

Provision for Pastors 1 Corinthians 9:1-18

I. Intro

● Anecdote

• Riches

- As we consider the current state of the church - I have no doubt that the first century saints would be shocked to learn that...
 - ...there would be such a thing as Megachurch pastors - who are worth millions and millions of dollars.
 - For example - Kenneth Copeland currently has a Net Worth that is more than \$400 Million dollars...
 - ...while the Houston megachurch pastor - Joel Osteen - has a Net Worth of \$100 Million.
 - The self-proclaimed Faith healer - Benny Hinn - has a Net Worth of \$60 Million dollars...
 - ...and the infamous televangelist - Creflo Dollar – has a Net Worth of \$27 Million.
 - Without debate - there is money to be made - in the name of Jesus Christ.
- #### • Struggling?
- Now - as we consider the accumulated wealth of these so-called religious leaders...
 - ...we shouldn't be surprised by the unbelievers who criticize those pastors - who are clearly cashing in on the Christian faith.

- And knowing that the 21st century church has been infiltrated with hirelings - who are here to fleece the sheep...
- ...there are many who are quick to insist that - those who give money to the ministry - are wasting their wealth.
- If this sounds like something you're struggling with - then - it's my hope that this study will help you to understand...
- ...what the Bible says about our responsibility of providing financial Provision for the Pastor of the church.

II. Outline

● Points

- Provision
- Here in our text today - - we find Paul - helping his audience to understand that...
- ...every Christian has been called to support the work of the ministry - with financial offerings.
- And as we study the scriptures before us this morning - we'll begin to see that...
 1. ...Christians are called to provide financial provision for pastors - because it's Responsibly Right
 2. ...Christians are called to provide financial provision for pastors - because it's Religiously Right
 3. ...Christians are called to provide financial provision for pastors - because it's Relationally Right
- With this as our outline - let's open our Bibles to 1st Corinthians chapter 9...

- ...where we find Paul helping the Christians in Corinth to understand the importance of financially supporting pastors.

III. Rationally

● Set up

- Self-serving
- As we make our way to the ninth chapter of 1st Corinthians - I wanna take a moment to point out that a study like this can sound self-serving.
- Seeing how I am the pastor - who stands to benefit from a sermon such as this...
- ...I should remind you that I teach the Bible - line by line - and verse by verse.
- In other words - I didn't pick this passage - - no - instead - this is simply the passage that's before us today.
- I should also point out that I don't set the salary that I receive here at Calvary South Austin - No - instead - we have a board of pastors...
- ...who sets the salaries of our staff - below the average income of the wage earners here in South Austin.
- With all of this in mind - let's start our study of 1st Corinthians 9 - beginning there at verse 1 - where Paul asked...

● Text

1Co 9:1 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?

1Co 9:2 If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

1Co 9:3 My defense to those who examine me is this:

1Co 9:4 Do we have no right to eat and drink?

1Co 9:5 Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

1Co 9:6 Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working?

- Questions?
- Here in the beginning of this chapter - we find Paul - presenting the Christians in Corinth with six questions...
- ...regarding his right to receive financial support - for the full time ministerial work that he was engaging in.
- And we take the time to consider these questions - it seems to me that the Christians there at the church in Corinth...
- ...were enjoying the benefits of the work that Barnabas and Paul were accomplishing...
- ...while simultaneously failing to support them with financial compensation.
- With that being the case - I can't help but to wonder if their lack of support was due to the fact that...
- ...some of them were questioning Paul's calling in Christ.
- Apostle?
- I'll remind you that there were Christians in Corinth - who were questioning Paul's apostolic authority.
- And and it's for this reason that he began this chapter - by asking...

1Co 9:1a Am I not an apostle?

- Now - as we consider this question - there should be no doubt that Paul was in fact an apostle of Jesus Christ.
- He clarified his calling in Romans chapter 11 - where he assured his audience - that he was an apostle to the Gentiles.

