

A Church's Responsibility to Support its Pastor

Bernard Boyo

One of the issues facing the African church is that of adequate salaries for pastors. Not all churches give their pastors sufficient payment. I think, for example, of the Africa Inland Churches of Nyandarua, Kenya where churches have failed to adequately meet their obligations in supporting the pastors financially. Insufficient support has brought about numerous problems that have affected the church's ministry in Nyandarua. The monthly salary given to a "full-time" pastor is too little compared to the needs that he has for his sustenance and that of his family. Consequently, most pastors have sought outside jobs, such as farming, in order to earn adequate income. In effect, the church suffers from "spiritual malnutrition" because pastors cannot give their full attention to the ministry. The pastor's divided effort causes a lack of spiritual nurture and lack of church growth.

One cause of the inadequate salaries is the church's lack of proper biblical teaching on pastoral support. Therefore, it is necessary to have a clear

understanding of the responsibilities of the church in supporting the pastors.

The purpose of this article is to determine whether the church in which a pastor is ministering has a definite biblical obligation to meet the pastor's needs so that he does not need to engage in outside jobs. It is worth pointing out that the pastoral ministry is more than just a job in which one ventures. Lamont correctly observes that those who spend their lives in the ministry have been called by the Lord. This sense of calling is more crucial than the wages that the minister should receive. (Lamont, 52). Since pastoral ministry is a calling from the Lord, we shall also seek to establish what the Lord says about pastoral support.

In order to meet its purpose, we will exegete 1 Corinthians 9:7-14 to determine the rights of a gospel minister. The paper will also seek to ascertain the teaching and practice of the early church on the issue of pastoral support. Other passages to be exegeted are Galatians 6:6, 1 Timothy 5:17,18 and 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13. Having established the biblical teaching on

pastoral support, biblical guidelines, and application for the Africa Inland Churches in Nyandarua shall be drawn.

1 Corinthians 9:7-14: Background and Context

In 1 Corinthians 9, Paul deals with personal rights. He is responding to the Corinthians questions regarding the eating of meat that has been sacrificed to idols. The question that the Corinthians may have asked Paul might have been, "What is wrong with eating food that has been sacrificed to idols? It can do us no harm. We have knowledge. We know that there is but one God and that there is no such thing as an idol!" (Gilmour, 690). In response, Paul agrees with them but points out that "...out of consideration for those brethren who, ... have not been emancipated from such belief, [they should] refrain from sitting at table in an idol's temple" (Gilmour, 690). Paul seems to be arguing that "unless one is governed in all his doings by the principle of consideration for others ... he may by his thoughtlessness to sin against Christ" (Gilmour, 690). In view of this principle, Paul at the end of chapter 8 "undertook to abstain from eating meat for the rest of his life, if eating meat should prove to be prejudicial to the interests of his Christian brother" (Barrett, *Corinthians*, 199). He calls upon his

readers to willingly give up their personal rights as regards the eating of meat for the sake of others (8:9-13).

To support his renunciation of personal rights, Paul cites his own example in chapter 9, which forms "part of the discussion of the question as to eating food that has been offered to idols ..." (Robertson and Plummer, *Corinthians*, 176). Paul's argument here on the exercise of the believers freedom "leads him to expand the theme of Christian freedom and apply it in a wider context than that of sacrificial meat" (Mare, 241-242). Having shown the Corinthians the need for renunciation of personal rights, Paul "points out that his habitual forbearance is greater than that which he would occasionally claim from them" (Robertson and Plummer, 176-177).

Whereas this seems to be the background in which Paul derives his defense on personal rights, some scholars have divorced chapter 9 from chapter 8. Conzelmann for instance points out that:

Chapter 9 surprisingly introduces a new theme: the apostleship of Paul . . . While it is certainly possible to see a comprehensive theme in the topic of freedom, yet it is not enough to explain that state of the text. For in chapter 9 the

freedom that is discussed is not the same as in chapter 8. Its sense cannot be discovered from the connection with chapter 8, but in the first instance only from chapter 9 itself (Conzelmann, 151).

This would be a wrong way of looking at the argument brought about by Paul in chapter 9. His major concern here is to straighten the concepts and thoughts of those in the Corinthian church “who overstressed their rights to the detriment of others. He told them that this was selfishness on their part” (Abogunrin, 96). The suggestion of divorcing chapter 9 from chapter 8 is unfortunate since Paul seeks to respond to the Corinthian’s question regarding their eating meat sacrificed to idols (chapter 8). He explains it more vividly by using his personal example in view of the denial of his apostolic rights (chapter 9). As Hargreaves points out:

In chapter 8 Paul has said, you have the right to eat food which has been offered to idols. But be willing to give up that right for the sake of other Christians. In the same way, I, as an apostle, have the right to receive payment. But I have given up that right, so that no one should say that I am preaching in order to make money. I have given up that

right, so that as many people may accept the good news about Jesus (Hargreaves, 109).

