



[1 Corinthians 9:16](#)

(16) For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!

[2 Corinthians 11:27-28](#)

(27) in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—(28) besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

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Paul says, "Woe to me if I do not [preach the gospel](#)." But on the other hand, "the care of the churches" was also on him constantly.

Considering what Paul says in [I Corinthians 9:16](#) and [II Corinthians 11:27-28](#), and comparing how much time he must have spent preaching the gospel in relation to how much that he spent on feeding of the flock in his daily care of the churches, it appears that the great preponderance of his time and energy were spent in "[feeding the flock](#)," not in preaching the gospel to [the world](#).

A pastor has a unique point of view on this because he knows how demanding the pastoring of a congregation is in terms of time, energy, and effort. In comparing what a normal pastor does with what the apostle Paul had to do with a Mediterranean-wide area to cover on foot or by boat, he had to spend most of his time on his congregations, not on the world.

In the long run, what kind of picture does the *overt* emphasis on preaching to the world give a person of [God](#) and His purpose? Is God so limited in creativity that He can only think of one thing for His children to do? Are lives and relationships always so stable that nothing ever arises that creates a necessity for something different to be done?

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for 1 Corinthians 9:16 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

Is there only one thing that we have to be trained for, so we just keep doing the same thing over and over again? Is there nothing else in God's mind for us that requires analysis, strategy, concern, and the effort of sacrifice and living by [faith](#) to produce growth, create solutions, and to overcome? Is our Father in heaven so one-dimensional that all He thinks about in regard to His children and His purpose is that we preach the gospel to the world? Of course not.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[What Is the Work of God Now? \(Part 1\)](#)



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