

ARE YOU WORTHY OF YOUR PROMOTION?

Every person, in his vocation or profession, has a desire to be elevated to a higher position. Promotion gives joy and only because of its prospect of material benefits but also for the fact that it serves as an acknowledgement of one's merits and ability. But owing to the high incidence of deviations and perversions in almost every sphere of human activities in our time, many people do receive promotions that they do not deserve while those who are genuinely qualified are ignored. However, true promotion, according to the Scriptures, comes from God.

A student in a grammar school has an ambition to be promoted from one class to another in ascending the academic ladder. He knows that this will depend on his success in an examination. And so, in order to realize his ambition, he must have to work hard.

Similarly, an undergraduate in a university, knows too well that he cannot gain academic laurels without passing his examinations. For this reason he has to do all he can in his studies so as to be successful in his examinations. This is the sort of thing that encourages healthy rivalry among students and instills in them a sense of duty and industry. Those of them who succeed in examinations and are promoted on merit are always a happy people. They have the satisfaction of a clear conscience that they have proved themselves worthy of the promotion. And their feeling is that of self-confidence.

But today, there are allegations that students seek to buy their promotions by giving bribes to ungodly teachers or invigilators. Such teachers award high marks not on merit to those students who have stolen their hearts with gifts. There are also allegations that even in some public examinations certain invigilators for reasons of corruption and such like sometimes connive at students' making reference to textbooks or notebooks, and condone unjustly a lot more of other irregularities.

A gift corruptly offered with the intent to carry a favour with anyone is a sin. No person whose morals are high or who is determined to maintain his integrity will accept that sort of gift. It makes one deviate from the course of justice and truth. This accounts for the enactment of a law by God forbidding the acceptance of such gift, which in a plain term is bribe. As it is written: "And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous." (Exodus 23:8) In the New English Bible the text is rendered in a language the ordinary man can better understand: "You shall not accept a bribe, for bribery makes the discerning man blind and the just man give a crooked answer."

With some female students it is a different story. Immoral or corrupt teachers do not want gifts from them. All they want is sex. And some ungodly and stupid girls take pleasure in establishing immoral relationship with their teachers so as to be favoured with the award of good marks during examinations and be promoted. No doubt, students and teachers who indulge in such corrupt practices stand condemned before God and godly men except they repent. It is reproachful for any girl to prostitute herself in order to be given a promotion which she does not merit; and a teacher who encourages such waywardness is not worth his salt and is guilty of breach of trust.

There is nothing wrong in wishing to be promoted but the promotion must be on the basis of what one essentially is. Any sort of promotion gained through bribery or at the price of forfeiting one's self-respect is not really worth the having: it is bogus.

A student girl who fails in an examination but maintains a high standard of morals is much a better person than the one who passes an examination at the expense of her chastity. It pays to maintain one's integrity. And King Solomon stated: "The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them. A gracious woman retaineth honour..." – Proverbs 11:3, 16

And any teacher who purposely causes a student to fail in an examination just because the student refuses to practise any form of corruption or immorality to satisfy his carnal desire, is wicked. He shall pay dearly for it. For the Bible states clearly that an evil man shall not escape God's punishment, and that the pursuit of evil leads to death. – Proverbs 11:19, 21, Romans 1:38-32, 2:6-9 etc.

Many school or college girls have died untimely in attempts to procure abortions of pregnancies for which certain immoral teachers were responsible. There are teachers who take undue advantage of their privileged positions to lure or intimidate some of the girls into intimate acts that lead to their death. A certain man lost his daughter the other day after hearing her confession that her college teacher put her in the family way. The wayward girl stubbornly refused to disclose the name of the teacher until she died. For her foolishness she was given an inglorious burial in which the church refused to take part. The girls are always the losers in the game. However, one thing is certain: though the teacher's name was covered by the girl and he was unknown to men, he was not covered before God. His sin and guilty conscience will ever haunt him. And he will fully be recompensed by the Lord except he shows satisfactory contrition. (2 Corinthians 5:10, Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14)

Obtrusive Influence

Now, turning to other sections of human society it is distressing to note that promotion has lost its significance among very many people. In certain institutions, offices and departments the workers themselves know that their promotion will not depend on industry, diligence or efficiency but on the considerations of tribe, blood relationship, or obtrusive influence or how much one can corruptly offer to please the bosses.

There was a case of a certain young man who had served in his department for a considerable length of time and proved to be efficient. For his intelligence, hard work and devotion to duty he was always respected by his colleagues. This was well known to the board of management of his department. When it was time for promotion, this man who was in all respects best qualified for the senior post was let out and another man was promoted. During the promotion interview, the young man was told by the chairman of the board that there was no adverse report against him and that his work was excellent but it was the wish of the board that he should wait the next opportunity. And when the next opportunity came the following year, it was the same story. Nothing was done to encourage the hardworking young man.

The corruption that was going on behind the scenes all along was common knowledge. But the young man was and is still a Christian who was determined not to isolate his faith and was, therefore, not prepared to take a dishonourable and sinful course of offering bribes to anybody. He believes, according to the Scriptures, that true greatness, honour or promotion comes from God. And since God's time is the best he had the understanding and faith to wait on Him.

It is interesting to note that consequent upon circumstances allowed by God, the gods that constituted that management board were all ousted. And the first measures taken by the newly constituted board to re-organise the department brought the oppressed young man to a position much higher than all those of his colleagues who were earlier promoted undeservedly through corruption.

Moreover, among them some had since been demoted or forced to go on voluntary retirement. For acts not unconnected with dishonesty, abuse of office and inefficiency. But up till today the young man is enjoying the benefits of his hard work and making the most of his promotion to the glory of God.

