

New Covenant Theology



New Covenant Giving

- When we looked at the question of tithing, we saw that the standard for New Covenant giving is that we are to give *generously* and *cheerfully* (without compulsion) (2 Cor. 9:7, 1Tim 6:17-19)
- But who all should New Covenant believers be generously and cheerfully giving **to**?
- Several categories of giving are mentioned in the NT:
 - Pastors/Elders
 - Ministers of the Gospel
 - The Poor
 - Other Possibilities?

Giving to Your Pastors/Elders

- The scriptures require that local churches pay financial support to their pastors.
- The two clearest passages that discuss this are:
 - *Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches.* (Gal. 6:6)
 - *Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.* ¹⁸ *For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages."* (1Tim. 5:17-18)
- What principles can we glean from these passages concerning our giving to our pastors?

Giving to Your Pastors/Elders

Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. (Gal. 6:6)

- The “*word*” refers here to the **Word** of God.
- Scripture often uses the phrase “*good things*” here refer to material benefits that we enjoy in this life:
 - *But Abraham said [to the rich man], “Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.* (Luke 16:25)
- Such sharing of “*good things*” is commonly done in our day through the giving of money. But actual goods and services could be shared as well.
- The “*one who teaches*” within a local church would primarily be the pastors/elders.

Giving to Your Pastors/Elders

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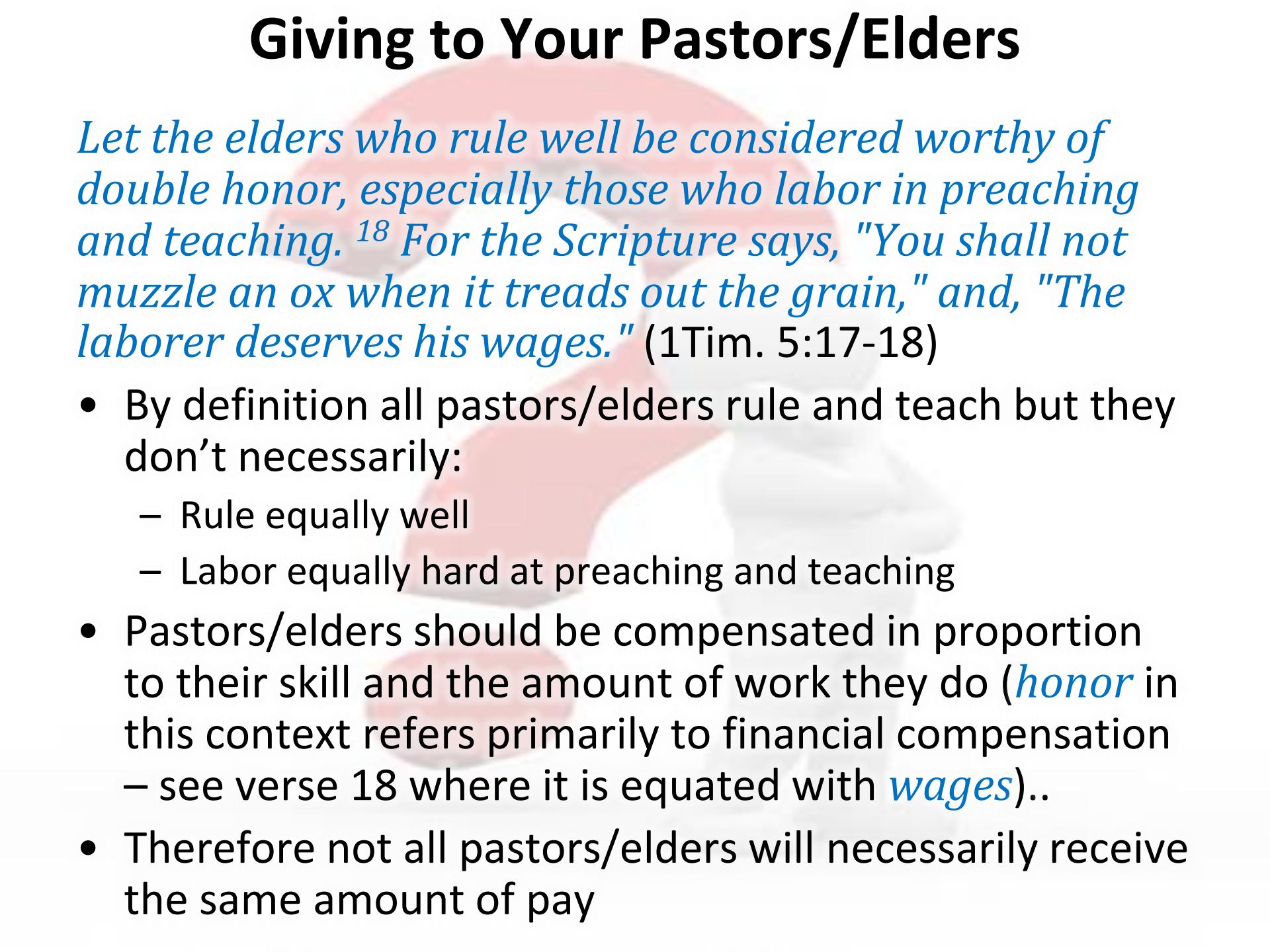
- So, to summarize what Paul is saying: You who are regularly taught the Word of God by your pastors, have an obligation to share “all good [material] things” with them in exchange for the spiritual benefit that you have received.
- Paul here is drawing on a general spiritual principle that he references in a number of other places: Those who receive spiritual benefit from another have an obligation to give physical benefits in return:
 - *If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? (1Cor 9:11)*
 - *For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. (Rom 15:27b NIV)*

