

Pastors Being Paid

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Bible Text: 1 Corinthians 9; 1 Timothy 5

Preached on: Sunday, January 26, 2014

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Go to Hebrews chapter 10 and we're going to come right back to 1 Corinthians 9. Flip over to Hebrews chapter 10 and what I want to preach about this morning is a subject that is covered in 1 Corinthians 9 there about pastors or preachers being paid for being a pastor or for preaching. Now, in Hebrews 10, we find a Scripture that talks about the importance of going to church or the importance of not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together. Look at verse 24 in Hebrews 10, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." In the Scripture, the Bible is telling us in verse 25 that there are some people who their manner is to forsake the assembly. Now, I believe that that "some" of Paul's day when the Apostle Paul was writing the book of Hebrews, has become a lot today. I think when Paul wrote this he said, "It's a matter of some to forsake the assembling of ourselves together," but notice what he said in the last phrase of verse 25, "and so much the," what? "More as you see the day approaching." So the "some" of Paul's day has become the "more" of today as we see the day approaching.

What the Bible is telling us here is that in the last days, there will be a great forsaking of the assembling of ourselves together. Otherwise why even put that last phrase in there? He could have just said, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is but exhorting one another." Period. Why did he say, "so much the more as you see the day approaching"? Because he said, "As we see the approach of," what day? "The day of Christ, the day of the Lord, that there will be more of a forsaking of the assembly and we even more need to be vigilant and exhorting one another to stay in church and not to forsake it." It's more important today to be in church than it's ever been. More important in 2014 than it was in Paul's day. Yet today we have people teaching the exact opposite. I've even heard people say recently that, "You know, when we get into the tribulation, we're not going to be going to church." No, that's the exact opposite of what the Bible teaches. They say, "Oh well, but here we are in the last days so therefore we can't find a good church to go to. There just aren't any churches that we can assemble with that are scriptural churches." That's a bunch of baloney. That's a bunch of garbage. When the Lord Jesus Christ comes back, there will be all kinds of churches, there will be all kinds of people preaching and believing the truth. The Bible tells us in Daniel 11 that in the end times yes there will be persecution, yes the antichrist will be in power but the Bible says that "they that be wise and do know their God shall be strong

and do exploits." The Bible tells us that the believers of the last days that are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord will do great things for God. I'm sick of hearing about this "Laodicean church age it. Everybody is lukewarm." No, you're lukewarm. I'm not lukewarm. Faithful Word Baptist Church is not lukewarm. We should be doing the greatest works for God in the last days.

Now is not the time to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. But there is a great movement today that's out there to try to take people out of church. I'm not talking about our church, I'm talking about any church in general. You don't have to go to Faithful Word Baptist Church to be right with God but you do have to go to church to be right with God. I'm not saying that you have to go to this church. If there's another church that you gravitate to, that is a Bible believing, Bible preaching church, then by all means, don't let the door hit you on your way out because honestly, it's up to you to decide where you go to church. It's up to you to go to the church that you believe lines up the most with Scripture. But you need to go to church. Church is not optional according to the Bible. The Bible commands us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. The Bible said that Christ died for the church. Christ gave us the church for our edification. He commands us to be a member in the body of Christ and to serve and to use our spiritual gifts in the local church to seek for the edifying of the church. He said, "Pray for spiritual gifts that you might excel to the edifying of the church."

But today there is a great movement to get out of church, to quit going to church, to not attend church. As with any other sin, the people that are guilty of this sin, they seek to justify their sin. People don't like to just admit, "I'm in sin. I'm not right with God. I'm a lame Christian." They don't like to admit that. So usually when people get involved in sin they seek to justify that sin, saying, "Well, here's my excuse." Look at Saul when Saul was confronted with his sin by Samuel. He had a lot of excuses, didn't he? So people today who forsake the assembly, they've got excuses for why they don't go to church. I'm going to deal with one of those excuses this morning. First of all, let me say this, I believe that a big reason for this last day forsaking of the assembling of ourselves together is technology. Now, I'm not against technology. I'm not against driving cars and using video cameras and cell phones and using GPS. I'm not against using the Internet. I'm not against taking advantage of technological advances but there can be dangers to these technologies. Just as they provide benefit, they could also be dangerous. Obviously, we can see a lot of the dangers of the technology of the surveillance state and the government being able to tune in and listen in on us through our cell phones and Internet connections and so forth. Obviously, there could be danger there but I think one of the big dangers of the Internet today is that people today can feel like they have all these friends and community and that they are a part of a church from their basement, wearing a wife beater, eating chips off their chest, in front of a screen at three in the morning and they think, "I am in church. I have 1,000 friends."

I saw a comic, somebody made a comic and it showed this guy's funeral and there's nobody there and they said, "We expected a bigger turnout because he had 2,000 Facebook friends." We expected a big turn out and nobody even came. Because a lot of people, they get so jacked into this cyber world that they lose touch with reality and they

forget about reality. Instead of getting their rear end into a local church like Jesus pastored, like the apostles pastored, like the Apostle Paul went around and started, local assemblies where imagine this, people were all with one accord in one place. In one place. I mean, they actually congregated. In fact, the word "church" means congregation. They congregated. They assembled. They gathered together. A physical, real life church. Today that forsaking is taking place because people are lazy. Why do people not go to church? Because they are too lazy to go to church. I mean, it's too much work just to get dressed. To go to church, you must get dressed. Please. Don't come in your pajamas. This isn't Walmart at 2 AM. You know, part of going to church is putting on some clothes. You know, you might have to run a comb through your hair. You might have to brush your teeth. You might actually have to confront a human being face-to-face and shake their hand and look them in the eye.

Today people are becoming just devoid of any kind of social skill. They are not able to interact. They are lazy. They're slovenly. They're sedentary. And technology can make that sedentary. It's convenient but it gets so convenient that we just get sloppy and slovenly and sluggardly and slothful and anything else that starts with an sl. So what I'm saying is that we don't want to be part of that group. That manner of some is a derogatory statement that the Apostle Paul is making toward these people who want to forsake church. But those who do forsake church, they need an excuse. They need a justification to justify their sin and so what they then do is they start attacking every church. Because in order to justify not going to church, you can't just attack one church because it's then like, "Okay, if you don't like that church, then go to this church." We live in the United States of America and somebody who might hear this sermon in some foreign country that is destitute of Christianity, whatever. But obviously I'm gearing my sermon toward you, O thou Phoenix, Arizona resident sitting in the United States. No matter where you move to because, you know, not everybody is going to live in Phoenix forever. No matter where you move in this country, I can pretty much guarantee you there are going to be a lot of churches wherever you go. There are churches everywhere. Any major city or even midsize town in America has a plethora of churches to choose from. True or false? Lots of churches. So in order to justify not going to church, you have to just attack all churches. You have to just write off every church and what you're doing is you're slandering every church. You have to become a false accuser which, by the way, is the number one attribute of the devil. In fact, the devil even derives his name "devil," the etymology of the word "devil" is actually "accuser." That's where that comes from. So his name is Accuser and so he is the one who accuses the brethren before God day and night. Today, there is an attack on all pastors and an attack on all legitimate bona fide churches in order for people who are in sin to justify their sin of not being a part of a local church.