This development of thought clearly shows the close connection between the two chapters. Abogunrin observes correctly that:

The chapter is an illustration of apostolic privileges and why he did not use these privileges . . . Paul shows a better way of exercising Christian freedom. Paul renounces some of his apostolic rights for the sake of the Gospel. He sacrifices his rights in order to accommodate himself to all men for the purpose of winning them to the Gospel (Abogunrin, 96)

In order to adequately defend his apostolic rights, Paul first establishes his apostleship. As Godet points out, Paul’s enemies were “alleging that if he did not make his churches maintain him, it is because he did not feel himself to be the equal of the apostles” (Godet, 429). It is evident that some people at Corinth (2 Cor. 12:11-12) and elsewhere (Gal. 1:1; 1:15-2:10) questioned Paul’s genuine apostleship and he had to defend it. In 9:1-3 Paul establishes the reality of his apostleship from which he derives his apostolic rights to maintenance (v. 4-14). Paul then bases his argument on the rights of the gospel

minister to be supported by the church in which he is ministering.

Having defended his apostleship and established his and Barnabas' rights as apostles, Paul seeks to authenticate his assertions. He nevertheless explains that he freely abnegated himself of his rights (v. 12) to get full support from the church.

Paul uses some strong arguments and reasons to illustrate to the Corinthians the rights that he has as an apostle. He argues from five areas: "common practice, scriptural precept, intrinsic justice, Jewish custom and Christ's command" (Prior, 153). He uses a set of rhetorical questions in illustrating his points of claiming support from the church. He bases his argument on the principle of remuneration observed in common life. It is human expectation and practice that, "those who addict and give themselves up to any way of business in the world expect to live out of it" (Henry, 549). The soldier expects to receive his pay due him because of his service. The term used here means, according to Walter Baur, "ration" or "money" paid to a soldier as "pay" or "wages". This is the predominant meaning and "the only one in the LXX" (Baur, 602). This meaning has in this context, an idea of "expenses" which, "though applying primarily to the soldier's food, it may cover his pay and his outfit generally" (Robertson and

Plummer, *Corinthians*, p.182). Gordon Fee, quoting C.C. Caragounis, says that this term

must not be understood in the sense approximating that of 'wages'. The word has to do with 'provisions', not salary, and is almost certainly both how Paul understood it and what he is here arguing for himself. He is not to be 'paid' for services rendered, but 'provided for' by those who owe their lives to him. (Fee, *Corinthians*, p.405).

From these considerations, we can deduce that a soldier has a right to be supported while in the service. Nevertheless, the provisions do not necessarily have to be in the form of salary but a kind of stipend without which the soldier cannot work. Thus, "the soldier gets his equipment and his uniform, without which he cannot fight" (Prior, 154).

The other argument is derived from the farm whereby Paul points to two kinds of farmers: the vine-dresser and the shepherd. The farmer plants, dresses, and cultivates vineyards anticipating and expecting the fruits thereof. The latter tends the flock with an expectation of being fed by it. These normal life illustrations clarify the human pattern of life. The farmer is to eat from the produce of his labour.

These examples clearly indicate that every labourer has a right to expect a comfortable life from his toil. Labour of all kinds must be rewarded so as to maintain the labourer. This sums up Paul's argument that, as one expects to be sustained by his labours, so it is also true with the apostle. "He should expect to be sustained from his "produce" or "flock" — the church that owes its existence to him" (Fee, *Corinthians*, 405).

To make his argument more vivid, Paul turns to the law's demands. As Leon Morris points out, "Paul repudiates the thought that the principle he is enunciating and illustrating from various fields of human endeavour rests simply on human wisdom" (Morris, *Corinthians*, 134). He does not seek to rest with the illustration deduced from the human sphere which is simply "from a human point of view". Paul is here saying that, "It is not merely in accordance with human judgment of what is fitting that he lays down the principle that a labourer has a right to a living wage. There is higher authority than that." (Robertson and Plummer, 183). Quoting from Deuteronomy 25:4 (the prohibition to muzzle the ox when treading the grain) in v. 9, Paul goes beyond the application which essentially has to do with the protection of animals (Conzelmann, 154). On the one hand, there is a sense in which "the law is not

made for irrational beings, but for those that have mind and reason" (Barrett, *Corinthians*, 205). On the other hand, there is the "kindly and beneficent regulation for the oxen when threshing" (Barrett, *Corinthians*, 205) evident in the law. This would indicate that "Paul did not mean that God did not care about the animals" (Barrett, *Corinthians*, 205). In his argument that the law was written for us, Paul sees the law figuratively speaking of men as indicated by *pantos* which signifies 'entirely, absolutely' (Godet, 440). In this case therefore, "The *pantos* for us signifies that in thus legislating, it was man's moral good, and not the satisfying of oxen, that God had in view" (Godet, 441). Hence, the primary application of the words of the law lies with man and not with oxen.