Giving to Your Pastors/Elders

*Let the one who is taught **the word** share all good things with the one who teaches. (Gal. 6:6)*

- While Pastors have a **right** to expect support from their congregations, they can (at **their** discretion) waive that right if they believe it is in the best interests of the advance of the gospel to do so. See 1Cor. 9:15 where Paul waives his right to receive support from the Corinthian church.

Giving to Your Pastors/Elders



Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. ¹⁸ For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages." (1Tim. 5:17-18)

- By definition all pastors/elders rule and teach but they don't necessarily:
 - Rule equally well
 - Labor equally hard at preaching and teaching
- Pastors/elders should be compensated in proportion to their skill and the amount of work they do (*honor* in this context refers primarily to financial compensation – see verse 18 where it is equated with *wages*)..
- Therefore not all pastors/elders will necessarily receive the same amount of pay

Giving to Ministers of the Gospel

- The scriptures teach that those who preach the gospel have a right to receive financial support from those who have benefited from their preaching:
 - *If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? ... ¹³ Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? ¹⁴ In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.* (1Cor. 9:11, 13-14)
- According to this text, who is it the is responsible to provide for the financial support to the gospel preacher?
- In our modern world, who would you say that gospel preachers most commonly look to for financial support?
- Although Paul insists here that he has a right to receive financial support from the Corinthians, he does not insist on using that right in their case:
 - *...the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel. ¹⁵ But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing these things to secure any such provision.* (1Cor. 9:14-15).

Giving to Ministers of the Gospel

- Paul gives **two** reasons why he did not accept support from those to whom he preached the gospel:
 - **To set an example** that we are to work to support ourselves and not to live at the expense of others:
 - *For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you,⁸ nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.⁹ It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.* (2Thes. 3:7-9)

Giving to Ministers of the Gospel

- Paul gives **two** reasons why he did not accept support from those to whom he preached the gospel:
 - **To silence his accusers** and keep them from claiming that he was just preaching for the money:
 - *Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached God's gospel to you free of charge?⁸ I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you.⁹ And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way ...¹² And what I am doing I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do.* (2Co 11:7-12)

Questions?