Now, how do they attack the churches? What they'll do sometimes to justify their sin is they will say, "Well, you know, these institutional churches," and what they mean, translation: a real church. I'm going to explain what makes a real church biblically in a moment. But, "These institutional churches. These businesses. These typical churches." They'll attack them and they'll say, "We need to get back to the book of Acts to a house church." This is the movement that they've adopted. A house church. Translation: them sitting in their house. We need to get to a house church and what they'll do is they just

fine their other Christian buddy who doesn't want to go to a real church, who wants to complain about everything and everyone and criticize everything and everyone and find fault with everything and everyone, and them and their buddy are going to sit around and have a coffee klatch together and say, "Well, where two or three are gathered together." No, my friend, that is not the church. Sometimes I'll be out soul winning and I'll be giving somebody the Gospel and they'll be like, "We're in church right now." I'm thinking, "No, we're not. This is not a congregation. This is not an assembly." Yeah, where two or three are gathered together in Christ's name to pray, prayers will be answered. That's what the Bible teaches. It doesn't define that as a church, though.

Just to prove it, are you in Hebrews 10? Just to prove to you, go to chapter 13. Just to prove to you that we're talking about a bona fide church in chapter 10, not just getting together with your buddy at the coffee table, just to prove that to you, look at Hebrews 13. Because what they'll do is they'll say, "Well, you know, we just don't go to an institutional church but we haven't forsaken the assembly because we just do a house church." And its like them and their wife and their kids. That's not a church, that's a family. I have that too. Okay, I do that on Monday. I do that on Tuesday. I do that on Thursday, Friday and Saturday but I also go to church Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night where I congregate with a body of believers, not just my family. Then they'll say, "Well, you know, we have a couple of friends come over, whatever."

Let me just show you two signs of a fake house church. This is a fake church that's calling itself a house church. Number one: there's no qualified pastor. That's the first sign. You know, the Bible teaches that there should be elders in every church and that there should be a Bishop and that Christ ordained men of God to pastor and to lead and to rule in churches. Just to show you that in Hebrews when he said in chapter 10, "Don't forsake the assembling of yourselves," just to show you he's not talking about your little coffee group with your body, look at chapter 13, verse 7. Tell me if this sounds like the typical house church. Hebrews 13:7, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." Okay, does it sound like these people have pastors? Look at verse 17, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." Go to verse 24, "Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you." So don't we see here that there is a leader? And the Bible says that the elder, Bishop and pastor all used interchangeably in the Bible, let the elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double honor. Look, the Bible is teaching that they had a pastor. He's saying that the pastors, greet the pastors and greet all the saints. Greet the elders. Greet those that have the rule over you. Obey them that have the rule. Submit to them. Look, a church that has no pastor is not a bona fide church when you just have a couple of Christians getting together at a house for a so-called Bible study and everybody is just going to go back and forth and take turns talking about the Bible. Look, Rick Warren has already been doing that for years. Bill Hybels has already been doing that for years. The Jehovah's Witnesses have already been doing that for years. Do you think you came up with some epiphany when you figured out how to be

like a Jehovah's Witness and the Purpose Driven Church? It's already been around friends, and it's not church.

Number two: go to Acts 1. Remember, we're talking about the two marks of a fake church where people say, "Well, you know, just because I don't go to a building," and here's what they do, they try to use a straw man argument by saying, "You think church is a building." No look, church is not a building. Could church meet in a house? Yes. Who came to our church when we met at a house? Brother Jeremy, Amanda, my whole family. Anybody else here when we were in a house? Brother David would raise his hand but we sent him out to start a church in his house. But here's the difference, Brother Dave pastors a real church that meets in a house but that doesn't make it a house church. Sometimes people play games with words. A house church. Yeah, were there churches in the Bible that met in houses? Absolutely. Did Faithful Word Baptist meet in a house? Absolutely. But what was the difference between a real church that happens to be meeting in a house and a fake church of people who are quitting on the real church and just claiming, "Oh well, this is my house church. This is my cyber church. This is my Internet church." I'll tell you the difference, number one, there is no qualified pastor. You see, when we met at Faith Word Baptist Church in a house, there was a pastor that met the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus chapter 1. Number two, it's not just enough to have a qualified pastor, number two, the church has to be growing and soul winning and reaching people because if it's not reaching anybody else, then it's just a couple of buddies getting together. It's a social club. Call it what it is. Is our church a social club? No, because we're going out and reaching people. We're growing. We have visitors almost every week, constantly new people coming in. That's what makes us a real congregation, not just a couple of friends getting together.

Here's what's funny, the house church crowd, this fraud, this house church movement, this is what they say, "We're just like the book of Acts." They say, "This modern church, this corporatized church, this institutional church, this business model church, it's a modern invention. We need to get back to the book of Acts and the book of Acts was a house church." Okay, let's see how the house church crowd matches up with Acts. Look at Acts 1:13, "And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room," you see, they're in a house, "where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty)."

First of all, I can't fit 120 people in my house. Who here has a house that has the room in it that could hold 120 people? Does anybody here have a house like that with a room like that? I'm afraid to raise my hand or we're going to start meeting in my house. Does anybody have a room like that? Guess what? Neither do I? Guess what? I have nine people in my family with another tenth member on the way and my house is small. You know, I'm content with my house, it's all I need but guess what? There's no extra room in my house. I don't have an extra spare bedroom or guest room. No, we are using every

square inch of our house. We're constantly having to mount shelves and stuff up in the corners and things just to make room in our house. We're not bringing 120 people into my house. It's not going to happen.