To make the argument more forceful, Paul applies another analogy from farming which also makes "the point that he has the right to their material support" (Fee, *Corinthians*, 409). The principle that he seems to underscore is that the labour should enjoy the products of his labour. He stresses that he had a right to be supported by the Corinthian church. The church was obligated to support those who had laboured among them. To make his argument more specific, Paul emphatically challenges the Corinthians to place more weight on the message

which he had preached along with the other “founders” of the church. “They [the Corinthians] are the soil which has benefited by the seed scattered with so much labour”, from which the wages would originate (Godet, 446). He is emphasizing that “what the apostle gave was incalculable in its richness, what he might have claimed, but never took, was a trivial advantage” (Robertson and Plummer, *Corinthians*, 185). Paul had a right to get his support from the Corinthian church just like other workers who came to Corinth after him.

Paul proceeds on to vindicate the right of his apostleship by calling upon the Corinthians “to look no further than the Jewish temple to see the same principle in daily operation” (Prior, 155). He uses the example of temple servants. He says that, “those who are employed in [the temple] and especially those who minister at the altar, get their share in the sacrificial flesh or cereal and so have the food supplied from the altar (cf. Numbers 18:8ff)” (Bruce, 85). Using the same principle, “the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel” (v.14). Though not directly quoting from the Lord, it is probable that Paul has in mind the sayings of Jesus in Matthew 10:10 and Luke 10:7. This “command” is not given to the preachers, but, as indicated by the dative, it is to their favour. Thus, “Paul

spells out an extremely powerful case for claiming all his personal rights, not merely as a Christian, but as an apostle” (Prior, 156). The gospel minister has a right to be supported by the church in which he is ministering. Paul authenticates this idea by looking at “reason and common experience; the Old Testament; universal religious practice; the teaching of Jesus Himself; all [of which] support the custom by which apostles (and other ministers) are maintained at the expense of the church which is built up by the ministry” (Barrett, *Corinthians*, 208).

It is evident that Paul in the passage argues that “the labourer is worth his wages” (cf. Luke 10:7; 1 Timothy 5:18). In conclusion, Abogunrin correctly observes that:

while complete devotion is required of the ministers and servants of God, it is wrong to take for granted that all their service to God must be voluntary and unrewarded. It must be remembered that the most dedicated ministers are still human. They have to eat; be clothed; they need good housing and things that will make life comfortable for them and they need support, encouragement and backing in their efforts. It is wrong, neither fair nor charitable to underpay

ministers on the pretext that they must not be interested in earthly things and because their reward is in heaven. A Church of avaricious, ungrateful members can never be a source of inspiration to its minister. Rather than 'spoiling the market', Paul strongly defends those who are supported by the Church. Christians owe their spiritual leaders who sow among them spiritual seed part of their material wealth (Abogunrin, 98-99).

We note that Paul in this passage does not simply argue for the remuneration of one's work. On the contrary, one gets a compensation from his work "in the sense that one receives a share of that which one does [cf. vv. 10, 12]. One is not simply rewarded with an external reward. There is instead an intrinsic connection between one's activity and one's recompense" (Nasuti, 250). We also derive the concept of pastoral support from the life and the practice of the early church.

The Teaching and Practice of the Early Church

The obligation of the church to support the pastoral ministry is not only derived from this passage but also from the life of the early church beginning with the ministry of Jesus Himself. Jesus' needs

together with those of the Apostles (his disciples) were met by the women who followed him (Luke 8:2-3). These women followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs (cf. Mark 15:40-41; Matthew 27:55). It is in line with Jesus' teaching, when he sent out the seventy-two on a preaching mission that, "the worker deserved his wages" (Luke 10:7). This concept seems to have dominated the life of the early church. The Apostles not only expected to live by their preaching ministry but also taught the church to support those who laboured among them.

