

Should Ministers of the Gospel be Paid?

My ponderings over the past two days have been on this very questions. Early on in this ministry the Holy Spirit told us that if the ministry ever became about money, than it stops being about Him. So, we've made a point not to accept pay for the events put on by this ministry. We've only had two occasions where we felt that if we didn't accept it that a friendship might be ruined so in those two cases we sowed the money right back into those ministries. I've had several close friends through the years try to correct me on this point using various scriptures like Matthew 10:9-10, 1 Timothy 5:17-18 and 1 Corinthians 9. But each time I've been presented with the argument I've stayed strong and adamant that my God shall supply all our needs and He has. But, I think we have made a few people and churches uncomfortable through the years giving them back their check at the end of a series of revival meetings or emergency fill ins. Although we I believe we have been kind and thanked them for their gift but we've had such as strong concern not wanting money to ever influence us.

Yesterday when spending time with my beloved Lord and Savior I was reading 1 Corinthians 9 and it has never jumped out to me in this way before. The whole chapter speaks on Christian rights as the chapter is titled in many bible versions.

The scriptures that have especially jumped out to me are:

"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ." 1 Corinthians 9:11-12

"Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." 1 Corinthians 9:13-14

So, I feel somewhat chasten by the Lord for following the letter of the law or what He said and not the Spirit of it. So, if we are given a love offering for future speaking, we will accept the love through carnal things, but never will finances be used as a measure as to whether to speak.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ and the gifts of the Spirit are not for sale and this message of the Gospel will not be prostituted.

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. What

is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel." 1Corinthians 9:16-18

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more." 1 Corinthians 9:19

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20

Jesus never charged anyone for the truths He spoke into people's life, Jesus never charged anyone for setting them free from whatever captivity they were in. We are crucified with Christ: nevertheless we live, yet not us, but Christ lives in us: and the life which we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us. We will follow Jesus' example and what has been freely given to us, we will freely give to others.

Thank you Lord for your chastening, I know you love me.

So, you might be wondering what does this have to do with Christmas because I thought you would write something about Christmas. Well, what God has freely given to you, give and do not expect anything in return except the peace within and a happy heart living the life of Christ. A Servant to All.