Well, let's not stop there. Look at chapter 2, verse 41, because let's say, well, okay, I've got a big house and I've got 120 people that can fit in my house. Okay, here's the problem, we're growing. So then in chapter 2, verse 41, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." You know, this reminds me of every house church I've ever seen. Doesn't that remind you too of the typical house churches? They are constantly winning 3,000 people to the Lord. Wrong. They are not. Do you know what they're doing? They're winning nobody to the Lord. Do you know what? Our church that has about 100 people in it is reaching over 1,000 people for the Lord every year, knocking on doors, winning people to Christ. We've knocked at the doors of over a million people in this area, the Phoenix area. Okay, how did we do it? Do you know how we did it? By having 100 people. You can't put 100 people in my house. Now look, we started in a house but guess what? The church is growing and thriving and it's going to get out of the house just because of space. Look, did the church in the book of Acts just stay at 120 people from chapter 1 to chapter 28? No, they multiplied, they grew and then they started other churches and spread out and then those churches grew and on and on. Look, this house church movement is a fraud. It's not a growing, thriving, soul winning church. It's a dead, stagnant group of people who are not right with God, not qualified to do anything. Just getting together and moaning and whining about what's wrong with every other church. Wrong. It's sin.

By the way, it's of the devil. The devil would love nothing more than to get saved, born again children of God out of church. Why? Because when you're not in church, you're not going to do as much for God. I mean look, do you think that I won a thousand some people to the Lord last year because I didn't but our church did. Do you know what? If we were to disband and split up and all go our separate ways, do you think we'd have that many people saved? Absolutely not. Because we are a church that gets together, we do the preaching, we organize, we go out and we knock on the doors to get people saved. It's the scriptural model. This house church model is a fraud.

So that's what they'll do, they'll attack the local church. Now let me give you the main attack. Go to 1 Corinthians 9. This is one of the many attacks because think about it, what did I just point out as the two biggest problems with these phony, fake house churches? Number one: they don't have a qualified pastor. Number two: they are not growing, they're not soul winning. Those are the two biggest problems. By the way, those two things go hand-in-hand because it takes a leader to rally the troops and get people going. So what we see is that if those are the two things that expose them, that's two of the things that they're going to attack in this false movement. So one of the things that they'll do is they are going to level their attack on the pastor and say, "Well, it's not even biblical to have a pastor." Remember, they have to justify their sin. They're in a church that has no pastor which is not scriptural so they have to justify that by saying, "Well, it's not even biblical to have a pastor." Here's what they'll say, "There were always multiple elders in

the church. Never one pastor." Yeah right, when you're running 8,000, you have more than one elder. When you're running 80, probably not. I've heard people say, "It's not a scriptural church unless you have seven deacons." Well, do you know why they have seven deacons, because they're running 10,000, because they're running 15,000. Our church is a great church filled with great people but you're not going to find seven people in this church that meet the qualifications for being a deacon and you're not going to find 12 people in the church to be a Bishop, to have your board of elders and your seven deacons. If you have 19 people right now that can meet up to the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, if so, let's go and start 18 other churches. It's not happening. Okay, does our church have the money to pay 19 people? You see, this is where it comes in and that was all introduction. Buckle your seat built. No, I'm not going to preach to you longer or anything, don't get worried, but that was all introduction. Let me say this, this is where this comes in of, "Well, pastors aren't supposed to be paid anyway." Because that's the only way that they can get multiple pastors in that living room. Are you listening? How are you going to get multiple pastors into a living room? By having them all unpaid. So part of this all goes together of saying, "Well, these pastors, yeah every pastor in my town, he gets paid so he is a hireling and he's in it for the filthy lucre's sake." And so this group that wants to attack churches, they can attack 99% of churches by saying the pastor shouldn't be paid. That's not right.

Again, this is isn't unique to them. Mormonism has taught this for years and I've been confronted with this out soul winning and maybe you have too, those of you who go soul winning in Mormon country. You'll be out soul winning and they'll say, "Well, does your pastor get paid? That's why he preaches lies because he's getting paid. That's why he's lying to you." That's what the Mormons will tell you when you're out soul winning because did you know this? Mormonism has no paid clergy and they brag about that. Okay, here's the thing, does Mormonism really have no paid clergy? Here's the thing, all the higher ups are getting paid. In fact, this is from a newspaper in 1988 that said that the home of the president of the Mormon church was valued in 1988 at \$1.2 million and it was provided by the church free of charge for him as part of his modest living expenses. So his modest living expense, he's not getting paid but he does get a modest living expense which includes a \$1.2 million condominium in 1988. So what is \$1.2 million in 1988? What would that be in 2014, 25 years later? \$3 million, 2 1/2 million dollars. Yeah, that's unpaid.

So what I'm saying is they brag about unpaid clergy. Do you know why their local bishops are getting paid? Because they do pay their lawyers, they pay their secretary, they pay the bodyguard that's around the prophet in Mormonism. They pay all kinds of janitors and they pay all kinds of landscapers. They pay all kinds of people. Do you know why their clergy, their local pastor doesn't get paid? Because he's not doing anything. Because, guess what? He doesn't write the sermon. Are you listening? The sermon is handed down from him from the guy who is living in a \$3 million mansion. The \$3 million mansion guy hands down the sermon to the local volunteer, unpaid Bishop or pastor and he gets up and just reads. Well, you know, I could do that for free too. If somebody wants to provide me something to read for 20 minutes three times a week, I'll do that for free. Piece of cake because that doesn't take any work. That doesn't take any

effort. By the way, that's what a lot of pastors are doing. Shame on them. They go to some mega-church and they buy sermons and they buy a whole series. They buy a 13 week series on grace and they just preach through it and they didn't do their own homework, they didn't do their own study.

By the way, Mormon preachers, they are not dynamic. They just get up and they just go through what's been given to them and they just blah blah blah for a couple of years and then they cycle through another guy. You know, the Amish are the same way. The Amish don't pay their pastors either. The Amish, they preach some awesome sermons. I mean, you want to talk about fire, you want to talk about the power of God, I mean, they're like Elijah and John the Baptist on steroids. Right? No, wrong. They are not. They don't have anything worth saying. They didn't do any study. In fact, the Amish discourage people from reading the Bible. They teach that the Bible is dangerous and don't read it. I'm not kidding. They teach you that we need to interpret it, I've talked to people who are ex-Amish who got saved and got out of that false religion. It's cool churning your own butter and everything but it's a false religion. Okay, that's the problem with it. It's cool being tax-free and making quilts and furniture but it's a false religion. That's the problem with it.

