

Rethinking Commission Sale Programs

The Bible declares that the “laborer is worthy of his hire.” (*Luke 10:7*) This means that an industrious employee earns and is worth their wage.

It has been my observation that different people have unique personalities, abilities, and skills. Some people are mechanically inclined; others are better with computers; and still others a make-up that gears them toward in excelling in commission sales.

Some professions have the potential to offer large financial packages, while others do not pay as well. Many factors go into determining this. For example, is someone has to work harder, in a dangerous environment, or away from home that could lead them to a higher compensation.

There is a story in the Old Testament that offers some principles that may incline us to rethink commission pay programs:

“And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire; And had taken the women captives, that *were* therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried *them* away, and went on their way.”

“And David enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake *them*, and without fail recover *all*. So David went, he and the six hundred men that *were* with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed. But David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred abode behind, which were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.”

“And David took all the flocks and the herds, *which* they drave before those *other* cattle, and said, This *is* David’s spoil. And David came to the two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that *were* with him: and when David came near to the people, he saluted them. Then answered all the wicked men and *men* of Belial, of those that went with David, and said, Because they went not with us, we will not give them *ought* of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead *them* away, and depart. Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the LORD hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand. For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part *is* that goeth down to the battle, so *shall* his part *be* that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike. And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.” *1 Samuel 30:1-2, 8-10, 20-25*

Some Highlights:

- Teamwork- David's army needed to go and save their families. Some of the people were not able to go into battle. It took all to win. They were one army. (See *Ephesians 4:1-7*; *1 Corinthians 12:12-27*; *Acts 2:42-47*).
- Some people "stayed by the stuff." What does that mean in today's workforce? The accountants, logistics, inventory, and human resource employees do not always go "out into the field."
- The sales people may receive a higher rate, but could there be a higher hidden cost? A diligent prayerful and Biblical review before automatically implementing a commission program should be considered.
- Who should be rewarded? Everyone.
A system to pay with equality was established. The supportive professions are necessary to insure that the company is still there while the soldiers go to war. The flip-side is also true- if sales are not secured then there will not be a company around so the folks in the warehouse would not have a job.
- We all work for God's glory! (See *Colossians 3:17* and *Ephesians 6:5-8*).

The Bible offers principles for employees and employers (*Ephesians 6:5-9*) and for those with wealth (*1 Timothy 6:6-12, 17-19*). The conclusion is that a payment system of fairness should be established and maintained. Yes we need sales personnel, but we also need the accountants paying the bills, and the people manufacturing and managing the inventory. The common factors are that we all work together for the good of the whole (we are a team) and that we all need provision.

"But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny." *Matthew 20:10*