The Teaching of Galatians 6:6

Another relevant passage is Galatians 6:6. Paul admonishes the believers to share all good things, including material things, with those who have given them instructions on spiritual matters (Hendriksen, 236). This verse has raised some questions among many biblical scholars. The issue is whether it has any connection with what precedes or it stands as an isolated statement or whether it introduces the next section (Guthrie, 145). The construction here clearly shows that verse 6 is not independent since there is a connecting "but" at the beginning of the verse. This indicates that this verse logically follows verse 5 (Betz, 304). Not only does this verse find placement in the preceding verses but also has further explanation in the following verses

(v. 7ff). This explanation given by Paul (vv. 7-9) adds more weight to the believer's responsibility "to shoulder the financial support of the Pastors-teachers in the church" (Campbell, 610). Paul argues that depending on where he sows, each person decided what his harvest will be. Sowing in the flesh provides fading harvest while using funds to support the ministry, thus sowing in the spirit, produces a harvest that will last eternally. Paul continues to urge the Galatians not to lose heart or be discouraged because the harvest is delayed. He nevertheless encourages them to be patient since the harvest will surely come in God's appointed time, both here below in part and more fully "at the judgment seat of Christ" in the next life (Campbell, 610). Thus Galatians 6:6 fits within the context of pastoral support. Campbell points out that, "though a broader application the principle is legitimate, it seems clear that Paul was dealing primarily with the question of financial support of Christian workers in the Galatian churches" (Campbell, 610). With this close connection between verse 6 and the preceding verses, Paul emphasizes that each man should bear his own burden, and at the same time, share the responsibilities of his teachers (Guthrie, 145). The one being instructed in the word should have partnership with the

instructor. This sharing includes the financial support (Guthrie, 145).

Paul is saying that, "the labourer deserves his wages". Since "the teacher relieves the ignorance of the pupil; the pupil should relieve the teacher of concern for his subsistence" (Bruce, 263). In other passages dealing with "pastoral support", Paul emphasizes the right of the preacher or teacher to claim his support. In this passage he puts it to the believers that it is their duty to provide materially for their teachers (Bruce, 263). This clearly outlines the scriptural teaching on the obligation of the church to support those who have given their lives to preach and teach the word. As Lightfoot correctly observes, "the obligation of the hearers of the word to support the ministers of the word is again and again insisted upon by St. Paul, though he seldom asserted his own claims" (Lightfoot, 218). Paul freely chose to preach without claiming any material or financial support. He nevertheless asserted strongly that the ministers of the Gospel should be supported by the gospel (Bruce, 263). It is worth noting that the Galatian church was obligated to support the "pastors" in all things. It is the responsibility of those being taught to seek the welfare of their teachers. They must provide the teachers with the necessities of life. Paul clearly points this out in saying that anyone who receives instructions in

the word must share all good things with his instructor. This sharing provides for him eternal life, since he has sown in the spirit by supporting a spiritual endeavour.

The Teaching of 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13

Paul not only expected the church to support its ministers but also to maintain a good working relationship. The Church should do this by having the right attitude toward the ministers (1Thess.5:12,13). We need to note with Howard Marshall that honour and respect given to individuals in the New Testament perspective is not given by virtue of their personality or status but “on the basis of the spiritual task to which they are called” (Marshall, 149). The pastors are servants who do not need to seek for personal glory, but are entitled to it because of the nature of their work (Marshall, 149). As Leon Morris observes, the church at Thessalonica might have been encountering a prevailing restlessness in which it failed to receive with respect those that had authority over them. Paul, therefore addressed the church urging them to respect their leaders in a proper manner (Morris, 97-98). Paul admonished the church to “respect” the leaders (v.12) and to “esteem” them (v.13). The leaders who should get this respect and esteem are “them that labour among you, and are over you in

the Lord, and admonish you”. Paul stresses that the church should not only appreciate the true worth of the spiritual leaders but should also place them in their rightful position. This is because they have “toiled till they [have become] weary in the service of the church” (Morris, 165). The labour that the church leaders are involved in is so broad and includes the various types of duties in the church that pertain to leadership and admonition (Hiebert, 232). These leaders might have been giving voluntary services to the Church, they might have been official leaders or office bearers (Moore, 80). Whether they were officially assigned in their labour or served voluntarily, Paul calls upon the church to respect them.

Not only does he require the church to respect them but also to esteem them. Paul wants the church leaders to be loved “and not thought of simply as the cold voice of authority” (Morris, 167). He emphasizes that the church is to esteem their rulers in love for their work’s sake and not on their personalities. This is because, “the church cannot be expected to do its work effectively if the leaders are not being loyally supported by their fellows” (Morris, 167). The term “esteem” has the general meaning of “to think”, “consider”, “regard” or “to give careful and deliberate consideration to something or someone” (Hiebert, 233).

