

Is Paying the Pastor Biblical?

By Joe Keim

Introduction: First, we are going to look at God's pattern for paying full time ministers in the *Old Testament*. We will see how God's law was very specific in this matter and leaves no room for doubt. Second, we will look into the *New Testament* to see what kind of pattern God has laid out for the church and their full time minister of today.

We read in the Old Testament that the Children of Israel were split into 12 tribes. According to God's plan, the *Tribe of Levi* was to do nothing but minister full time to the other 11 tribes. Today we will see how God wanted His full time ministers (the priests and Levites) to be supported for the work they did in ministry.

God gave a strong message to the priests and Levites: they were to earn their living. They were to work and work hard for their livelihood. In honor of their service and ministry, the other 11 tribes were to support them through their tithe and heave offerings.

OLD TESAMENT

Numbers 18:20-24.....God Said, Support the Priests and Levites

1. What did the Levites receive for their inheritance (v-21)? _____
2. In your own words: Why did the Levites have no inheritance ^(estate/possession) among the Israelites (v-23a)?

II Chronicles 31:4-10

3. How did King Hezekiah make sure that the priests and Levites had time to do their jobs properly (v-4)?

4. What was the response of the people when Hezekiah called on them to bring the required portion of their wealth for the support of the priests (v-5)?
 Grudgingly Cheerfully
5. How did Hezekiah and his officials respond to the generosity of the people (31:8)? _____

6. What did the chief priest tell Hezekiah about the abundance piled up in heaps around the temple (31:9-10)?

Get it

7. Why is it important to praise God when His people give generously? _____
8. How have you shown appreciation toward those who minister to you? _____

9. Do you think those who minister to you, feel appreciated? Yes No

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Malachi 3:8-10.....Gives A Warning To Those Who Did Not Give As Commanded

10. What was it that the people robbed God of (v-8)? _____
11. What were the consequences for robbing God (v-9) _____
12. What did God promise those who gave like they were asked to (v-10) _____

NEW TESTAMANT

I Cor 9:1-14.....Take Care of Those Who Are in Full Time Ministry

1. Who was the result of Paul's work in the Lord (v-1)? _____
2. Who was the *living proof* (seal) that Paul was called out by God (v-2)? _____

Many of the Corinthians had been led to the Lord by Paul. The very fact that some of them were saved under his ministry was proof of his call. Any who wished to examine his call could look at the believers at Corinth.

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The minister has the right to be supported financially. Paul asserts three rights in dealing with the church and supporting the minister financially; then he gives five supporting arguments. (Verses 3-14)

- 1) ***The right to be fed (v-4).*** *The minister and his family have to eat; therefore, it is the church's duty to provide food for their ministers.*
- 2) ***The right to receive travel support (v-5).*** *The ministers of Paul's day were always traveling about ministering among a number of churches. Ministers of every generation have had travel expenses; therefore, it is the responsibility of the churches to provide the travel expenses. Note two things.*
 - a. *The apostles and other ministers took their families with them as they traveled about ministering. This seems to indicate that most of them were married.*
 - b. *The reference to the "brothers of the Lord" is a strong testimony to the deity of Christ. His own half-brothers who had lived with him day by day became followers and ministers after His resurrection (cp. Matthew 13:55-56).*
- 3) ***The right to receive enough income that he can minister full time (v-6).*** *Paul says that he and Barnabas worked and earned their own living while ministering in Corinth. But they had the right to be supported by the church.*
- 4) ***The supportive arguments. Note how clearly the issue is illustrated and seen in these arguments. The church is unquestionably responsible for the support of its ministers.***

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- a. **The soldier's right (v-7):** What soldier goes to war at his own expense? The minister is a soldier of Christ. He is leading the people of God in their spiritual warfare. He is, therefore, to be supported by those who engage him to lead the battle.
- b. **The farmer's right (v-7):** What farmer plants his vineyard and does not eat of the fruit? The minister is a farmer who sows the seed of the Word of God. He plants and harvests the fruit for the Lord and for the church. Therefore, the church is to see that he reaps of the harvest and eats of the fruit.
- c. **The shepherd's right (v-7):** What shepherd feeds a flock and does not eat of the milk of the flock? The minister is the shepherd of God's flock and feeds God's flock; therefore, he is to be fed and supported by the flock.
- d. **The law or Word of God says this right belongs to a minister (v-8).** Paul says he does not have to speak as a man using human illustrations to prove his point. The Word of God says the same thing:
—**Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible – Commentary**

3. God said in the Law of Moses, **“Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn”**. Paul brings it up again in (1 Cor 9:9) when he is talking about taking care of the minister. What does this statement from the Old Testament law and Paul’s message mean?

