



**“The Preference Driven Church”**  
2<sup>nd</sup> in the “Autopsy of a Deceased Church” Series  
1 Corinthians 9:15-27  
July 30, 2017  
Pastor Brad Schreiner

Introduction:

1. The Gospel, not our preferences - should drive our decisions for church and ministry (15-18)
2. We are to set aside our preferences, for the preferences of those who don't know God. (19-23)
3. Keep our focus on the prize of the Gospel, not on our preferences and rights. (24-27)

### Questions for small groups:

Pastor Ken Bergstedt sent an email to the pastors after hearing the first sermon in the series and reading the book. An excerpt is “I can see why you would want to spend time at this stage in the life of Hope, to evaluate and hopefully make some positive steps toward a good and healthy future. I pray the people are willing to read the book with a mind open to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit to see themselves in the pages of the autopsy. I pray that they are willing to shoulder responsibility to make a difference in the future of the church.” Discuss how this challenge from a retired pastor from our church relates to you in your current context here at Hope.

Read page 49-50 of the Autopsy book. Can you identify a preference you have that you have difficulty letting go of? When you read the list of things Jesus did on page 50, how can that encourage you to release preferences?

What are perhaps some choices you have made in your life that is hindering the spread of the gospel?

Have you ever participated in or observed an “Us vs. Them” conversation in the church? If so, how helpful was it in fostering unity in the body and the pursuit of making disciples in the community?

Read v. 16 – Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel. How often does this concept enter into your everyday thinking, your devotional life, etc?

How and why has Paul given up the freedom to live whatever lifestyle he prefers?

How might we change our preferences to reach people in different ethnicities or sub cultures? (i.e – African Americans, Hispanics, goths, bikers, etc)

What does Paul mean when he says he becomes all things to all people in order that he might save some? How can we do likewise?

What are the parameters at which we should be able to get into their context without sacrificing our integrity towards the gospel and our relationship with Christ? Give concrete examples.

In giving up our rights and preferences – how are we like an athlete in training?