I'M EDDIE AND I'M A CHARITY CEO

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Category: Observations

There has been a lot of furore in the newspapers recently about the salaries paid to some charity executives in the UK (here is one example). As a charity CEO who doesn't earn anything like the sums mentioned in these articles (I don't actually get paid a salary at all), I thought I'd throw a few personal comments into the discussion. Feel free to agree, disagree or ignore totally what I write!

- Sometimes the system that we operate under is called "living by faith"; not a name I particularly like. It is sometimes implied that "living by faith" is a better, more Christian way for missionaries to receive their income than an actual wage. It isn't better, it's different. It works for some organisations and not for others. I am certainly not a better person because I don't get a monthly pay cheque.
- Yes, I am sometimes jealous of people who earn whacking great salaries for doing a job very similar to mine. I know I shouldn't be jealous and I am working on it; but I'm not perfect yet!
- I don't judge those charities that do pay very high salaries to their staff. I know enough about the way in which charity leadership teams and boards go about their business to know that these decisions are not taken lightly and that they are done with the best interests of the charity at heart.
- You couldn't pay me enough money to do what I do. Over the years we have moved house more times than I can count. We've lived for years without running water and electricity and every member of our family has spent time in hospital as a direct result of the jobs that Sue and I do. It's been tough and no salary would ever have been enough. And there's the rub. We don't do what we do for money! More money would be nice, of course it would, but that isn't the thing that motivates me to be involved in mission.
- God, through the generosity of his people has always provided what we needed. We've managed to take holidays (sometimes quite exotic ones when combined with work trips) and we've always had a house to live in. Quite simply, we've never gone short.

This is the way we've chosen to live our lives and it reflects how the organisation we work with operates. Other people and organisations do things differently - I don't pretend for one moment that any one system is morally superior to the another.