- And it's here in the 9th chapter of 1st Corinthians - where we find Paul challenging those who were questioning his apostolic authority...
- ...and he did this by presenting them with a rhetorical question by declaring: "Am I not an apostle?"
- And just to be clear - Paul was assuring them that he deserved the financial support that the church was providing to the 12 apostles.

- Free?

- In order to further grasp Paul's point - let's take another look at verse 1 - where Paul asked...

1Co 9:1 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free?

- Now - that word - free - was translated from the same Greek word that Paul used back in 1st Corinthians chapter 7...
- ...where he referred to those who were once enslaved - but are now free in Christ.
- This is the same word that Jesus used in John chapter 8 - where He declared: "...if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."
- And it's here in our text today - where we find Paul - referring to the freedom that received...
 - ...when the Lord Jesus appointed him to the position of apostle to the Gentiles.
- Servant
- In order to better understand Paul's freedom - we should consider the way that he used the same Greek word - later in this chapter.
- Look with me there at verses 18 and 19 - where Paul asked...

1Co 9:18 What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.

1Co 9:19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more;

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - helping the Christians in Corinth to understand the reason...
 - ...for why he refused to require recompense from the believers who were benefiting from his apostolic calling.
 - And while he had the right to receive this remuneration from the Christians in Corinth...
 - ...he set aside this right - in order to reach more people with the gospel of grace.
 - At the same time - he also made a case for why Christians should financially support those who work in full time ministry.
- Work?
 - Let's consider how Paul put it - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 9 - look with me again - beginning there at verse 1 - where Paul asked...

1Co 9:1 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?

1Co 9:2 If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

- As we take another look at these verses - we must not fail to notice that...
- ...that the Christians there in Corinth were not only proof of Paul's apostleship...
- ...they were also proof of the ministry that Paul had accomplished - there in the Roman province of Achaia.

- And just to be clear - that word - work - found there in verse 1 - was translated from a Greek word...
- ...which was used of any enterprise that demands the exertion of labor.
- Labor
 - This is the same word that Paul used in the 15th chapter of this epistle - it's verse 58 - where he declared...

1Co 15:58 ...my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

- From this - we can see that Paul was calling every Christian to labor for the Lord.
- What this means is that - we've all been called to accomplish the work of the Christ's great commission.
- At the same time - it's also important for us to understand that the Lord calls some Christians into full time ministry.
- And according to Paul - the congregation has been called to provide financial provision for their pastor.
- In order to make my case - let's continue to consider the questions that Paul presented - here in our text today.
- Support?
 - Look with me again - beginning there at verse 3 - where Paul declared...

1Co 9:3 My defense to those who examine me is this:
1Co 9:4 Do we have no right to eat and drink?
 - Here in these verses - we find Paul - challenging the Christians in Corinth - about his right to eat and drink.

- And just to be clear - Paul was making a case for receiving financial support from them...
- ...so that he could continue to engage in full time ministry - without starving.
 - And while it's true that Paul had no problem supporting himself - by becoming a bi-vocational minister...
 - ...it's also true that he was helping his audience to understand that Christians were responsible for supporting full time ministers.
- Wife?

- Paul continued to make his case - there in verse 5 - where he asked...

1Co 9:5 Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

1Co 9:6 Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working?

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - making a case for the financial support of both him - and for Barnabas - who was not an apostle.
- And not only them - but he was also making a case for the financial support necessary for supporting a family.
- What this means is that - those who are called into full time ministry have the right to receive the remuneration necessary...
 - ...for supporting a wife - - and by implication - kids as well.
 - And what this means is that every Christian congregation is responsible for paying their pastor a living wage.

● Application

- Share

- Let's consider how Paul put it - in Galatians chapter 6 - it's verse 6 where he declared...

Gal 6:6 Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.

- Let him who is TAUGHT the word SHARE in all good things with him who TEACHES.
- Those who receive the instructions of God's word - are responsible to provide financial support...
 - ...for those who have been ordained by the Lord - and called to instruct the Christians in their congregation.
 - And the reason why is because - this enables those who are called to full time ministry...
 - ...the ability to accomplish their calling - without becoming a bi-vocational minister.