This whole phrase is therefore a strong plea by Paul for the spiritual leaders to be highly regarded. They are to be so regarded because of the work that they are performing. The thought behind the respect is that the teachers “can never do their best work when they are subject to carping criticism from those who should be their followers” (Morris, 99).

Having analyzed this admonition of Paul to the Thessalonian church, we note that he is not urging for any form of financial support. On the contrary, he is calling for the due respect and honour that the spiritual leaders deserve. This will not only imply a good working relationship between the teacher and the “students” but will also enhance mutual support that the teachers ought to receive. Unless and until the spiritual leaders’ task is given the due recognition, even the support that they deserve, both material and financial, will not be given as it should. It is essential that Paul gave this instruction to the church so that it can see the sense of responsibility springing from the respect and honour owed the pastor.

The Teaching of 1 Timothy 5:17,18

In this passage Paul teaches that spiritual leaders are to receive double honour. The ‘elders’ are not only to be properly honoured but also properly

paid. Paul says that “the elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honour” (1 Timothy 5:17). This verse can only be understood in view of verse 18 which begins with the preposition ‘for’ which implies that what follows will explain or give support for the contention of verse 17 (Fee, 1 Timothy, 129). These two verses form a clear unit “telling Timothy and the church that the elders responsible for preaching and teaching are to receive honour, because scripture supports it” (Fee, 1 Timothy, 128).

Paul in essence says that those elders who rule well are worthy of double honour. These are the ones whose function is to superintend the congregation in the local church. They direct the affairs of the church well. They are tirelessly involved in the preaching and teaching of the word. They have devoted their time essentially for church ministry (Kent, 174). In this passage, the labourer is portrayed as toiling and growing weary in preaching and teaching the word. This labour must not be overlooked or minimized but should receive double reward, honorarium or salary. The double honour that Paul claims here is for those spiritual leaders who work hard in preaching and teaching the word. Different authors have given this passage various interpretations. It is worth noting that, the double honour

implied by Paul here is for those elders whose labour is to direct the affairs of the church well, especially in teaching and preaching. As Hendriksen correctly observes,

an elder deserves to be honoured; particularly if his labor excels in quality. This honor is due especially to those who labor in preaching and teaching. And this implies, of course, that whenever it is necessary (and it would be necessary especially in the case of the “minister”) the work should also be rewarded in a material way. A man who spends all his time and effort in kingdom-work (a “minister”) certainly deserves “a good salary” (Hendriksen, 180).

In making this claim for pastoral or ministerial support more emphatic, Paul in verse 18 brings in view the Deuteronomic law. The argument he raises here, as he does in 1 Cor.9, has the same interpretation. A.E. Harvey notes that “we must assume [that Deut.25:4] had already become a standard scriptural proof-text for use whenever the matter of the payment of ministers was raised. And that is to say, Scripture also says - ‘The workman is worthy of his hire’ (Harvey, 212). The usage in the OT context does not have the implication given here. But, it is

worth noting that this Deuteronomic passage about oxen was “generally accepted [in the early church] as relevant to the payment of ministers” (Harvey, 212). In giving the nation Israel various laws upon which to lead a harmonious life within the society, God affixes the law concerning oxen. The oxen were used to tread or thread grains upon harvesting and this they would do all day long. It would appear inhuman to have the oxen work while muzzled such that they would not be able to eat anything at all while they work. The same principle applies in the African context where animals are used to provide labour. The amount of work that they do and the time they spend doing it is enormous compared to the few hours that they are let loose to feed on the “dry grass fields”. It is essential therefore that God gave the law for men to have concern for these animals which were so useful to them. In the same way, it would be illogical to expect a labourer to work without getting sufficient support for his sustenance from his labour. Likewise, the gospel minister who works tirelessly yet the church fails to support him as he deserves will inevitably lose his zeal for work. It is with this respect that Paul, quoting the Scripture as well as the words of Jesus in Luke 10:7, emphasizes that “the gospel minister (worker) deserves his wages”. Jesus’

giving of this command depicts clearly the NT understanding of the need for pastoral support. This scriptural saying is open to a wider application. It can be applied, not only to “the general matters of the remuneration of ministers in the church, but to the quite specific question of how much they should be paid” (Harvey, 212). A wage is the remuneration that a labour receives in return for services rendered. here, we find Paul “[reiterating] a point made elsewhere that those who give leadership to the community in the ministry of the word should be maintained by the community . . .” (Fee, 1 Timothy, 129).

It is therefore evident that Paul’s emphasis in this passage is to have the ‘Pastor’ receive his pay from the church in which he has given his entire life to minister. As Barclay points out: “A man’s reward must always be proportioned to a man’s toil . . . It is those [pastors] who toil in preaching and teaching who are honoured.” (Barclay, 134).

