

What Does the Bible Say About Financial Support for Ministers?

To the Church

The Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel. (1 Cor. 9:14)
God's plan is that those who preach the gospel shall be supported by those receiving it. As Jesus sent out the seventy, they were not to think of themselves as objects of charity. The hospitality of those to whom they ministered was payment for services rendered. He said:

*"...stay in that house, eating and drinking
what they give you; for the laborer is
worthy of his wages." (Luke 10:7a)*

*"...let the one who is taught the word share in all
good things with him who teaches." (Gal. 6:6)*

Paul taught churches to support those who ministered. According to the New Testament, people who are called to serve a church should receive their support from the church. When a church calls a pastor or staff member, the church has the responsibility to provide for financial needs to the best of the congregation's ability.

In addition to cash salary and housing, financial support for ministers includes protection coverages (insurance and retirement) and covering ministry-related expenses. This should be done with love and Christian generosity.

Ministers and church staff will have difficulty performing effectively without this support. 1 Timothy 5:17-18 reminds us that while ministers who serve well are not necessarily to receive double pay, they are worthy of it and should receive adequate financial support.

To the Minister

In 1 Timothy 5:8, the apostle Paul shared a thought provoking statement:

*"...if any one does not provide for his own, and
especially for those of his own household, he has
denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever."*

In the original language there is an added dimension to his words that may not be evident in most translations. When Paul said, "provide for his own," it included in his thinking "*with forethought for the future.*"

The implications of this for a minister's financial support plan should be obvious. Life, disability and medical insurance are important to the well being of one's family. Adequate retirement planning now is essential for one to provide security in retirement years. Appropriate provision for retirement and insurance are a major part of "providing for one's own with forethought for the future."