

A labourer is worthy of his wages – Asaolu O. S. (asaolu@yahoo.com)

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Text – 1 Timothy 5:18

Introduction: Someone who works for another should be remunerated, let expended effort in service be properly compensated. Anything other than this is worse than slavery, for even how slaves should be well-treated was enunciated in the Old Testament. Unfortunately, in an effort to maximize profit, many employers of labour exploit their workers. To effectively have a voice and negotiate for *fair rewards and work conditions* led to the formation of Workers Union during the age of Industrial Revolution. To protect their trade, craft and income led Artisans and Skilled people to band together as Professional associations [Acts 19:23-29] The issue of workers' reward – prompt, fair recompense led to concepts such as “Minimum Wage” and the regulatory “Salaries and Wages Commission.” Pro bono service ought to be voluntary. It was in the 1990s that ASUU started the slogan [with car sticker] “*my salary cannot take me home.*” Sadly, today the salary of many workers cannot even take them to the office five days a week, it became official policy in some offices to do shifts by coming to work just thrice a week due to excessive cost of transportation and general inflation. It shows that wages have not been properly reviewed. The current strike by academics in Nigeria is poignant as I noted via a post on the church WhatsApp Group.

Thesis: God expects workers to be fairly rewarded for carrying out their duties, He specified consequences of failing to do so – Deut 24:14-15. Jere 22:13, Job 7:1-2

Luke 10:5 *And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. 6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. 7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. 8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. [Mt 10:10]*

Do not exploit anyone working for you but rather pay such on time [Lev 19:13] be it a relative or townsperson or a friend, do not take undue advantage to deny someone of rightful earnings because of personal or social relationship with you. The well-rewarded worker also should be dedicated, contented and loyal to an employer until he quits. [E.g. See how Laban offered to pay Jacob and how it transpired - Gen 29:15; 30:26-28; 31:1-7]

1 Timothy 5:17 *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. 18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward. [Deut 25:4]*

Those who labour or serve ought to be recognized and rewarded financially because they have needs to attend to. The motivation to continue and the energy to do so is directly proportional to proper compensation received.

1 Corinthians 9:7 *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? 8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? 9 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? 10 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. 11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?*

Instructors whether spiritual (preachers) or natural (teachers) should enjoy part of their reward on earth, from those whom they trained and groomed to be blessed. All professionals are groomed by teachers and lecturers!

James 5:1 *Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. 2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. 3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. 4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.*

An unrepentant exploiter could be punished with misfortunes now and divine rejection on the final day of rest.

Conclusion: Treat an employee with fairness and respect, such may become your boss or help your firm in future.

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