

the Savior teaches that in physical work laborers deserve their wages, and that this applies also to those who perform spiritual service (Matt 10:10; Luke 10:7). Particularly the Greek root μίσθ- (pay, hire) is used to convey the meaning of hired servants (μισθιοι, Luke 15:17, 19; μισθωτοί, Mark 1:20; John 10:12, 13), a hired house (μισθωμα, Acts 28:30), the act of hiring (μισθόω Matt 20:1, 7), and the wages given for fulfilling the job (μισθωμα, Matt 20:8; μισθός, Luke 10:7; John 4:36, wages for the spiritual harvest). The teaching is given that for sin and inequity, pay (μισθός) will also be given (Acts 1:18). The word ἀποδίδωμι (give back, recompense) carries the notion of fulfilling one's obligation whether of paying up fully one's debt (Matt 5:26, to the last κοδράντην²⁴; Luke 12:59, to the last λεπτόν²⁵) to the idea of farmers fulfilling their crop quota obligation (Matt 21:41), and managers of estates giving an account of their management (Luke 16:2). Zacchaeus, in his financial accounting, determines to give back four times what he has wrongly cheated people of (Luke 19:8). People are called to give account of their rash actions (Acts 19:40). The Savior reminds men that at the Second Coming he will fulfill his obligation by recompensing each person according to his work (πρῶξις, Matt 16:27).

Sometimes men are addressed as not realizing the implications and consequences of their deeds (cf. those who crucified Christ, Acts 3:16), and at other times it is admitted that their deeds are not deserving of the punishment which men want to give (John 18:38; Acts 25:11, 25).

The Gospels and Acts make clear that it is not enough for one to engage in the buying-selling activity and to be making profit enough to live on and to meet one's own obligation. There is the additional obligation to use one's substance to help the poor and needy. Possessions, goods, and properties were sold (πιπρασκω) that proceeds could be used where necessary to help those in need (Acts 2:45; 4:34; 5:4). Disciples (Luke 12:33), as well as others (the rich man, Mark 10:21; Luke 18:22), are encouraged to sell (πωλέω) their possessions and give to the poor. Jesus also teaches the principle that creditors are to be considerate and merciful to debtors who have fallen on bad times and cannot pay (Luke 7:42), just as God forgives the sinner who has grievously sinned against Him (Luke 7:44-47).

Bad business transactions and profits are not overlooked, as exemplified in the case of the rich farmer who only thought of making more (Luke 12:16-21), and the owners of the slave girl who only thought of their profit (ἐργασία, Acts 16:16, 19), and by the Ephesian craftsmen who were interested only in making profits from their silver shrine business (Acts 19:24, 25), rather than in meeting the needs of the people of the city.

The Places Where Work is Accomplished

The number of uses of the root ἀγορ- (market-place) emphasizes the importance of the work and business motif in the Gospels and Acts. The ἀγορά is the place where laborers are hired (Matt 20:3), where judicial business (Acts 16:19), and other official business (Acts 17:19) is