The Bible shows clearly that God is the Helper of the oppressed. Said the Psalmist: "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set *him* in safety *from him that* puffeth at him." (Psalm 12:5) What the former board of management did to the young man was a glaring case of oppression and injustice. Any man in a position of trust should always remember that however highly placed he may be, he is still subject to the Highest, God Almighty. If a man uses his position and power to oppress the poor or the innocent, he cannot escape God's judgment. King Solomon said: "If you witness in some province the oppression of the poor and the denial of right and justice, do not be surprised at what goes on, for every official has a higher one set over him, and the Highest keeps watch over them all." – Ecclesiastes 5:8, New English Bible.

People who are thriving through oppression and bribery must be told the plain truth that their riches are false and that by their actions they are digging their own grave. In their own interest they should repent of their evil deeds so as to obtain divine mercy before God's vengeance is expressed on them. God said: "Forasmuch therefore as your treading *is* upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them. For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate *from their right*. Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it *is* an evil time." – Amos 5:11-13

God also gave this warning: "Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart *upon them*." – Psalm 62:10

What is more, Jesus Christ also warned: "...Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (Luke 12:15) And he further said: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" – Mark 8:36

It is much more better and honourable to live an honest life, having a clear conscience and commanding the respect of your fellow men while you are at peace with God than to be a crook who though rich has no reputation and is not in favour with God. In Proverbs 28:6, 8, it is written: "Better *is* the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than *he that is* perverse *in his* ways, though he

be rich. He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor."

Immoral Conduct

Another thing that must be condemned without reservation is the immoral conduct of some men in top posts towards the female workers under them. Some ladies who are performing their duties creditably are denied their rights to promotions because of their refusal to flirt with ungodly bosses or succumb to satisfy their carnal lusts. But if they remain faithful to God they shall see the tribulation or punishment of God upon corrupt bosses who refuse to repent and they themselves will be promoted in the long run.

Godly married women and spinsters should never give in to the advances of mean, immoral bosses. They should exercise strong faith in God always and wait patiently for Him. For God's time is the best. He will certainly bless them.

An open letter to the Federal Minister of Health by a female nurse that was published in the West African Pilot on Tuesday December 12, 1961, speaks for itself. She wrote: "BAREFACED SHAMELESSNESS is the only word to describe the mean attitudes of some doctors and male nurses towards the female ones. There is the impression which is eating deep into the minds of the public, that female nurses are corrupt.

"This may sound quite true, but one has only to see the way in which some doctors make approaches to females nurses and if any of these female nurses refuses to yield she will either be threatened with dismissal or disliked and eventually her progress may be retarded. I am making this remark because I have been a victim of their fiendish approaches and I know what position my refusal to yield to their requests has kept me...

"Most of us are not working with a view to befriending doctors and do not care a hoot about their hire-purchase cars with which they think they can get any girl at will. I am optimistic that the responsible authority after reading this letter, will instill sanity into the heads of these sex hungry doctors and to ensure that the interest of the female nurses are adequately protected from the hands of the wolf doctors.

"Female nurses are no prostitutes,"

This sort of experience is not peculiar to female workers in the medical department. In many other departments, similar incidents of crass immorality are rampant. Some executives keep a harem of ungodly, shameless and loose ladies in the office for self-gratification. They work less but earn more: in other words, their earnings are in no way commensurate with the work they do. As long as the girls can keep up the illicit erotic relationship, they are "entitled" to double increment, promotion and other amenities; and besides they are above discipline. Despite the economic and moral adverse effects these acts are bound to have on the company or corporation, no one dares raise a voice in protest, otherwise he will be kicked out of his job.

Those executive officers or bosses who take undue advantage of their positions to defile needy married women or spinsters will surely be punished by God. It is only on the condition that they repent and produce fruit that is consistent with their penitence that they will receive divine mercy.

Thank God, not all doctors, or executive officers, teachers, invigilators or highly placed persons are corrupt or immoral. A story by a columnist published in EVER-BODY'S (June 16-22, 1973) gives a picture of what obtains in some offices, He stated: "One morning, the official came into his department and found that most of the girls on duty had left their desk. He found out that some of them were in a room. Well, he went inside and found that they were plaiting their hair. He queried them and told them it was wrong to do that on duty. One of the girls retorted: 'Oga, you better go back to your desk...' The officer insisted that they must disband and go back to their desks. As they left, the same girl told the officer: 'I will make sure you regret your action.' The officer little realized that she was the girlfriend of her head of department and, in fact, it was a red letter day for him when he knew the cause of why he was not promoted along with others."

Some people think only of the present joy, and love the pleasures of sin but they do not consider the after-effects of their actions or what God will do in His judgment. Saint Paul said: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad." – 2 Corinthians 5:10

Any promotion gained through bribery and corruption or immorality is not deserved and is ungodly, and except there is evidence of repentance on the part of whoever is concerned all will not be well in the end. The gains of corruption or immorality are cursed. It is better to seek such promotion as is given by God. This does not mean that God will send an angel from heaven to elevate you but when your ways are pleasing to Him because you love to keep His commandments, He will use any man to bring you into honour. Wicked men may delay your promotion but in God's own time it will surely come. The woman Hannah in her thanksgiving said: "The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set *them* among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory..." – 1 Samuel 2:7, 8

And in Psalm 75:6, 7, it is written: "For promotion *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God *is* the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another."

What is more, Jesus Christ said: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will *my* Father honour." The promotion or honour that comes from God is full of grace and is lasting. To be worthy of such promotion you must abstain from bribery and corruption and immorality, and be diligent, honest and God-fearing.