



Commercial Christianity

Let's be brutally honest. The yeast has spread though the batch of dough – the corrupt yeast of Commercial Christianity. Nowhere in the Holy Bible does God tell us to charge for training, meetings, Christian merchandise or discipleship. Jesus Christ is not a franchise. How do you put a price on the revelation and understanding that was given to you from His Holy Spirit? Why are we charging for something that God has given us freely? Holy Spirit anointing and power, revelation and understanding of the Kingdom of Heaven has been given to us by God for the equipping and perfecting of God's people. It is not to be

used for personal profit.

And [His gifts to the church were varied and] He Himself appointed some as apostles [special messengers, representatives], some as prophets [who speak a new message from God to the people], some as evangelists [who spread the good news of salvation], and some as pastors and teachers [to shepherd and guide and instruct], [and He did this] to fully equip and perfect the saints (God's people) for works of service, to build up the body of Christ [the church]; until we all reach oneness in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, [growing spiritually] to become a mature believer, reaching to the measure of the fullness of Christ [manifesting His spiritual completeness and exercising our spiritual gifts in unity]. So that we are no longer children [spiritually immature], tossed back and forth [like ships on a stormy sea] and carried about by every wind of [shifting] doctrine, by the cunning and trickery of [unscrupulous] men, by the deceitful scheming of people ready to do anything [for personal profit]. But speaking the truth in love [in all things--both our speech and our lives expressing His truth], let us grow up in all things into Him [following His example] who is the Head--Christ. From Him the whole body [the church, in all its various parts], joined and knitted firmly together by what every joint supplies, when each part is working properly, causes the body to grow and mature, building itself up in [unselfish] love. Ephesians 4:11-16

Luke 10:7, lets read it. *Stay there, eating and drinking **whatever THEY GIVE YOU**, for the worker **deserves** his wages. Do not move around from house to house.*

Two things stand out about this scripture.

- Number one is the words **whatever they give you**. Giving is biblical, charging payment for a service or product in God's name is not.



- The second standout in this scripture is the words that are often recited as a reason for charging for Christian merchandise or discipleship training – the worker deserves his wages. Let's really look at this - it says **deserves NOT demands**. To charge means to demand (an amount) as a price from someone for a service rendered or goods supplied. Giving is different from charging. Additionally, this is said in the same sentence as giving – whatever they give you. Have you studied this scripture with the Holy Spirit and asked him to reveal the truth of what He is saying to us?

The worker deserves his wages through giving. God supplies all our needs (Philippians 4:19). God does not tell us to demand payment in exchange for what He has freely given us. Demanding a cost for a product is secular which is the marketplace God is talking about in *Matthew 21:12-14*. What do you have that you did not receive?

Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.' " Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.

After Jesus cleared the temple of these 'thieves' who were buying and selling as though in a marketplace, the blind and lame came to Him in the temple and they were healed. The temple, God's house, had been turned into a place where greedy merchandisers were selling and buying, using God's house for financial gain as in a business or marketplace. Jesus says this type of behaviour is not welcome in my Kingdom. Did I not say freely you have received, freely give? Where do you read in the scriptures my disciples, my true disciples, gaining profit from the selling or buying of merchandise in my name? I threw these corrupt worshippers out of the temple.

*As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. **Freely you have received; freely give.** Matthew 10:7-8*

***So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do.** Ephesians 5:15-17*

If you're putting a price on discipleship training, conferences, books, CDs, whatever you are selling in the holy name of Jesus Christ you have succumbed to commercial Christianity and turned God's House into a marketplace. Jesus drove out the buyers and sellers from His temple stating this His House/His Father's House will be a house of prayer not a marketplace or a den of thieves.



There are several accounts of Jesus cleansing HIS temple in Matthew 21:12–17; Mark 11:15–19; Luke 19:45–48 and John 2:12–17. I encourage you to read these scriptural accounts for yourself instead of listening to the opinion of man. In John 2:17 after Jesus cleared the temple of these robbers and thieves (as written in the other scriptural references above) this was said:

*It was nearly time for the Jewish Passover celebration, so Jesus went to Jerusalem. In the Temple area he saw merchants selling cattle, sheep, and doves for sacrifices; he also saw dealers at tables exchanging foreign money. Jesus made a whip from some ropes and chased them all out of the Temple. He drove out the sheep and cattle, scattered the money changers' coins over the floor, and turned over their tables. Then, going over to the people who sold doves, he told them, "Get these things out of here. Stop turning my Father's house into a marketplace!" **Then his disciples remembered this prophecy from the Scriptures: "Passion for God's house will consume me."***

Does passion for God's house consume you? Have you made your living by profiting from the gospel? *For we are not like many, **[acting like merchants] peddling God's word [shortchanging and adulterating God's message];** but from pure [uncompromised] motives, as [commissioned and sent] from God, we speak [His message] in Christ in the sight of God. 2 Corinthians 2:17*

1 Corinthians 3:16–17 tells us that we are the temple of God and that is holy. It is written that his temple will be called a House of Prayer.

*Don't you realize that **all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you? God will destroy anyone who destroys this temple. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.*** 1 Corinthians 3:16–17

I appeal to you as brothers and sisters in Christ. *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad (2 Corinthians 5:10).*

Search the scriptures. Ask God to search your heart and mind and reveal the truth about this controversial subject that has caused division in the Body of Christ and indeed led many away from the truth. God's words resound strongly in my heart – *No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve both God and money.*** Matthew 6:24

Which master do you serve – God or money?