Concluding Summary of the Passages

In these passages we note that the early church’s teaching and practice indicates that the church was fully responsible to honour and provide for the maintenance of those who gave their lives to labour in the church on a day to day basis. It was an obligation that the church had

which came as a command from the Lord. The church therefore has the responsibility to adequately support the pastors who labour among them, whether they demand the pay or not.

There is scriptural proof from the teachings of Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:7-14 that pastoral ministry should be supported by the church. The teaching and practice of the early church as seen in Galatians 6:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13 and 1 Timothy 5:17,18 has the same emphasis. In view of these teachings, it is necessary to draw some applicational guidelines for pastoral support in the Africa Inland Church of Nyandarua.

Applicational guidelines

The Kikuyu people of the central province of Kenya had a song they used to sing during the colonial days as they worked in the plantations of their white masters. The message of the song was directed to the white employer. He was told that “the work is the stomach” and failure to satisfy their hunger meant they would relax in their labour. This analogy clearly indicates that if labour is to be fruitful, then the labourer’s needs should and must be sufficiently met. This will motivate him so that he can work hard and joyfully. Likewise, the pastor should receive full financial support from the local church in which he is ministering. It is the responsibility of the believers to maintain the pastor

adequately in view of his ministry among them.

Looking at the biblical passages that have already been discussed, it was noted that the pastor has a right to be supported by the church. He has given his life for the service of the church and the church is his "labour-field". If "the labourer is worthy of his wages" and the pastor is labouring in the church, then it logically follows that it is his right to receive his wages from that very church. Just as a soldier cannot serve in the army at his own expense, so also the pastor cannot minister in a local church without being supported by the church. The support that the church must give the pastor is not only monetary but can also include the supply of other essential commodities like clothing, house equipment, foodstuffs, etc., as he may have need. It is worth bearing in mind that the pastor is a human being who, like any other worker, expects and hopes that his toil is not in vain. His expectation is that the labour will at least provide for him to lead a comfortable life for it is in order that the labourer live by his labour. This expectation should give the pastor encouragement to work hard for the ministry by giving all of his time to it. The pastor is therefore full-time and should earn his living from his pastoral work.

It is vital that the church recognizes the biblical obligation laid upon it to support the pastors. As Paul correctly asserts, "it is written in the law of Moses." The responsibility laid upon the shoulders of the church to support the pastors in view of their pastoral labour has its roots in God himself. No labourer should Labour in vain. As it was in the temple, the priests received their food supplies from the offerings of the temple. They did not have to go elsewhere in search of their sustenance but derived it from the very services that they were rendering before the Lord. The priests got their food from the temple and this helps expound the command that the oxen should not be muzzled while it is treading out the grain. The pastors likewise are to eat and comfortably live by the pastoral duties that they are offering. The church should therefore not withhold from the pastors or neglect to give them their rightful earnings (wages) from the church. On the contrary, it should encourage the pastor by meeting all his needs.

More forceful is the fact that "the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel" (1 Cor.9:14). It is the Lord's command that the church take the obligation to support the pastors seriously. It must seek to effect this obligation since it is imperative that

the pastors must be supported by the church. Pastoral support does not depend on the willingness of the church but is mandatory. This would erase the thought that most believers tend to have that the sustenance of the pastors is by faith and thus they (pastors) should not demand or claim to get any form of financial support if they have truly been called into the ministry. The church needs to realize that the pastor is not a beggar and when supporting him by way of providing for his needs, whether financially or materially, the church is not doing him any favour at all! Rather, the church is meeting the demand that the Lord, who is the head, has spoken. The authority for pastoral support by the church comes from the Lord. It is worth pointing out that the support that the church should give the pastor is not to be in part but in full. This implies that the support given to the pastor should be sufficient to meet his needs and those of his family without him having to look for outside jobs. Along with this, the church should note that the pastor is not a hireling to be tossed hither and thither just because he is getting his support from the church. He is worth the respect and honour from the church in which he is ministering. The church should give this honour, not because of the personality of the individual, but because of the nature of the work that he does. The church must

seek to maintain a good healthy relationship with the pastor so that he can be able to perform his duties well. In essence, they should not only give him financial support but also mutual support because of their love for him and for his work.

Apart from the fact that the church has an obligation to support the pastor financially, there is also the admonition given by Paul to the church. This has to do with sharing all good things with him. This indicates that the church should have at heart the welfare of the pastor and seek to give him all the necessary co-operation, support, and motivation, so that he can administer his duties with joy and satisfaction. The church will also enjoy his ministry. The fact that the church is to share all good things with the pastor indicates that the obligation for pastoral support is more than just the money that the pastor gets as his salary. On the other hand, the pastor who deserves support is the one who has given his full time for the ministry. Much as the pastor has the right to be supported by the church, he also has an obligation to serve the church well. He must have the welfare of the church at heart and seek every opportunity to render services to the church. This he should not do because of the hope of the support he is to receive, but in view of his calling and the responsibility that the Lord has

bestowed upon him to feed the flock. His first priority should be the ministry that the Lord has called him into.

