

Sovereign Grace Chapel

NO. 60

April 30, 2006

Page 1

"The Proper Attitude About Monetary Support"

By: Walter Pendleton

“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**” (I Corinthians 9:17-18).

It is quite common today to hear of pastors moving from one church to another. Pastors stay for a few years then move on to another church. This move usually includes “greener pastures” in both greater prospects and more money. This is generally justified by the attitude, “I can do more for

By: Joe Galuszek James 2:14-26

James 2:22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

In this assemblage faith is spoken of a lot. This is a good thing. Faith is the gift of God. True faith comes from Christ through the Holy Spirit. Spiritual life is given to a dead, alien sinner, and the sinner will believe. The faith of God’s elect, His chosen, always has an effect. The spiritually alive sinner, who has true faith, comes to know who God is and will believe and be converted. I think sometimes the word believe has

the Lord in that place than in this place.” Rarely does one hear of a pastor going to a smaller place with fewer prospects and less money, yet persuaded this is the purpose of God for both him and the smaller assembly. This attitude is so pervasive in this day that churches even appoint extra-biblical officers called “pulpit committees” to accommodate this practice. In this day it is even more rare that one ever hears of a man, or rarer still of men, within the local church (Tit. 1:5) being appointed to minister to that local church in the word and in doctrine. The God ordained practice of our early brethren is discounted for the expectation and ambition of this

been abused by people in general. This is not the same as ‘I believe it will rain.’ I know who God is. He has given me knowledge. What my part is in His plan I am not always sure about. I have, at times, doubts and fears about myself, but I always know who He is. He is God. There is no doubt about Jesus Christ, the Lord who is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. I have been saved by grace through faith.

These scriptures have been abused for years, centuries actually. Preachers, so-called, **James 2 cont. Page 3**

world. We live in an age of “professional” preachers trained in seminaries for the pastorate as a career opportunity. Their careers are even summed up in their obituaries by a long list of churches over which they have been pastor.

Long gone seems to be the days, save in a few instances, where pastors by appointment from within the local church, and by time, experience, shared hardships and joys, and the true union of living where the people live and working as the people work, they come to know the people to which they minister. A pastor living and dying with one local assembly is just shy of being as rare as the legendary “hen’s tooth.” Church members are so discon-

Monetary Support cont. Page 2

Inside...

“Monetary Support” ..Page 1-3

James 2:14-26
.....Page 1,3

“Genesis 4:1-7” ...Page 3

Contact info
.....Page 4

....**Monetary Support (cont.)**

tent with sound gospel preaching, no matter what the results, that the pastor must perform to their attitude of ambition and success or else he is out the door and inquiries go forth for more résumés for another pastor. I have personally had a pastor's wife tell me that her husband, after leaving one place of ministry to go to another and it then fell through; he thus "had no job." This is not meant to be critical for my heart was grieved for their difficulty, but it is an example of how attitudes toward the preaching of the gospel can become skewed and "preacher" or "pastor" is held to be a trade. It saddens the heart when the pastorate, by the pastor or the people, is viewed to be a job rather than a calling to service in the gospel of Christ to a local church, especially when compared to some secular profession. I have also had a deacon inform me that their church wanted a "full-time" pastor who had no other job, and his beginning salary would certainly increase as more people came in. The apostle Paul was certainly a God called, full-time, approved apostle (I Cor. 9:1-2). Nevertheless, this man had a trade and at times worked at that trade (Acts 18:1-3) not being ashamed to work with his own hands (I Cor. 4:12 cf. I Thess. 2:9; 4:11). He viewed the taking of support (monetary stipends of some fashion) from other churches to relieve another church "robbery" or "plunder" (II Cor. 11:7-11). The apostle also wanted to nip in the bud the boasting of the false

apostles, who in the context boasted of the Corinthians monetary support to them as proof of their superior position in spiritual matters (II Cor. 11:12-15). The apostle chose this way (I Cor. 9:15a; 17a) and would not relent to those who would criticize him of this kind of boasting (I Cor. 9:15b; II Cor. 11:10).