But what I'm trying to say is that there are people out there who teach this doctrine whether they be Mormons, Amish, whether it's just people who want to just justify not going to church and they teach a doctrine that says that pastors should not be paid. Now, let me start out by saying this: there is nothing wrong with a pastor who chooses not to be paid. There is nothing wrong with that in the world. The example of that in the Bible even though he was not a pastor, an important point, the Apostle Paul was one who preached and was a full-time servant of God. He was not paid, though. He actually made tents on the side to provide his own need. So the Apostle Paul worked with his own hands at a secular job of making tents and he did not take pay for preaching. He didn't take pay. He said, "I want to pay my own way so that I can teach people how to work hard and be a good example and I can be a person who gives a lot." So that's what the Apostle Paul did. That's why when you go to the Mormon official website, they'll quote a bunch of verses about the Apostle Paul doing that as why they don't have paid clergy. You know, they'll have all the different verses from the Apostle Paul because that's the example of that in the Bible. But what's funny about that is that whenever the Apostle Paul talks about the fact that he didn't get paid, he's always quick to point out, "I do have the right to be paid. All the other apostles are getting paid. Everybody else that is a pastor should be paid but I've chosen to forgo that."

Again, people just want to take Scripture out of context and just believe what they want to believe. But you know what? This doctrine of a pastor must be unpaid is a very unscriptural doctrine. There is so much Bible and I've got to jam it all in in the time that I've got. There is a lot of Bible. Let me say this, when I first started Faith Word Baptist Church, the first 4 1/2 years, which is a substantial amount of time, I didn't take any pay and then for a long time I was taking a part-time pay and honestly, I can stand here and honestly tell you that I planned to never take any pay because I wanted to just as much as is possible, to just basically work my job and pastor a church and do both. The reason

that I did that is not because I think it's wrong for pastors to be paid but because I had a goal and a desire to model the way and set a pattern that other preachers could follow of how to start a church without any financial support. So I wanted to show them, you know, it's possible to start a church, just work a job 40 hours, 50 hours, 60 hours, and then pastor and get the thing going and do it. Once I got into it a few years of having started a church that way and showed an example, by the way, an example that Brother Dave is following right now, by the way, an example that Roger in Sacramento, California who I trained and taught is following right now. Because these men have followed my example of saying, "Hey, it's possible to just work a job and start a church and do both. It's hard but you can do it." They're doing it and praise God, I did it. But once I got a few years into it like that, I decided, do you know what? I thought to myself, "I just want to keep doing this." I liked my job. I enjoyed working. I felt like it helped me keep my finger on the pulse of every day life that people in my church are going through. You know, they're going to work, I'm going to work. I just liked it. I enjoyed that lifestyle and I was making a lot of money. Some people might say, I'm making a lot of money, I don't need to get paid from church. At one point, I even hired an assistant just to help me with church stuff because there was just too much to do both but at the same time, I just thought, I'm just going to keep working my job. That's not the way it ended up working out for me because my business has been under attack for years now. People back in 2009 started calling all my costumers and telling them that this guy hates homosexuals, this guy is preaching hard on it. Guess what? I lost two thirds of my business just in a few days from people making those phone calls. Because these costumers, they don't like that. There is some sodomite high up in their company and so they've done that to me throughout the years. People call and they stalk me, figure out who my costumers are and call them. I only have a few costumers because I work with big corporations because I did commercial fire alarms so they would call me first. Then the IRS started persecuting me and I paid all the taxes, it was all legit. By the way, I never ended up having to pay them any money but they still harassed me and audited me and went after me. Finally I got to the point where I just couldn't handle it anymore, trying to run a business and trying to pastor a church. The church has grown. But let me says this: during that 4 1/2 years, when I was taking no pay and when I was working my own full-time job and when I never had any plans to do otherwise and I liked what I was doing, I never, never taught that it was wrong for pastors to be paid and I had people come up to me during that time and say, "Oh man, I love the fact that you work a job. My pastor this and that." I would correct them and rebuke them and say, "No, you're wrong. Your pastor has every right to be paid," and I showed them what the Bible said and I said, "I'm choosing to do this like the Apostle Paul but you are not right to criticize other good pastors who are following a biblical model of being paid."

Now, let's just read the Bible together and see what the Bible actually says, shall we? If I'm wrong, then don't believe me. If I'm wrong, start a coffee group in your house tomorrow. If I'm wrong, forsake the assembly. But I'm not wrong. Look what the Bible teaches in 1 Corinthians 9, this is Paul talking about his unpaid ministry. Look at verse 1, "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord. Mine answer to them that do examine me is this."

So Paul is coming under scrutiny. He's being attacked. He's being examined. He says, here's my answer. "Have we not power to eat and to drink?" He's saying, "Don't I have the right to eat and drink. Don't I have to eat food just like you?" He says, "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife." What is he saying there? He's saying, "Don't I have the power to get married and support a wife?" And of course, what comes with a wife? What happens when you hop in bed with your wife? What comes later? Children. Unless you are tampering with nature. So the Bible says, "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife," look at the next phrase, "as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" What's another name for Cephas? Peter. "Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?" What is he teaching there? He's saying, "Look, the other apostles," which how many apostles were there? Originally 12, they ordained 70 others so we're talking 80+ people because Barnabas was an apostle. He wasn't part of that original 12. There were over 80 apostles so what Paul is saying is, "Look, all the other apostles plus the four brothers of our Lord, the half-brothers, the children of Joseph and Mary," he said, "they're all married and they are not working secular jobs. They have forborne working, they are married." He's saying, "Are Barnabas and I just the only ones who can't get married, can't eat and drink?" What is he teaching? That the other apostles are married. Was Paul married? No. Paul was not married. By the way, that's why Paul was never a pastor because one of the qualifications for being a Bishop or an elder is that you must be the husband of one wife and that you must have faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly because you have to know how to rule your own house. Look, the Apostle Paul did not meet that criteria.

Now, he was a great man of God. He was an apostle. He was a missionary. He was greatly used by God but he is not a pastor. Was Peter the pastor of a local church? Yes. I'll prove that to you later. Was John? Yes, I'll prove that to you later. But look down at the Bible. It says, "Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?" So is Paul saying that he must work a job to be right with God in addition to preaching? No, he says, "I have the power to forbear working." And he says in the next verse, "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" He's saying, "Look, I've sown unto you spiritually," meaning, "I've taught you the word of God. I've preached unto you spiritual truth. It's not wrong for me to then receive a carnal award from you." Carnal means fleshly or a physical reward.