● Transition

• Points

- Now - this brings us to our second point - because listen...
 1. ...Christians should not only provide financial provision for their pastor - because it's Responsibly Right...
 2. ...Christians should also provide financial provision for their pastor - because it's Religiously Right.
- With this as our focus - let's continue to consider the point that Paul was making - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 9.
- Look with me - beginning there at verse 7 - where Paul elaborated on his argument - by asking...

IV. Religiously

● Text

1Co 9:7 Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?

1Co 9:8 Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also?

1Co 9:9 For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about?

1Co 9:10 Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope.

1Co 9:11 If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?

1Co 9:12 If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.

• Examples

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - continuing to make his case for why Christians should provide financial provision for pastors.

- And he did this - by comparing those who are in full time ministry...

- ...to those who serve as Soldiers - Vinedressers - Shepherds - Beasts of Burden and Farmers.

- With this as our focus - let's take some time to consider these five examples...

- ...which will help us to understand the reason for why every Christian congregation should support the staff of their church.

- And as we do - we'll also see how this remuneration is also a religious right - for every pastor.

• War

- Look with me again - beginning there at verse 7 - where Paul asked

1Co 9:7a Who ever goes to war at his own expense?

- Those who serve in the military - receive financial compensation for their service.
- And wether you know it or not - - the taxes we pay to our federal government...
- ...are used to pay the salaries of the soldiers - who are actively serving our country.
- Not only that - but - our taxes also pay for the retirement of those who complete 20 years of service.
- And in similar fashion - every Christian congregation has been called to provide financial provision for their pastor.
- Vinedresser
- We should also consider the second example that Paul presented - there in verse 7 - where he asked...

1Co 9:7b Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit?

- In other words - it would be ridiculous to think that the vinedressers who works hard in the vineyard each and everyday...
- ...will refrain from consuming the fruit that they worked so hard to produce.
- In the same way - it's unreasonable to think that the pastor - who works hard everyday - to lead their congregation...
- ...should then refrain from receiving remuneration - from the fruit that they've produced through their evangelistic endeavors.

- And what this means is that - every Christian congregation has been called to provide financial provision for their pastor.

- Flock

- The third comparison that Paul presented - is found there in the third part of verse 7 - where he asked...

1Co 9:7c Who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?

- In other words - the shepherd who cares for a flock - - will also enjoy the fresh milk that comes from the herd.
- And it's in a similar - yet spiritual way - that the shepherds of the church...
- ...have also been given the right - to receive financial support - from their flock of faith.
- More simply put - every Christian congregation has been called to provide financial provision for their pastor.

- Law

- The fourth comparison that Paul presented is found there in verses 8 and 9 where he asked...

1Co 9:8 Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also?

1Co 9:9 For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about?

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - reminding the original recipients of this epistle...
- ...about the law that the Lord presented in Deuteronomy chapter 25.
- It's verse 4 - where he declared: "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain."

- In other words - every beast of burden should be permitted to eat - as it works in the field.
- And in similar fashion - every pastor has the right to receive remuneration from the congregation he serves.

- Farmer

- The fifth comparison that Paul presented is found there in verse 10 - where he asked...

1Co 9:10 Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope.

- Here in this verse - we find Paul - shifting his focus from the Oxen pulling the plow - - to the farmer who is guiding the oxen.
- And while it's true that the beast of burden pulling the plow - should be able to eat - as it works in the field...
- ...so too - the farmer who is plowing the field - should have a heart filled with hope...
- ...as he looks forward to the day - when the harvest is finally gathered to the threshing floor.
- And in similar fashion - the pastor should also plow the field of faith with a heart filled with hope.
- Hope
- Just to be clear - that word - hope - found there in verse 10 - was translated from a Greek word...
- ...which was used in reference to the confident expectation of the good things to come.

