

Marinating in God's Word: 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

You've got mail! A letter sent long ago to someone else, now by the power of the Spirit has been forwarded to you, so that you may grow in Jesus Christ.

For further reflection on your own or in a small group, consider these questions:

- Just up the page Paul dealt with controversies about how these early Christians were using their freedom – in their case whether to eat meat offered to idols or to pay their leaders. Here Paul shifts the focus to the purpose of freedom. He's not interested just in "freedom from", but also in "freedom for". In Christ what are we free from? What are we free for?
- How do Americans understand freedom? How is that different from a Christian understanding?
- Think of a relationship where you have limited your freedom (e.g., marriage, parenting, a job). How did you limit your freedom? Why did you do so? Did you ever submit to limits that stole your identity or integrity? What happened?
- Paul wanted to adapt the faith to the culture in ways that didn't compromise central beliefs, but enabled him to connect. So he was willing to eat kosher with Jews or non-kosher with Gentiles. How have you done the same? Where might you, and might we as a church, do the same now?

Next week we will focus on Philippians 3:17 - 4:9.