He says in the next verse, "If others be partakers of this power over you," referring to the other 80 apostles, referring to other Bishops and elders, "are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power." Look, he's saying, "I have the power to eat and drink. I have the power to get married and have children. I have the power to forbear working but I have not used this power." He's saying, "I've chosen not to get married. I've chosen to pay my own way by making tents." He says in verse 12, "but suffer all things, lest we

should hinder the gospel of Christ." So the Apostle Paul felt that the Gospel of Christ would be furthered better by him going to these places and working his own job than to rely on being paid by the people he's ministering to. Okay? Keep reading, "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." It's not saying that you should not make your living preaching the Gospel, right? Wrong. Look at the next verse, "But I have used none of these things." So do you see how Paul is saying, "I'm not being paid." He was being accused of being a money hungry preacher. He wasn't even being paid. Now that doesn't surprise me because back when I was not being paid, people accused me of being a money hungry preacher and I'm like, "I'm not even getting paid." Oops. Just railing accusations. Look, it says here, "But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me." He's saying, "I haven't used it and I'm not writing this to you so that you'll start doing it to me. I don't need to be paid," he said. "For it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void." Glorying, he's talking about bragging. He's saying, "You know, I want to be able to say that I haven't been paid because I want to be that example that it's possible and just show an example of hard work and giving and sacrifice."

Go to 2 Thessalonians 3 and we'll find a very similar passage. When you think about, for example, Brother Dave went and started the church in Prescott and the Bible said in 1 Corinthians 9, "Who goeth a warfare of his own charge?" I mean, do you think soldiers in the US military or in the Marine Corps... Let's ask a veteran, did you have to buy your own gun, your own helmet and your own uniform when you joined the military? "Absolutely not." Did you have to pay for your own food every day and your own lodging? "No." You had to save up, right? When you went to Iraq, you had to pay for all your lodging, your food, your equipment. "No," So as you threw a grenade, you had to pay for that, right? Because nobody goes to warfare of their own charge. Nobody pays their own way to go to warfare. Right? No, they get paid to go to war. Nothing about this.

Brother Dave when he went to go and start a church in Prescott, we didn't tell him, "Pay for everything yourself. Do it yourself. Figure it out yourself." Do you know what we did? We bought him a whole bunch of gear, kind of like our brother was outfitted when he went to war. You know, he's outfitted with equipment and gear he's going to need. We outfitted brother Dave with songbooks and Bibles and chairs and offering plate and invitations to his church. You know, everything he was going to need to go up there and fight that spiritual battle and establish that church. We didn't say, "Pay for it yourself, you lazy jerk." No, we said, "Look, you're willing to do the work, you're willing to go, you're willing to make the sacrifice, you're willing to take on a very difficult challenge, that I don't think people are lining up to do right now and we said, do you know what? We'll pay for all of that." Now, once he started the church, we cut that umbilical cord because we wanted him to be independent but as we sent him out, we furnished him liberally out of our winepress and out of our grain floor because we didn't want to send him to warfare of his own charge. We wanted to help him have the tools that he needed and not just say, "Brother Dave, pay for everything yourself and by the way, you had better work hard at your job so that you can buy a house big enough to fit 120 people, buddy."

What do these people think you're supposed to do once you outgrow the house? They're never going to have that problem. They're never going to outgrow the house. They are never going to have to think about that but those of us who actually do the work and do the preaching and do the studying and do the soul winning, we do have that problem and what do they expect us to do? "Well, you just need to get two jobs and then you can buy a house that holds 120 people and 200 people and 300 people. Well, churches shouldn't be that big." Yeah, but they should have 12 elders. What? It's stupid. It doesn't make any sense. But it's this kind of foolishness and stupidity that people who are on the Internet all day instead of reading the Bible and going to church come up with. Look, we need to get in a physical building with a man who is going to preach us the word of God. You say, "Why does it have to be a building?" Well, your house is a building and if you want to be outside, go ahead with -20 outside in Minnesota. If you want to be outside, go ahead when it's 115 in Arizona. But I'm sure the apostles had every service outside, rain or shine. It's nonsense, folks. But these people, they just want to find fault with every church because they don't go to church. I don't care if you're meeting in a tent, I don't care if you're meeting in a bathroom, I'm not kidding. I don't care if you're meeting anywhere. It's not what type of building but you need to assemble with God's people and grow and win souls and have a man of God preaching to you. It's the truth, folks. I mean, there are people in China today who are having church in a hotel room so that they can baptize people in the bathtub because of persecution. They say that at least if we do it in a hotel room, we've got a baptistery. They do it secretly in a hotel. Great. That's a scriptural church.

But when you're not having a pastor, you're not growing, you're not reaching anybody. By the way, you should outgrow the house. You should outgrow the house. If God is blessing you and multiplying you, you should outgrow that. If it's never growing, something's wrong. Now it takes a long time, don't get me wrong. Patience. It's not going to happen overnight but eventually it will grow. I mean, Brother Robert's church in Sacramento, they are moving into a building that's bigger than our building. They are growing. They are thriving. Now look, in the first year was it like that? No, the first year he was running 10 people in his house. He was in a house for the first couple of years. Now it's growing. It takes time but there is going to be growth. When you're going out and weeping, bearing precious seed, you would doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing your seed with you. It's going to grow. Our church is growing. Scriptural churches grow. They send people out to start churches. They do great things for God. They win thousands of people to the Lord. This is God's plan.

So what do we see in 2 Thessalonians 3. Look down at what the Bible says in verse 6, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." "Ah, it's just your tradition." Did you know that there are good traditions? This is an example of a good one. A tradition is something that is passed down. Well, this is passed down. Is this a good tradition? No, you want to trash it and go by an NIV. No, this is a good tradition, the King James Bible. But he says here, "withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the

tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought." What does nought mean? Nothing. He's saying, "We didn't basically take food or pay for doing no work. We did not eat anything for nought, but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you." He's saying, "Look, we labored and worked hard day and night so that we would not take any money from you. So that we would not be chargeable unto you." Look at verse 9, "Not because we have not power." So he's not saying that he didn't get paid because Jesus Christ doesn't want us to get paid. No, he said, "I didn't get paid not because I don't have power but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." Now what is he saying? In the area of Thessalonica, there was a big problem with a lot of people who didn't work. They didn't go to work. They are lazy. Working not at all. He said, "I knew that. I wanted to be an example so we worked day and night. Not because we don't have the power to just focus on preaching and serving God and just get paid but wanting to make an example for you to follow us."