- It's the anticipation that leads us to look forward - with faith - as we wait for God to fulfill His promises.
- And in the context of verse 10 - Paul was referring to the hope that fills the heart of the pastor...
 - ...when he sees the people he leads - sacrificially supporting the work of the ministry - with financial offerings.
- Reap
 - We should notice how Paul elaborated on this principle - there in verse 11 - where he asked...
1Co 9:11 If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?
 - Here in this verse - we find Paul - elaborating on the principle of sowing and reaping.
 - And much like the farmer - who reaps the fruit - of the seed that he sows in the soil...
 - ...so too - the pastor has the right to reap material rewards - from the blessings that believers receive - after growing in the Lord.
 - Think about it - - if the Lord is blessing your life - as you continue to mature in the faith...
 - ...then - shouldn't those blessings be shared with the pastor - who is sowing the seed of God's word - into your heart?
- Right
 - In order to further grasp this principle - let's consider the question that Paul presented there in verse 12 - where he asked...
1Co 9:12a If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more?

- Here in this verse - we find Paul - reminding his readers about the way that they pay others for goods and services.
- For example - you're favorite band will charge admission to those who want to watch their public performance.
- And you're favorite NFL football team will charge at least one hundred dollars for the cheap seats.
- We're willing to pay car companies for the vehicles they manufacture - and we're willing to pay our mechanic to fix them when they break.
- And we have no problem paying those who process the food we eat - every times we go to the grocery store.
- Dash
- If you're a foodie who loves to dine at trendy restaurants - then - you're also willing to pay a premium for the culinary experience.
- And while it's true that the owners of those restaurants charge too much money - for too little food...
- ...foodies are still ready to pay too much money - just to take a photo of their fancy food.
- And listen - those who leave without paying their bill - are committing a crime.
- The reason why is because - those who dine and dash are guilty of consuming the food - without paying for the product.
- In a similar yet spiritual way - those who fail to provide their pastor - with financial support - are effectively dining and dashing.
- These believers receive the nourishment of spiritual bread - and then leave without tipping their server.
- Gospel

- Now - as we consider the point that Paul was making - we must not fail to notice how he also refused to require his right to remuneration.
- Look with me again - there at verse 12 - where Paul declared...

1Co 9:12 If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.

- Here in the second half of this verse - we find Paul - helping the Christians in Corinth to understand that...
 - ...he wasn't willing to require this right - by commanding them to give to the work of God.
 - And the reason why was because - he was concerned that this would hinder the gospel of Christ.
 - In other words - the pastor who requires the right of remuneration - could cause some to reject the gospel of grace.
 - And it's for this reason that I would never charge admission - for attending our church services.
- Law
 - At the same time - I encourage every Christian to realize that every Christian has been called to financially fund the work of the Lord.
 - And listen - this most certainly includes the religious responsibility - of providing financial support for the staff of their church.
 - And while it's true that those who trust in Jesus are no longer under the Old Testament law of the tithe...
 - ...it's also true that Paul encouraged weekly offerings to be collected every Sunday...

- ...so that the Christians in every congregation can financially fund the work of the ministry.
- And in order to grasp this principle - let's consider the way that Paul encouraged the Corinthians in Corinth...
- ...to take up a collection for the Saints who were engaging in full time ministry.

● Application

- Cheerful
- It's 2nd Corinthians chapter 9 - beginning at verse 5 - where he declared...

2Co 9:5 I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation.

2Co 9:6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

2Co 9:7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - encouraging the Christians in Corinth to take up a collection...
- ...which he goes on to describe as an offering that would supply for the needs of the saints...
- ...so that they could accomplish the administration of their service.
- And according to Paul - these offerings shouldn't be given out of some sort of legalistic obligation...
- ...no - instead - we should give cheerfully with gracious generosity - according to the conviction that come from Christ Jesus.

- Sunday

- Not only that - but - Paul also encouraged the Christians in Corinth - to take up a collection on Sunday.
- It's in 1st Corinthians chapter 16 - beginning at verse 1 - where he declared...