In view of what has been observed above, we can draw out the following:

1. *The Church has an obligation to support the pastor.* This obligation comes from the Lord and the church should seek to fulfill it. The Lord commands that “those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel” (1 Cor.9:14).
2. *As a dedicated servant of the Lord who has yielded his life and time to serve in the church, the pastor has a right to be adequately supported by the church.* The church is his labour field and he should eat from it.
3. *The church must give the pastor the honour and respect due him because of the nature of his work. It should share all good things with him.*
4. *The pastor who deserves support from the church should be hard working.* He must “direct the affairs of the church well”. He must feed the flock by way of preaching and teaching the whole counsel of God.

Specific Applications

Having considered all these necessary points of application for the church regarding the support of pastors, it is essential that the Africa Inland Churches of Nyandarua reexamine their understanding and practice of pastoral support. A vast majority of the

pastors serving here have at least five or more local churches in which they minister individually. The amount of work that the pastor is expected to do is so much yet the financial support given is so little. As a result, they have to look for other means of income to meet their needs. These supplementary jobs cost the pastor his precious time of ministry. If the church expects to be served by the pastors more efficiently, then it must see as its obligation, the need to meet all his needs. By clearly understanding the scriptural mandate that “the labourer is worthy of his wages”, the church can utilize the pastor’s capabilities and thus enhance more spiritual growth.

As noted above, the churches in Nyandarua need to realize that the support that they are obligated to give the pastors does not necessarily have to be financial. Since most church members are farmers while others are businessmen, they can supply the pastor with the items (possessions and crops) that they have. This will help meet some of the needs of the pastor. This can be done privately or publicly. Church members can pledge so as to avoid duplication of commodities. The church also needs to improve on their offerings especially on tithing, which forms part of the pastor’s salary. The church gives so little that it fails to meet its bills save the amount dedicated for the pastor’s

salary. If the church members are faithful in their tithing, then the problem of meeting the needs of the pastor will not arise.

The Nyandarua believers also need to realize that they owe their pastor respect and honour in view of his duties among them. They need to consider him with high regard and therefore they should take seriously his welfare. In their support of the pastor, they should do it generously and with joy as unto the Lord. As Christians, they should be governed and guided by the principle of love for the other before self. They should consider the rising cost of living. As Robins points out, "Like everyone else, ministers and their families are concerned about the inflationary erosion for their income" (Robins, 36). Due to rising rate of inflation, the church should always review the pastor's salary. This will ensure that the pastor does not receive less support while the demand of his expenditure is higher.

In an attempt to meet the needs of the pastors adequately, the churches in Nyandarua need to consider the size of the pastor's family and the amount that he has to spend in paying his children's school fees. This will help determine the pastors need so that he gets the support that he needs. In order to ease this work, the church should appoint a pastoral support committee. This committee will act as the church's

advisor on what amount the church needs to give the pastor. Each member of the church needs to commit himself or herself to support the pastor. The committee should organize a commitment program and "let persons make the type of commitment which is most relevant to them." The committee should devise commitment forms and "leave a lot of open space for [the people] to frame the obligation that they are willing to make" (Rieke, 12).

On the other hand, the pastors need to realize that the church looks upon them for spiritual nourishment and thus they must dedicate themselves to this wholeheartedly. The church can at times lose the zeal to maintain the pastor if they see a lack of dedication on his part. This is to say that the pastor who deserves "double honour" is the one who ministers well. If the pastors take their duties seriously and work without being money-minded then the Lord will move the church to meet their financial needs. This works with the principle that a hard-working labourer receives the best out of his labour. If the pastor has in mind that he is working because he has been called by the Lord, then he will have a better perspective of his work. Whereas he is to receive his pay here and now, more treasure awaits him in the life to come. This attitude will give him more

determination and satisfaction in spite of the demands lying before him.