Those who preach the gospel of Christ are to have their physical life in preaching that gospel maintained by gospel support as God has ordained (I Cor. 9:14). In other words, as Paul's six (I Cor. 9:7-13) illustrations show, no man is required to pay his own way in the calling in which he is placed. Let's see Paul's illustrations. There is a power [authority or right] to due support when called to duty in another's purpose (I Cor. 9:7a – warfare); there is expected partaking when engaged in a desired endeavor (I Cor. 9:7b – planting, herding; 9:10b – plowing, threshing); there is the illustration of law concerning oxen demanding that no limitation of mere necessity [just a daily ration] be placed upon the instrument of service while in that service, even **his** (the human servant I Cor. 9:10a) desire [to have what he wants as he feels need] is to be unfettered (vv. 8-9a); then there is the law illustration of the priests who served in the sacrificing of the sacrificial gifts and offerings who had the right by ordination to live [eat] certain sacrifices or parts thereof (I Cor. 9:13). The key factor here, manifest by Paul's wording, is the place where this "power" is vested (I Cor. 9:4-6, 12)

as ordained by God. The power [right] to partake is given to the minister who can refuse this right if he is so willing (I Cor. 9:12, 15) and willing he must be if he does this (I Cor. 9:17). As seen later (II Cor. 11:7-8) the servant can chose parts of the whole as so desired. The power [right] is not given to those served to demand of the servant! No assembly has the right to demand the preacher not work at a trade if he is so willing. Now, one might say that this leaves much to be desired in that a pastor may want more than can be provided, or he may want less so that he might work and provide for certain lusts or escape certain responsibilities, or he may desire more so that he might further his ambition, etc. This is why God commands that bishops [those who lead a local church as elders or pastors/teachers] first be proved by desire, character and conduct of life and place, and experience in that assembly (I Tim. 3:1-7). The very nature of this kind of ordination implies that "résumés for pastor" from without the local assembly should not be considered, barring the prospect has clear connection with another assembly of like faith and practice and is willing to submit to time and experience before taking the responsibility. Any who hold reservations to this way distrust God's ordained way and they usually seek secular checks and balances to relatively secure their so-called spiritual choices. If their desires are not met then they can dismiss that pastor and hire an-

Monetary Support Cont Page 3

..Monetary Support (Cont.) other. The very phrases should make true believers shutter.

Any local church, which has the capacity to take care of all the ministerial needs, whether having a single pastor or multiple ones, and she does not so support because of stinginess or immediate selfishness, carnal reasoning about the future (i.e. what about my retirement, etc.) or conformity to the ways of Christendom (the pastor can have his salary) will reap as they have sown (Gal. 6:6-8). The fact also remains that any pastor who demands above that which God has been pleased to prosper the people has *abused his power* and is in danger of preaching for filthy lucre. If he chooses to work, or indeed must work, outside the gospel ministry then he must do it willingly in light of the necessity of his call and not because of a personal right to demand such support, no matter what support he does or does not get, or else he is merely fulfilling a duty reluctantly under a constraint of mere servitude (cf. I Cor. 9:16-17).

Here is the question for this subject: what is the attitude with which the gospel preacher and the local church should approach this subject? The preacher's attitude should be one of he will do whatever it takes to continue this ministry, come what may. And I do it willingly! To demand a salary could become, at best, a muzzle, and God forbid it be the effect of being too proud to work alongside the people if needs be. What is the assembly's attitude? First, we will support in a manner that assures that we will

meet together and be taught, edified, and rebuked if necessary, in the truth of the free and reigning grace of God in Christ. Second, we will provide for the sending forth of Christ's gospel to others outside the assembly. Therein is the proper attitude. Due communication (distributing or giving) where all gospel needs are met and not "salary" is the proper attitude for the monetary support of the gospel.

....James 2 (Cont.)

have used these to browbeat congregations into doing what the preacher wants. "You must work or your faith is dead." This is not the emphasis here. Notice how James always puts faith first in his statements. This is because faith has to come first. Also notice that showing faith by works is toward man, not toward God. The key to this is verse 22. Works are wrought by the true faith of God. Believers will work because of the faith of God, which is not of themselves and is unto good works, in which the elect were ordained to walk. Paul put it this way in Phil 2:13. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." True faith wants to work. True faith will work. If there is no work, there is no true faith. What is the work a believer is to do? This depends upon the individual believer. Believers are placed in the body of Christ where He wants them. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office" (Rom 12:4). Saved sinners are to minister, teach, exhort, rule, be kind, love, abhor evil and cleave to the good. Do what God has given

you the ability to do. Faith without works is dead. Believers are alive unto God, in Christ.

Genesis 4:1-7

- 1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.
- 2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.
- 3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.
- 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:
- 5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.
- 6 And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?
- 7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.



Newsletter

We will start placing the newsletter on the website. It will be in PDF format. This will require you to have the adobe reader to view it and print it out if you would like. You can go to the Adobe site and download their viewer for free.

Pamphlets

For sometime now we have said we were going to place our pamphlets on the website. You should now be able to see them there and print them out also. They will be in the PDF format as well.

Articles on the Web

We also have some messages on the site that may not have appeared in our newsletter.

Mailing Address:
Sovereign Grace Chapel
PO Box 15
Kellysville, WV 24732
Sovereign Grace Chapel Web Page:
<http://www.sgchapel.com>