

Biblical Principle for Pastoral Support: The Problem with Dispensations: Chafer on Submission to Doctrinal Statements Rather than Divine Revelation; Spiritual Gifts: Pastor-Teacher: From Awareness to the Crown of Glory; Evangelist

1 Corinthians 9:8 - I am not speaking these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does not the Law also say these things?

v. 9 - For it is written in the Law of Moses, [**Deuteronomy 25:4**] "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing." God is not concerned here about oxen, is He?

The right of a communicator of truth to be supported by those who are benefitted by their application of doctrine is not human viewpoint but rather divine viewpoint.

Some may conclude that salary for services is a procedure that the world applies but that the church should not be bound by worldly capitalistic policies. In essence, the communicator is to take a vow of poverty, i.e., ecclesiastical socialism.

Paul refutes this notion by quoting a principle from the Old Testament that is now transferred by the Holy Spirit to the Church Age. This is how some concepts of the Law are incorporated into the New Testament and with new revelations provide believers with absolute standards so there is no doubt about what God expects of us.

In this case, a right is established that those who exercise the spiritual gifts of communication are due a living wage. This is illustrated by the metaphor of the ox threshing corn.

It is the ox that does the work so he is free to eat the corn he threshes. This is the principle of remuneration illustrated. If an animal is to be paid for his services then much more so the one who communicates spiritual truth.

It's interesting that all over this country pastors are being paid to preach from their pulpits to a congregation that generally accepts what he teaches as truth. Each man's sheep hear their own shepherd's voice.

To quote Pontius Pilate, "What is truth?" That's for positive volition and the Holy Spirit to sort out in the soul of each believer. It starts out with recognition of authority. This is not a social club but an institution for the communication of spiritual things to spiritual receptacles, namely, the souls of those who are positive. For this system to work there must be a volitional acceptance of the authority of the one communicating.

For a believer's soul to be informed of the things of God he must respect the authority of the one communicating. That respect must be undergirded by confidence that the communicator not only has the gift but also the integrity to do the work necessary to insure what he teaches is the truth.

A pastor can graduate with highest honors from seminary but still be ineffective in his ministry because he was trained in a system of hermeneutics that does not accurately interpret Scripture and a systematic theology that does not properly arrange the facts of the Bible into a coherent whole. On this subject Lewis Sperry Chafer wrote the following in the Preface to his *Systematic Theology*:

Theologians have no permission from God to restrict the field of theology to the material found in the standards of their respective denominations or the more or less restricted teachings of the uninspired leaders who formulated those standards. The divine revelation in its entirety, and not merely the portions of it which harmonize with accepted dicta, challenges the student of doctrine. (pp. x-xi)

Though interest in Systematic Theology has declined in past years, there has been a growing need for an unabridged, premillennial, dispensational work on theology. Such a work has long been a desideratum. This work proposes to take a step in the direction of the realization of that need.¹ (p. xi)

Dr. Chafer completed his desideratum in 1947 and it remains one of the best systematic theologies available today.

1 Corinthians 9:10 - Or is He not surely speaking for our benefit? It was written for us, because the one plowing and threshing ought to work in hope of enjoying the harvest.

Those who invest their physical labor have a right to expect wages. No one but a slave master would disagree. Therefore, the worker in the vineyard deserves a fair day's wage; the ox who threshes the corn deserves to eat his portion.

For a local church to function efficiently each of the seven post-canon spiritual gifts needs to be represented by at least one member of the congregation. The local church is issued only one pastor. There is no need for assistant pastors; all this does is create the environment for a power struggle.

There can be more than one evangelist but each must function under the authority of the pastor and submit to his teachings from the pulpit and the policies of the church.

¹ Lewis Sperry Chafer, "Preface," in *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena, Bibliology, Theology Proper* (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary Press, 1947), 1:x-xi.