1Co 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:

1Co 16:2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

- Now - as we consider the instructions that Paul was presenting - I'd like to suggest that...
- ...every church will do well to take up a collection on the first day of the week.
- In this way - our offerings are not only given purposefully - according to the leading of the Lord...
- ...but - our offerings are also given religiously - as we incorporate the support of the saints - as part of our weekly worship service.
- And with this as the goal - Christians will accomplish this Religious Right - by financial supporting the staff of their church.

- Transition

- Points

- Now - this brings us to our third and final point - because listen...

1. ...Christians should not only provide financial provision for their pastor - because it's Responsibly Right...

2. ...and Christians should not only provide financial provision for their pastor - because it's Religiously Right.
3. ...Christians should also provide financial provision for their pastor - because it's Relationally right.
 - With this as our focus - let's continue to consider the point that Paul was making - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 9.
 - Look with me - beginning there at verse 13 - where Paul elaborated on his argument - by asking...

V. Relationally

● Text

1Co 9:13 Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar?

1Co 9:14 Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.

1Co 9:15 But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void.

1Co 9:16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!

1Co 9:17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship.

1Co 9:18 What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.

- Minister
 - Here in these verses - we find Paul - making a comparison - between those who are in full time ministry - to the Old Testament priests.
 - Notice with me again - there in verse 13 - where he referred to the priests and the Levites - who ministered the holy things of the temple.

- The same servants were also given the right to eat the offerings of the LORD - which were made by fire.
- Not only that - but - they also received the firstfruits of the grain offerings...
- ...as well as the new wine - the oil - and the first of the fleece from the sheep.
- And to sum it up simply - - the priests and the levites received a portion of the offerings - brought to the temple.
- Law
- Let's consider how the Lord explained it to Aaron - in Numbers chapter 18 - it's beginning at verse 8 - where he declared...

Num 18:8 "Here, I Myself have given you charge of My heave offerings, all the holy gifts of the children of Israel; I have given them as a portion to you and your sons, as an ordinance forever.

Num 18:9 "This shall be yours of the most holy things reserved from the fire: every offering of theirs, every grain offering and every sin offering and every trespass offering which they render to Me, shall be most holy for you and your sons.

Num 18:10 "In a most holy place you shall eat it; every male shall eat it. It shall be holy to you.

Num 18:11 "This also is yours: the heave offering of their gift, with all the wave offerings of the children of Israel; I have given them to you, and your sons and daughters with you, as an ordinance forever. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it.

Num 18:12 "All the best of the oil, all the best of the new wine and the grain, their firstfruits which they offer to the LORD, I have given them to you.

Num 18:13 "Whatever first ripe fruit is in their land, which they bring to the LORD, shall be yours. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it.

- Here in these verses - we find the Lord - helping Aaron to understand that...

- ...the priests - and the levites who serve at the Temple - are free to eat the offerings that are brought to the temple.
- And not only them - but - their families - and the servants in their homes were also able to partake of those provisions.
- And in this way - the Lord was making sure that those who serve at the Temple...
 - ...had the right to receive the provisions they needed - from the congregation of Israel.
- Tithes
 - Let's consider how the Lord summed it up - in Numbers 18 - it's verses 20 and 21 - where the Lord declared...

Num 18:20 "You shall have no inheritance in their land, nor shall you have any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel.

Num 18:21 "Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting.

- Here in these verses - we find the Lord - helping Aaron to understand that...
 - ...the children of Levi - who were called to serve the tribes of Israel - according to their ordination...
 - ...would also receive a portion of the tithes - that the children of Israel brought to the temple of God.
 - And in this way - we can see how the tithes created a relationship between the offerings of the congregation...
 - ...and the Levites - who were called to serve the Lord - in full time ministry.

- Even so
- With all of this in mind - we should consider the way that Paul compared the Levites - - to the Christians who are called into full time ministry.
- Let's consider how Paul put it - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 9 - look with me again - there at verse 13 - where he declared...

1Co 9:13 Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar?

1Co 9:14 Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.