4. Who should support their full time minister (v-13 & 14)? _____

5. Who *commands* that the preacher of the gospel has to be supported? _____

Get it

6. Have you asked your pastor and his family about their needs lately? Yes No

7. Are you making sure that your pastor and his family are being taken care of financially? Yes No

8. When was the last time you encouraged your pastor and his family by saying something uplifting? _____

9. How well do you support your pastor in faithfulness and involvement in church?

Excellent Good Poor Very Poor

10. How well do you support your Sunday school teacher? Have you thanked him/her lately for the time they involve in studying and preparing for class?

Excellent Good Poor Very Poor

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11. Does your Sunday school teacher know that you appreciate his/her Bible teaching?

Yes No

12. If your church supports missionaries, are you personally involved in supporting them through...

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. Giving? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| b. Communication? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| c. Praying? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

13. According to 1 Timothy 5:17-18, what is the elder/pastor who directs the affairs of the church worthy of if he rules well?

14. Why should elders be paid (v-18)?

In conclusion of this matter of supporting your Pastors, Teachers and Missionaries, I think it is important that we look at one more scripture and the commentary that follows.

Introduction: *The relationship between teacher and student is a subject that is never stressed enough within the church. The present passage deals with this subject, in particular with the student's responsibilities to the teacher. Keep in mind that every believer is a student who sits at the feet of God's teachers whether they be ministers or Bible teachers.*

Galatians 6:6-7

Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

(Galatians 6:6) How does a believer do good to a teacher?

Very simply, by communicating and sharing in the ministry of the teacher. This means much more than just giving financial support. Of course it means financial support, but as stated, it means much more. Note that Scripture is speaking directly to the learner, that is, to a believer in the church, to the person who is taught in the Word of God. The learner has a responsibility to the teacher just as the teacher has a responsibility to the learner. What is that responsibility? To share with the teacher in all good things and to participate in the ministry of the teacher.

The learner shares in the ministry of the teacher by...

- Being present* when the teacher teaches.
- Being attentive and learning* what the teacher teaches.
- Sharing in discussions* of what the teacher teaches.
- Passing on* what the teacher teaches.
- Participating* with the teacher in his or her full ministry.
- Supporting* the teacher financially.

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- g. *Encouraging others to come and learn from the teacher.*

Note another point: the reference to the "Word" in v-6 means the *Word of God*. A teacher should always be teaching the Word of God, and a learner should always be sure that he is sitting under a teacher who is teaching the Word of God.

(Galatians 6:7) Why should believers do good to their teachers?

A person can be deceived about facing the judgment of God. The word "deceived" means to be led astray. Some Galatians were being led astray in this matter. They were failing to share in the ministry of Paul, becoming critics instead of supporters. And note what attacking the teacher of God equals: it equals mocking God. The word "mocked" means to turn one's nose up at God. By rejecting God's minister, the teacher whom God had sent to them, the Galatians were rejecting God. They were not only mocking and turning their noses up at the teacher of God, but they were mocking God. However, Scripture declares in no uncertain terms: "God is not mocked: for whatsoever man sows, that shall he also reap."

If a man sows a life...

- a. that is not present when the teacher teaches
- b. that is not attentive and learning what the teacher teaches
- c. that does not pass on what the teacher teaches
- d. that does not participate with the teacher in his ministry
- e. that does not encourage others to learn from the teacher

If a man sows this rejection, this turning up of the nose, he rejects and turns his nose up at God. And if he rejects God, he shall be rejected by God. Whatever a man sows toward his teacher, he reaps. He shall bear the judgment of his behavior toward God's teacher.

—Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible – Commentary

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