Let's look at Peter. Let's get off the Apostle Paul for a moment and let's go to Peter. Go to Acts 6 and we'll talk about Peter and we're going to talk a little bit about John. Now, unlike the Apostle Paul who was not a pastor at all, isn't it funny that the poster child for being an unpaid pastor was not a pastor? Isn't that a little ironic? Now, was Peter a pastor? Yes. This is how we know that: 1 Peter 5 tells us. If you go to Acts 6, we'll go to 1 Peter 5 in a moment if we have time. In 1 Peter 5, he says, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder." Peter was an elder. Guess what John called himself in 2 John? "The elder unto the elect lady and her children whom I love in the truth." Possibly, I've wondered about this, the Bible is not clear on this, probably being written unto his wife because he's writing "unto the elect lady." I don't know who he's writing letters and what woman he's writing letters to. We know the apostles were married. Peter was married. He had a mother-in-law. The Catholic Church denied that because they wanted to say he was the first Pope but, of course, Peter clearly said that Peter's wife's mother, Peter's mother-in-law, because he was married. Paul indicates in 1 Corinthians 9 that it's only him and Barnabas that don't have wives. The other 80+ had wives. So John calls himself an elder. Peter calls himself an elder. We know that they were married and obviously people that are married, every married person in the Bible eventually had children.

So what we see here in Acts 6 is an example of the apostles not Paul, but the other apostles, the other 12 apostles including Matthias, also including Peter and John of course. It says in verse 1 of Acts 6, "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." We would use probably the word administration today but it's a similar wording. "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason," meaning it doesn't make any sense,

"that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word," and our secular jobs. Does everybody see that? Because it isn't there. If these guys are giving themselves continually to the ministry of the word and prayer, okay, how are they paying their bills? Right? Their out working? Now, what was Peter's secular job before he got in the ministry? Fishing, right? So he says, "We'll give ourselves to the word of God, prayer and fishing." Is that what it says?

In fact, go back if you would to Luke 5. When you read Acts 6, does it look like the 12 apostles were making tents? Does it look like they are fishing? Does it look like they are carpenters? Does it look like they are plumbing? No, but did they have wives and children to provide for quite? The Bible teaches yes. So what did they eat and drink? Manna from heaven? Did God rain manna from heaven on the early church leaders in Jerusalem? Or did they somehow get food and drink and money and clothing to feed and clothe themselves and their families?

Okay, what did they do continually? They said, "We don't want to leave the word of God and serve tables," but this phony house church movement wants you to believe, the Mormon church wants you to believe, the Amish want you to believe, that the pastor is to go and wait tables all day down at the local hometown buffet or whatever, right? And wait tables eight hours a day and then he can gather straw by night to make bricks. That's what they believe. I mean, that's what they're saying. But is that what the word of God taught in 1 Corinthians 9? Is that what it taught in 2 Thessalonians 3? Is that what it's teaching in Acts 6? No. What are they doing continually? Preaching, soul winning, teaching, studying, praying. They are doing spiritual things with their time. Is it wrong to do like Paul did? No, but is that what God's plan is for the majority? No. 80+ verses two? Two single guys. Two single guys, Paul and Barnabas. 80+ married with children guys doing it the other way. But we just want to home in on the exception and say, "You must be like this or I'm not going to church. Every church in my town is a fraud." No, you're a fraud. You need to get your rear end in that church but you say, "But they are wrong on this." Well, you're wrong on stuff too. You think I'm right about everything? Do you think I'm perfect because I'm not. I'm not right about every single thing. I'm right about 99% and you'd better know it but I'll tell you this, nobody is perfect. If you're looking for the perfect church, you're looking for that unicorn church, it's not out there. A few of you are laughing because of my sermon last Sunday night was all about unicorns.

Luke 5, let's see if Jesus wanted Peter to keep working that secular job. Verse 6, "And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake." Verse 7, "And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth," from henceforth means from here on out, "thou shalt catch men. And when

they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him." What did they forsake? The ship. What that they forsake? The nets. What did they forsake? Well, Matthew 4 in a previous encounter with Jesus, it said of James and John that they immediately left the ship and their father and followed him. Straightway, they left their nets and followed him. He said, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men. From henceforth you're going to catch men, Peter. You're done with this." And Peter put down that net in Luke 5 and he walked away. He left his business. He left everything behind. He forsook all and followed Jesus and he never looked back until John 21.

Go to John 21. If you remember, in John 21 this is after the resurrection of Christ. Peter is very dismayed and despondent about the fact that he had denied the Lord Jesus Christ. He went out and wept bitterly. He feels like a complete failure. He feels like a complete loser because he denied Christ three times. Jesus is trying to bring him back into the fold. If you remember, he tells the women to go and call the disciples and Peter. He wanted to make sure that Peter knew that he was still included because Peter is down. He's depressed about the fact that he failed and denied Christ three times. Look at John 21:2, "There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee," what were their names? James and John, "and two other of his disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing." Do you know what he should have been saying? "I'm going soul winning." That's what he should have been saying, right? Isn't that what he was supposed to be doing? He's going back to his old life. He's quitting. He'd been with Jesus for 3 1/2 years, he'd been a fisher of men, he forsook the net, he forsook the boat, he forsook that job and he's going back now. He's saying, "Do you know what? I'm going fishing, guys. I don't know what else to do." Do you know what he did? He took them with him. They said, "We also go with thee." By the way, when you quit on God, when you quit the church, a lot of times you'll take people with you.

He says, "They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing." So God is not blessing their works. They are going out on their own, just going fishing, out of the ministry. God doesn't bless. Then of course, skip down to verse 15. I'll just tell you quickly what happened. Jesus shows up on the shore and he says, "Children, have you any meat?" And they say no and he says for them to cast the net on the other side of the ship. They cast the net and it's just bursting with fish at Jesus' command. That's when they knew it was Jesus. You know, Peter is so excited to see Jesus that he jumps in the water and swims to him on the shore. The resurrected Christ is there but nobody really knows what to say. It's funny because at other times when they saw Jesus, remember in John 20 when they saw Jesus? When they were in the upper room, they are meeting together and they are praying, they're talking Bible. When Jesus came, they run to him, they're touching the holes in his hands, they're touching his side. They're touching him. They're talking to him. They're saying that they're glad to see him. They are feeling him. Okay, but when they see Jesus in John 21, everybody is sitting around the campfire and nobody says anything. Why? Because they've been caught with their pants down, that's why. They are embarrassed. Do you know why they're embarrassed? Because they are caught doing what they weren't supposed to be doing. Do you know how you catch somebody doing something they're not supposed to be doing? So now