- Now - I should take a moment to remind you that - every Christian has been called to preach the gospel...
- ...and so - it's important for us to remember the comparison that Paul was presenting.
- Paul was comparing the Levites of Israel - to the Christians who are called to serve the church - in full time ministry.
- And so - while it's true that every Christian is called to preach the gospel message of Jesus Christ...
 - ...it's also true that those who are called to full time ministry - should also receive remuneration - much like the Levites.
- Relationship
- Now - this is not to suggest that we are under the Old Testament law of the tithe.
- No - instead - Christians should financially support the work of the ministry according to the conviction that the Lord has placed in our hearts.
- In this way - we are enabling those in full time ministry - to focus all of their time and energy - on accomplishing their calling in Christ.

- At the same time - those who are called to full time ministry should avoid taking advantage of their authority...
- ...by refraining from requiring this remuneration - from those they're ministering to.
- And in order to understand my point - let's consider the example that Paul presented.
- Used
- Look with me again - beginning there at verse 15 - where Paul declared...

1Co 9:15 ...I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void.

1Co 9:16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!

1Co 9:17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship.

1Co 9:18 What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.

- Here in this verse - we find Paul - helping his audience to understand that he wasn't writing these things - as a means of monetary manipulation.
- You see - Paul was ready to accomplish his apostolic calling - regardless of remuneration.
- He realized that he was given a spiritual stewardship - by which he was called to lead people into a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- It's for this reason that he was ready to minister to every person - without requiring financial reimbursement.
- And in light of his example - we should be concerned about any pastor - who is always begging for more money.

- Gain?

- Let's consider how the apostle Peter put it - in 1st Peter chapter 5 - it's beginning at verse 1 where he declared...

1Pe 5:1 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed:

1Pe 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

1Pe 5:3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;

1Pe 5:4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

- Here in these verses - we find the apostle Peter - encouraging those who are called to Shepherd the flock of God...
 - ...to eagerly serve our Savior as overseers - without any concern for dishonest gain.
 - What this means is that - the pastors who abuse their position of authority - in order to fleece the sheep they've been called to lead...
 - ...are failing to accomplish their calling - with the right heart.
 - And listen - the pastors who see people as a means for monetary gain - are running the risk of being disqualified.
- Shepherd
 - You see - the Christians who have been placed in the position of pastor - have been called to shepherd the flock of God.
 - And as we consider the loving relationship that a good shepherd has with the sheep he leads...

- ...it's crucial for pastors to realize that - we haven't been called to abuse our authority - by fleecing the sheep for financial gain.
- No - instead - we've been called to lovingly lead the Christians in our congregation...
- ...with the Biblical instruction that we all need - so that we can become more like Jesus.
- And according to Paul - the pastors who are accomplishing their calling in this way - are worthy of their wages.

● Application

- Double
 - Let's consider how Paul put it - in 1st Timothy chapter 5 - it's verses 17 and 18 - where he declared...
 - 1Ti 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.
 - 1Ti 5:18 For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."
 - According to Paul - the pastors who accomplish their calling - in a way that brings glory to God...
 - ...should be considered worthy of double honor - which is to say - they are worthy of the financial support they receive - and then some.
 - And so - whatever you were planning to give today - go ahead and double it.
 - But seriously - the pastors who work hard to care for the Christians in their congregation - deserve financial compensation.
 - And it's for this reason that I encourage you to recognize your roll in this relationship - between the pastor - and the parishioner.

VI. Conclusion

● Wrap up

- Points

- To sum it up with simplicity - let's run through the three points that we've considered here in our time today.

1. Christians are called to provide financial provision for their pastor - because it's Responsibly Right...
2. Christians are also called to provide financial provision for their pastor - because it's Religiously Right.
3. And Christians have been called to provide financial provision for their pastor - because it's Relationally right.

- And while it's true that pastors should refrain from abusing their authority - by requiring remuneration...
- ...it's also true that parishioners should gladly give - in order to honor those who labor in the word and doctrine.
- And knowing that this is God's will for every Christian congregation...
- ...I encourage you to do your part to provide financial provision - for the pastoral ministry - according to the instructions of God's word.