In view of these considerations, the following should be pointed out:

1. *The church should consider seriously the welfare of the pastor.* The amount given to the pastor by the church should be sufficient enough to meet his needs in consonant with the living standards of his church members.
2. *If the church expects the pastor to minister well, then it (the church) must support him adequately.* This will help prevent him from getting outside jobs to supplement his living.
3. *The support given the pastor can also be material in kind.* Farmers for example can supply the pastor with the necessary foodstuffs that he needs.
4. *The pastor should take his duties or services more seriously by devoting most of his time to the ministry.*
5. *In order to help ease the work of supporting the pastor the churches in Nyandarua should consider appointing a pastoral support committee.*

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has shown that the church has an obligation to support the pastor. This responsibility is instituted by God and the church should take heed in fulfilling its duty toward the pastor. The churches in Nyandarua should therefore consider the issue of pastoral support more seriously. They should re-examine their commitment to

support these spiritual leaders without whom the church would die spiritually. The demands for the church to support the pastor comes from the Lord as found in the words of Jesus which were propagated and practiced by the early church. The modern church should and must devise its pattern of life from the scripture. If the idea of supporting the pastoral ministry is scriptural, then the church has no alternative but to fulfill its duty to support those men who have given their lives for the ministry.

Works Cited

- Abogunrin, Samuel Oyinloye. *The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians*. Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1988.
- Barclay, William. *The Letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960.
- Barrett, C.K. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1968.
- Baur, Walter. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Translated and adopted by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich. 2nd ed., revised and augmented by F. Wilbur Gingrich and

- Fredrick W. Danker.
Chicago: The University of
Chicago Press, 1979.
- Betz, Hans Dieter. *A Commentary on
Paul's Letter to the Churches
in Galatia*. Philadelphia:
Fortress Press, 1979.
- Bruce, F.F. *1 and 2 Corinthians*.
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans
Publishing Co., 1971.
- _____. *The Epistle to the
Galatians*. Grand Rapids:
Eerdmans Publishing Co.,
1982.
- Campbell, Donald. "Galatians". *The
Bible Knowledge Commentary*.
Edited by John Walvoord and
Roy Zuck. Wheaton: Victor
press, 1983.
- Conzelmann, Hans. *A Commentary on
the First Epistle to the
Corinthians*. Philadelphia:
Fortress Press, 1975.
- Ellingworth, Paul and Hatton, Howard.
*A Translator's Handbook on
Paul's Letter to the
Corinthians*. London: United
Bible Societies, 1966.
- Fee, Gordon. *The First Epistle to the
Corinthians*. Grand Rapids:
Eerdmans Publishing Co.,
1987.
- _____. *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*.
Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson
Publishers, 1984.
- Gilmore, S.M. "Corinthians", *IBD*
1:684-692.
- Godet, Frederic Louis. *Commentary on
First Corinthians*. Grand
Rapids: Kregel Publications,
1977.
- Guthrie, Donald. *The Pastoral
Epistles: An Introduction and
Commentary*. Leicester,
England: Inter-Varsity Press,
1959.
- Hanson, A.T. *The Pastoral Epistles*.
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans
Publishing Co., 1982.
- Hargreaves, John. *A Guide to 1
Corinthians*. London: SPCK,
1978.
- Harvey, A.E. "The Workman is Worthy
of His Hire", *Novum
Testamentum*. 24:3(1982):
209-221.
- Hendriksen, William. *Exposition of the
Pastoral Epistles*. Grand
Rapids: Baker Book House,
1957.
- _____. *New Testament
Commentary*. Grand Rapids:
Baker Book House, 1957.
- Henry, Matthew. "An Exposition with
Practical Observations of the
First Epistle of St. Paul to the
Corinthians", *Matthew Henry
Commentary*. USA: Fleming
Revell Co., n.d.
- Hiebert, D. Edmond. *The Thessalonian
Epistles: A Call to Readiness*.

- Chicago: Moody Press, 1971.
- Kent, Homer. *The Pastoral Epistles: Studies in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1982.
- Lamont, R.J. "What to Pay Your Pastor", *Christian Herald* 107 (1984): 51-54.
- Lightfoot, J.B. *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1957.
- Mare, Harold W. "1 Corinthians", *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Vol. 10. Edited by Frank Gaebelin. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976.
- Marshall, I. Howard. *1 and 2 Thessalonians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1983.
- Moore, A.L. *1 and 2 Thessalonians*. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1969.
- Morris, Leon. *The Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1958.
- _____. *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1958.
- Nasuti, H.P. "The Woes of the Prophets and the Rights of the Apostle: The Internal Dynamic of I Corinthians 9", *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 50:2 (1988): 246-264.
- Prior, David. *The Message of 1 Corinthians*. Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1985.
- Rieke, Thomas C. "A New Focus", *The Clergy Journal* 66:8 (1990):12-13.
- Robbins, Paul D. "Clergy Compensation: A Survey of Leadership Readers", *Leadership*. 2:2 (1981):35-45.
- Robertson, Archibald and Plummer, Alfred. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1919.