

and yet are only willing to allow the devoted Minister a very scanty pitance for his support? It is abundantly evident from the nature of the case itself, and from the dictates of reason and common sense, as well as the command of God, that a Minister who devotes himself to his work, should receive a comfortable and liberal support as the reward of his ministerial labors, and not as the reward of farming, teaching school, peddling books, or any secular business.

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The duty rests with peculiar weight upon the members of the visible Church, from their covenant obligations. Brethren, when you united with the Church of Christ, you solemnly promised that you would stand by and assist the body by your prayers, exertions, influence, and contributions to support the Ministry and all the interests of the Church, as far as the Lord gave you ability. You solemnly pledged to do your just and equal part as a member of his visible Church. You then acknowledged a mutual relation between Minister and people. One to minister in things spiritual, according to the gift which God has given; the other to minister of their worldly substance for his support and comfort. If you neglect to fulfill your engagements, you not only violate your solemn obligations to your God andaviour, but you deceive your brethren, and let fall upon them the whole burden, of which you most solemnly promised to bear your equal part. It is practically saying that you are not particularly interested in the welfare of the Church or the Minister. And if there be a covetous heart here, it runs through every other christian duty and closes up the benevolent avenues of the soul. How many Churches complain of their destitute situation, that they are like sheep without a shepherd, and say they lament it. What does it not in too many instances arise from their covetous neglect to support the Gospel Ministry, when they have ability, but no disposition; which has brought upon them a blighting mildew, as a judgment from the great Head of the Church for their wicked covetousness? Let such make strenuous effort to support the Gospel, and God will bless their undertakings. Let Churches and religious societies restrict themselves to the same allowance as that on which many oblige their Ministers to live, and the most of the so-called feeble Churches could support a Minister comfortably. In how many instances faithful, devoted Ministers are obliged to leave their people for the want of that support which they could raise, and which they are burdened, would all do their duty. This has probably as much to do in unsettling the Ministry as all other causes. Then, if a Minister is properly supported, all reason and analogy show that the people must expect sermons, as he has little or no time to study. His mind is harrassed and perplexed, his spirits are crushed with discouragements, as he is kept poor and straightened, and what heart has he to labor? And it often adds bitterness to the cup of the devoted Minister, and renders it hard to die, to think that after serving the Church faithfully, they must leave their families poor and penniless, and homeless, when, could they have been excused from preaching the Gospel, they might have accumulated property as well as others.

How many have said let Ministers preach, be faithful, and trust in God to take care of them. But will He work miracles for their support? Will He provide them with coats of skin for clothing and manna for food? Or will He take them up to heaven to support them during the week, and let them come down to preach on Sabbath? Will He by miraculous power give them sermons as they go into the pulpit? No. He calls men of like passions and wants with their people, and makes it their duty to support them comfortably and liberally. The relation of the Church to a perishing world