

# *All Things to All People*

Paul's passion was to tell others about Jesus and to win "As Many As Possible" (1 Cor. 9:19). The first letters of each word in this phrase form the acronym "AMAP". Paul followed **THREE** distinct strategies as he traveled on his missionary journeys to proclaim the Good News about Jesus.

**FIRST**, there was the **Jewish strategy**, "To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews" (verse 20). When in the company of Jewish people Paul acted and spoke like a Jew, showing deliberate sensitivity to Jewish cultural perspectives in order to win the right to be heard. Paul often spoke in Jewish synagogues, and when he did so he preached from the Hebrew Scripture, beginning with the Old Testament and then pointing ahead to Jesus, who embodied the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Paul's discourses to the Jewish people were sprinkled with Old Testament history and quotations. (Acts 13: 13-41).

**SECOND**, there was the **Gentile strategy**: "To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's

law), so as to win those not having the law" (1 Cor. 9:21). When in Athens Paul reasoned with Greek philosophers and referred to Greek philosophy and poetry. Again, he started with the familiar and then turned his attention to Jesus, but his strategy was entirely different from that which he used with a Jewish audience (Acts 17:22-34).

**FINALLY**, he used a **different strategy** for the "weak" (for those individuals whose consciences were ultra-sensitive about details.): "To the weak I became weak, to win the weak" (1 Cor. 9:22). Those in charge of the pagan temples in Corinth were in the habit of selling surplus meat that had been brought to sacrifice to false gods. Certain believers were concerned that they might accidentally sin by eating such meat if they were to share a meal with someone who worshiped in one of the pagan temples. Paul reassured them that the important issue was that they spend time with people who did not know Jesus, eating whatever was set in front of them so as not to offend their hosts. **But if** someone else at the table was bothered by eating this kind of meat, then the believer should also refrain (1 Cor. 10:23-33).

On **one day** Paul might adhere to a kosher diet and quote the Old Testament. On the **next** he might dine on meat that had been offered to idols. On the **third** day he might decline to eat meat that had been offered to idols, because someone else was present who found the practice offensive. This triple standard may appear contradictory and even duplicitous, but Paul was not a hypocrite: **he was an effective witness because** he was able to differentiate which issues were important and which scruples would simply stand in the way of reaching people for Jesus. His statement provides a guiding principle we can all use as we step out to share the Good News: "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings" (1 Cor 9:22-23).

*At **HOUSE OF PRAISE INTERNATIONAL**, our goal must be the same, to win as many as we can to Christ Jesus.*

## House of Praise International Church

### WORD OF WISDOM BROCHURES

Words of Wisdom Brochures are a publication of the House of Praise International, written for the express purpose of equipping the saints for the work of ministry for our Lord, as well as the edifying of the body of Christ.

We shall NO LONGER be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every doctrine, by the trickery of men, but SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE, we will grow up in ALL things into Him who is the head of this body, Christ Jesus our Lord.

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House of Praise International Church  
*Where Christ Jesus is still Lord*

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## All Things to All People



Pastor Harlan & Doris Stilwell Sr.