they're all just sitting around the fire and nobody is saying anything. Nobody even says, "Hi Jesus." They all knew it was the Lord. Nobody wants to say anything and then what does Jesus finally say? Verse 15, they're just eating in silence. You can just picture the scene, the tension. They're all just sitting there eating and everybody is looking to Jesus and it's kind of like, "Is he mad? Is it okay? Are we alright?" "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs." Look, feeding of lambs is a different job than fishing. That's the job of a shepherd. That's a different job. He's telling him to do a different work. Now think about this, and of course he's going to ask him three times, three different ways. You know, he asked him a little differently and he answers a little differently. Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep. And it grieves Peter that he says it to him three times because what did Peter do three times? He denied Christ. So by asking Peter three times if he loves him, he's calling into question Peter's love because of his denial and it grieves him in his heart that he's asked three times, "lovest thou me?"

When we look at this, we see "lovest thou me more than these," what are the "these"? You have to ask yourself, what are the "these"? Is he saying, "Do you love me more than the other apostles?" That wouldn't really make sense because why does he need to measure his love versus the Apostle John's love which I'm sure was great? You know, why does he have to measure his love for the disciples versus his love for Jesus? You know, I think probably the "these" in my opinion is probably referring to the fish? Do you love me more than you love these? Is this what you love now, Peter? Is this what you want to do with your life? Now remember in Revelation 2 with the church at Ephesus, remember how they had lost their first love? How did they get the first love back? Do the first works. He said, you've lost your first love. He didn't say do the first love, he said do the first works. So what is Jesus' answer for Peter's lack of love? Jesus is saying, "You don't love me enough, Peter, because if you loved me you wouldn't have denied me three times. If you loved me enough." And he said, "If you love me enough, Peter, not only would you have not denied me but you wouldn't have quit on me and gone fishing, going back to your old way of life and not serve me, Peter." Number three, if you love me enough, you'd love me more than these.

How are we going to fix your love, Peter? Three times he says, "lovest thou me?" Three times he says, "Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep. Feed my sheep." He's saying, "Look, do the work that I told you to do." He said, "Peter, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. Feed the lambs. Feed the sheep. Don't go fishing." Look, do you read this and see this Scripture as teaching, "Peter, keep fishing so that you don't take a paycheck because that would be wrong. It would be wrong for you to feed your family by preaching, Peter. You need to keep fishing and feed my sheep, buddy." It's not taught in Acts 6. It's not taught in John 21. It's not taught in Luke 5. It's not taught in the Bible. Only in the deluded minds of the anti-church crowd that is of Satan. Why does Satan want people out of church? So that they don't win thousands of people to the Lord like churches do. Do you know who's making the greatest impact for Christ today? The local church. Do you know who made the greatest impact for Christ in the apostles' day? The local church. Do you know who got the most people saved in the book of Acts? The local

church. The Apostle Paul who started churches everywhere he went, who ordained elders everywhere he went.

I've got to hurry up but I just have a few more quick points to show you. Go to 1 Timothy 5:17. I'm out of time. Does anybody have a question mark in your mind right now? Is there any doubt? I mean, it's so clear. I don't even have time to go to all the Scriptures but there are people out there who beguile unstable souls with this kind of false teaching. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward." Keep your finger in 1 Timothy 5:17, don't leave it because I want you to compare two Scriptures. Go to Luke 10:7. Keep your finger in 1 Timothy 5, Luke 10. Was John an elder? Was he a pastor? Yeah, he called himself that in 2 John and 3 John. Was Peter a pastor? That's what he called himself in 1 Peter 5. Now look, are there pastors who abuse this? Of course. There are people who abuse anything. Are there pastors who get paid \$1 million a year and drive fancy cars and live in fancy houses like the Mormon prophet and they don't teach the word of God? The Bible teaches that there are preachers out there who teach things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake. Are there preachers who are in it for the money? Have you ever heard of Joel Osteen? Are there preachers who are out there for the money? Look, there are preachers who preach what people want to hear to get maximum attendance, maximum offerings, maximum wealth. I could name for you big name preachers all over the place that literally make in excess of \$1 million a year plus all the other benefits and things that they do and they preach lies. Joel Osteen, how much money do you think Joel Osteen makes? He's a multimillionaire and it's because he preaches lies. He basically just figured out exactly what people want to hear and that's what he's going to preach.

Are there people who teach things which they ought not for filthy lucre sake? Yes. Are there those who pervert judgment, take bribes and turn aside after filthy lucre as it says in 1 Samuel 8:3? Yes. There are. I heard somebody say this, "Well, just to make sure they are not covetous, let's just not pay them at all." But that's not biblical though. Quit leaning on your own understanding and read your Bible and what the Bible actually teaches. People do have a right to eat and drink and support their families. Look, here's what's funny: there are other people who have used this by taking a full time paycheck and not doing any work or doing very little work or doing part time work. And there are people out there who do very little work, they're lazy, idle people and then they're getting paid and it's like, "Well, you didn't earn that pay." But hold on a second, shouldn't we get mad at them not for being paid but rather get mad at them if they're not doing the work? Do you know what I'm saying? Look, the question is: what kind of a pastor do you want and what kind of a church do you want to go to? You can go to a church that's a do-nothing church and the pastor can do nothing and get paid nothing and then everything's great. It's all equal and fair. Look, I did a lot for the first 4 ½ years and even when I was only receiving a small amount of pay the years after that, you know, I did a lot. I was able to do a lot but, man, it was hard. I don't know if it was sustainable for a lifetime because the Apostle Paul wasn't married. He didn't have kids. And do you know what honestly? I remember those days and I was living a pretty unhealthy lifestyle. I'll just put it that way.

