

“Let Him That Is Taught In The Word ...”

“But, let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things” (Gal. 6:6). In 1 Corinthians nine Paul argues for the right of a gospel preacher to receive support in his work. He shows that soldiers had a right to be sustained while they warred for their government, that those who planted a vineyard had right to eat the fruit thereof and those who tended a flock had a right to drink milk of the flock (1 Cor. 9:7f). Paul quoted Moses who wrote, *“Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn”* (1 Cor. 9:9; Dt. 25:4). Then Paul concluded, *“Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel”* (1 Cor. 9:14). It is the right of preachers to be supported in the work they do; it is the responsibility of churches to support the man who labors among them and the fruits of whose labor they enjoy. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). Paul was supported by Philippi at Thessalonica and at Rome and very likely in Corinth as well (Phil. 4:15f; 2 Cor. 11:8).

Still, Galatians 6:6 is not a text to prove support for the preacher for the church treasury, it is a text which shows that individuals also have responsibility to the one who has taught them the word. A great lady in Israel urged her husband to build a little chamber onto their home that the prophet Elisha might have a place of his own when his travels brought him into the area where they lived (2 Kings 4:8-10). Other gifts in the Old Testament are recorded that came from those who were taught to those who taught them. In the New Testament Lydia took care of Paul and his company while they were in Philippi (Acts 16:15); the jailer brought Paul and Silas up into his house after his baptism and fed them (Acts 16:34). Paul called Gaius of Corinth *“my host and of the whole church”* (Rom. 16:23). A brother named Mnason, a native of Cyrus but resident of Jerusalem, lodged Paul and the messengers of the churches who traveled with Paul to carry relief to Jerusalem saints (Acts 21:16). Paul expected to visit in Colossae some time and asked Philemon to prepare a lodging for him (Philemon 22). Of course such hospitality was not reserved just for teachers; it was the badge of the love early Christians manifested toward other brethren, showing their love and hospitality.

It is somewhat distasteful to write such things for there is always the possibility that some will feel that such preachers are seeking to “feather his own nest.” Paul felt much the same way and while he wrote of the right of preachers to be supported as well as the responsibility of churches to support them, he was quick to add *“... I write not these things that it may be done in my case ...”* (1 Cor. 9:15). He had not allowed Corinth to provide

support for him while he was in their midst and he had no intentions of allowing them to do so in the future. "*I will not be a burden to you,*" he said (2 Cor. 12:14).v I do not ask nor seek anything more from brethren here but although I do not want nor intend to accept more support from the church here than what already I receive, that does not excuse us to fail to seek out and support worthy men to the extent of our ability. I am not a prophet nor the son of one, but I am fully persuaded that were we to commit ourselves to support more preachers, we would see a correspondingly increase in our contributions to allow us to do that, and even more.

The gospel is God's power to save. There are worthy men who can bring many souls to Christ if we will help to provide their physical needs to free them in preaching to others. Will we lift up our eyes unto "*fields white unto harvest*"? Will we determine to provide support to other men in their sounding out the word? We can do it. Why not do it, then?

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