all men, that he might win some
 - 1. Adapt to customs & peculiarities in order to help
 - 2. Our society unwilling to do this, especially in religion
 - 3. Caught up in MY feelings, wants, desires; forget others
 - 4. Brethren & world reject our involvement in their lives.

DISCUSSION:

I. PAUL WILLING TO ADAPT OR ADJUST HIS LIFE

- A. To the Jews he became AS a Jew.
 - 1. Many obedient Jews observed & practiced customs and traditions of Judaism and Jewish culture.
 - 2. Paul purified himself Acts 21:26 and circumcised Timothy Acts 16:3 - not necessary, but to win Jews
- B. To those without law (Gentiles) became AS without law
 - 1. Exactly how he did this we don't know.
 - 2. But whatever he did - he did whatever possible (within the law of Christ) to win their soul.
- C. To the weak (brother) he became AS weak
 - 1. Weak in this context: apparently conscientiously scrupulous - even in respect to lawful things.
 - 2. Example: willing to give up eating meat for their sake. Have to do this? Certainly not. 1Cor. 8:13
- D. Why Become all things to all men? To save souls.
 - 1. Do we have this attitude? Do I? Do you?
 - 2. Are WE willing to go out of our way?
 - 3. Paul's primary concern and interest - saving souls

II. TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT OURSELVES!

- A. If you are especially interested in someone - aren't you willing to go out of your way, adjust your lifestyle?
 - 1. In realm of amusement & entertainment, people tolerate our hobbies, taste in music, sports, etc
 - 2. Why? They care about us, want to be our friend.
 - 3. People love to talk about hobbies - invite us to take part - may not be interested but do it because we want to be a part of their life.
 - 4. Men shop with wives. Women tolerate sports

- B. Aren't we willing to accommodate, events of local interest, in speech, in dress, in etiquette, etc?
 - 1. Yes, but only those closest to us. Why not for those outside our normal comfort zone.
 - 2. Why not those whose souls are in jeopardy?

III. THERE ARE LIMITATIONS TO ADAPTING

- A. Line between adapting & hypocrisy is sometimes very fine - Don't be a hypocrite.
 - 1. Remember - what one can accommodate - another may not be able to do because of conscience
 - 2. Watch yourself & don't contradict yourself.
- B. Must not adapt in anyway to what would be sinful.
 - 1. Friend likes going to bar - drinking - should you accommodate? Gambling, adultery, etc? NO
 - 2. Paul respected conscience idol worshipper - didn't eat - but wasn't soft on idolatry. 1Cor. 8:4-6
 - 3. While accommodating - can't compromise gospel!
 - 4. Example: could in some circumstances attend with a friend to teach but can't condone error
- C. While being adaptable - we must not hold back truth.
 - 1. Declare whole counsel of God Acts 20:27
 - 2. Must preach even when it causes trouble Gal 4:16
 - 3. Remember - it's the truth that saves! Jhn 8:32

IV. REMEMBER MOTIVES IN ADAPTING OR ADJUSTING

- A. Save others V. 22 aim of Christianity show way to Christ
 - 1. Heaven everyone's goal. Matt 28:18-20; Jhn. 14:1-4.
 - 2. We forget how terrible hell is Lk 16:19-31
 - 3. Not only apply to worldly but brethren as well
 - 4. Brethren how do we react when a brother or sister comes to you to help you correct some wrong?
- B. To save self, we must try to save others V. 23 1Tim. 4:16
 - 1. Could MY soul or someone else's be in jeopardy because of my inaction
 - 2. (Song) You never mentioned Him to me.
- C. We must get out of our comfort zone and get involved in the lives of our brothers and sisters
- D. Do we really know our brothers and sisters - know of one struggling spiritually? then try to help!

CONCLUSION:

- A. One of the greatest needs of our time is for Christians to have a greater interest in the salvation of others.
- B. When we are really interested - we will be more than willing to accommodate.
- C. Above all you need to adapt or adjust to the Lord - do His will by obeying the gospel
- D. Get your life right - then get involved in helping others.