For the first 4 ½ years I pastored this church, for December 2005 to July 2010, I look at pictures of myself from back then and I looked a little bit like death warmed over sometimes. I remember just sleep deprivation being a way of life. I remember just flying all over the place. Working long hours. Driving 80,000 miles a year, literally 80,000 miles. Believe me, I just showed it all to the IRS. The IRS told me, "It's not humanly possible for somebody to drive this much. You're lying." I said, "Look, I'll prove it to you," so I showed him like all my credit card statements. The IRS tax auditor took all my mileage logs, he took all of my credit card statements. He put it all into a database and he said it added up to the penny but he said it doesn't look humanly possible. He said, "I'm wondering if you just gave your credit card to people and had them go and do all this." I said, "Why would I do that? It doesn't make sense." But he said, "When did you sleep?" I'm like, "Good question." I told the guy, I said, "Do you know what? My life stinks. What do you want me to say?" That's literally what I told him. I'm like, "Yeah, I know." It was horrible because this is what they would do, they would like, "Okay, you're claiming you drove from here to here to here," but then it's like, "Okay, here's where I went to Chipotle here and Chipotle here and got gas here." He said, "I figured this was how often he would need to get gas," and I had all the gas slips. Here's where I got gas in this town. Then I'm 500 miles down the road and got gas again. Got Chipotle again. Got Round Table pizza again. In and Out Burger again.

By the way, I tried to pick the healthiest food choices. At least Chipotle is partially organic and whatever but do you know what? Honestly, it was an unhealthy lifestyle because sometimes there was no Chipotle. Sometimes the last pizza just wasn't there and I had to go to some stinking gas station and just try to eat whatever I could find. I wasn't sleeping right. I was not seeing my family as much as I should have. I'm trying to be on the phone with my wife to maintain a close bond with her. I come home and the kids are like, "Who is this?" Sometimes I blew in at like 6:45 pm on a Wednesday night and I'm like Superman running to a phone booth, come out in a suit and tie, preach and then it's like, "Take me to the airport." Jump on a plane. Look, some of you gave me rides back then to the airport. You know what I'm talking about. It's true. You remember those days.

Look, it's possible but it's hard. Now, when you first start, you don't have that many people to pastor. When you've got 100 people coming and somebody is calling you every day which is great, I don't mind being a pastor and helping people out but somebody is calling on you every day. You've got more to deal with. Everything gets more complicated the more people come to the church. It gets harder and harder and then business gets harder and harder. Now I've got to support more and more kids that I have. So what I'm saying is, what am I saying? I don't know what I'm saying but Luke 10. Did I have you turn to Luke 10? Look at Luke 10, verse 7. By the way, I have no desire to be rich. Do you want to hear my motto? Do you want to hear my financial motto that I literally live by? If you've got nothing, you've got nothing to lose. That's what I told the IRS too. I'm like, "Okay, what are you going to take from me? My house that I'm upside down on? What are you going to take from me? All the stuff I don't have?" So they can't take from you what you don't have.

Anyway, look at Luke 10:7. This is talking about when they would go to various towns and villages and they would go there and preach the Gospel in those towns and villages. It says, "And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire." I don't want to go into a big dissertation on what this verse is about but just briefly, this verse is talking about how when Jesus sent them out he told them, "Don't bring any money. Don't bring a weapon. Don't bring shoes." He said, "Just wear sandals. Be shod with sandals. Bring one coat." He said, "I'm going to miraculously provide for you where every town you come to, someone will house you and feed you." Pretty cool, right? So they'd go out and preach the Gospel. They'd show up in a town and God had provided someone in every town just like he provided the widow woman to take care of Elijah, he provided a person in every town that would take them in and feed them. Not going from house to house. He's saying, "Don't make this a progressive dinner where you go to one house and eat and get gifts and drink and then go to the next house and get more money and food." He said, "Don't abuse it. Don't abuse the hospitality but I'm going to provide for your needs."

When they get back he said to them, "Did you lack anything?" They say, "No, Lord." Everything was provided. But he tells them, "Okay, but now I say unto you, take two coats. Put on shoes. Bring money in your purses," because that was a special miraculous thing. After that he tells them, "You do need to have a sword." It's the famous verse where he says, "Lord, we have two swords," and he says, "It is enough." I can't really deal with all of that. It's a whole other sermon. It's interesting. But all I want to point out about that verse is the part where it says, "The laborer is worthy of his," what? "Hire." The laborer is worthy of his hire. Compare that to 1 Timothy 5:18. Are you in both places? I want you to be in both places. It says, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." What does that mean? Laboring to study and learn the word. Laboring to teach and preach the word. That's the doctrine. It says this, "The labourer," what laborer? In the word and doctrine. "The labourer is worthy of his reward." That's the quote of the same Scripture as Luke 10:7 which says, "the labourer is worthy of his hire." So are "hire" and "reward" being used interchangeably? For the same statement, the same verse? A labourer is worthy of his hire. A labourer is worthy of his reward.

Now, let me ask you this: is it fair to attack any pastor and call him a hireling like that's a bad thing when the Bible says about pastors "the labourer is worthy of his hire"? Apparently being hired or getting a reward, what's a reward? Something that you've earned. What's hire? Something that you earned. Is there really a difference between "reward" and "hire"? No. What about a gift? Is that different? Salvation is a gift, it's not a reward, it's not hire.

So anyway, I just wanted to preach that to you because it's a doctrine that's out there that's a fraud. Beware of this house church movement that says, "Hey, we don't need to go to the institutional church with a pastor hireling down at Institutional Baptist." Do you know what it is? It's of the devil. I will not suffer it. I don't want to hear about it. I'm going to fight it. I'm going to preach against it. Do you know what? When you are going to slander and be a false accuser of men of God, "Yeah, they're in it for the money." People who

work their tails off and just get paid enough to just feed their family and just live in a house and just live a typical modest life and you're going to sit there and compare them to T. D. Jakes and compare them to Joel Osteen and compare them to these filthy, lucre, false teachers. Do you know what? You are a false accuser and that is a very big sin. Do you know what? I can't cover all the things that people will attack about churches to criticize them. If you want to find something to criticize about our church, you're going to find it. If you want to find something to criticize about me, you're going to find it. I'm not perfect. Our church is not perfect. But do you know what? God ordained the church. God gave pastors for our edification. We need to stay in God's institutional local church. You say, "I'm never coming back to this church." Then don't but go somewhere for crying out loud that's a biblical church.

Let's bow our heads and have a word of prayer.

Father, we thank you so much for your word and we thank you for the truths that are therein. We thank you that it's clear. As always, the truth is clear. There are those who want to muddy the waters and hold up the Apostle Paul like he's the only man who has ever lived. I mean, what are they going to tell us next, that pastors should be celibate because Paul was celibate? Are we going back to the Catholic Church, Mother Whore. Help us, Lord, to read the whole Scripture and not be fooled by people who take verses out of context and twist the truth. Lord, thank you for our church in spite of its flaws. Thank you for giving us a great church Faithful Word Baptist Church. Help us to make it better if there's something wrong with it. Help us to fix it but help us never to forsake your house. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.