

**“Who’s Your Boss?”**

**Col 3:22 – 4:1**

**Scripture Ref:** 1 Cor 7:20-24; Matt 25:23; Gen 2:2; Gen 2:15; Ex 31:15; John 5:17; 2 Cor 5:20; 1 Cor 7:22

- 1. After explaining God’s plan for the family, Paul now moves on to the next level – the workplace...**

***RULES TO SUCCEED AT WORK***

22 Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.

- 2. This touches on a sensitive topic – that there were slaves, and slave owners, in the early church.**
  - a. Some might think Paul should have immediately told the masters to release all their slaves.**
  - b. Complicated situation – most Roman slaves were captured from conquered countries, and the thought I have is “where would they go and what would they do?”**
  - c. They were not Roman citizens, they couldn’t hop a bus or plane to get back home, there was no social safety net...**
  - d. Fact is - Church was not “responsible” for slavery, nor was it “encouraging” slavery.**
  - e. No, Paul was encouraging the church to honor God in whatever circumstance they were in.**

***1 Cor 7:20-24***

*20 Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. 21 Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. 22 For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave. 23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. 24 Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called.*

***Honoring God in the Workplace***

- 3. Fact is - we all have “masters”**
  - a. Basically those to who we are under submission to in the “work arena”.**
  - b. When you commit yourself to work for somebody you are, in a sense, selling yourself as a slave for the hours involved.**
  - c. Employers cannot control the rest of your life, but they do have a right to control your life during your working hours.**
  - d. These words therefore have direct reference to us.**

- e. **And so - Paul calls upon the Christian to live to a standard that goes beyond the norm – beyond even what might be expected**

obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers,

- 4. **“eye-service... men-pleasers” – IOW working to impress your boss...**
  - a. **Say – wait – isn’t that who I am SUPPOSED to impress??**
  - b. **Well yes – but not in the way that you might expect...**
  - c. **Because although you might work under your boss... do you know who you really serve??**
  - d. **In reality – you work for the Lord!**

...but in sincerity of heart, fearing God <sup>23</sup> And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for **you serve the Lord Christ.**

- 5. **This gets to the motive – “whom do I serve?”**
  - a. **On the surface, we work for our boss or company...**
  - b. **But for the Christian, Paul says that is not really true - we are working for the Lord!**
  - c. **That changes everything!**
  - d. **Because if I only work for my boss, it becomes very subjective –**
  - e. **If I don’t like him/her, don’t agree with them, think they are unfair,**
  - f. **Then I can feel justified in not obeying.**
- 6. **On the other hand – If I am working for the Lord, and I understand that God has placed me in that situation...**
  - a. **Then regardless of my opinion of my boss, I will give my best always, because I am serving the Lord.**
- 7. **Think of it this way – whatever task you are doing, if after you were done, you were going to present the results to God Himself, how much effort would you put into it?**
  - a. **Wouldn’t you want to get it just right? On time? Ever better than expected?**
  - b. **How many Christians do a half-way job, and think nothing of it?**
- 8. **Don’t know about you, but I don’t ever want to work for a person again. I only want to work for the Lord!**
- 9. **“receive the reward of the inheritance” – a pretty radical concept for a slave, since a slave did not inherit anything!**
  - a. **Same with our work... of we do good, serve well, whether we “get what we deserve” from our earthly master is not as important as what we will receive from our Heavenly Father!**

- b. When we are serving “as to the Lord” God sees our motive, sees our service, and will reward us in the eternal!

**10. And...the reward of faithful service is always opportunity for greater service**

*Matt 25:23 ...you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things.*

**11. You want to see your career take off? Start working for the Lord**

- a. You want your business to thrive? Start working for the Lord!

## ***The Christian Employee***

### **Should work harder**

**12. God ordained work!**

*Gen 2:2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done,*

*Gen 2:15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.*

*Ex 31:15 Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD*

*John 5:17 "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."*

- a. Most people are looking for ways to avoid work, some have perfected the art to the point where they avoid it – but look like they are working hard!
- b. But the fact is, we are representatives for the Lord

*2 Cor 5:20 – we are ambassadors for Christ*

- c. An ambassador is a representative for the king that they represent – what they say and do is a reflection of the kingdom that sent them.
- d. So how we conduct ourselves sends a message about the King that we serve.

**13. It is a good witness when you stand out among your peers as a model worker**

- a. You don't have to be the smartest, or most skilled, but your work ethic is something you CAN control!

- b. If your boss knows you are a Christian – and they SHOULD – your performance at work should be such that their thoughts are “man, I need to hire more Christians”

**Should have more integrity**

*Like the doctor and lawyer who were fishing together in the Carribean – the Lawyer told the Dr “I’m here because my house burned down and I got a huge insurance settlement.”*

*The Dr replied “I’m here because there was a flood, and I also got huge settlement”.*

*The Lawyer replied “so, how did you start a flood?”*

**14. One of the most important things that you have with your employer is your integrity.**

- a. I don’t mean just “not telling huge lies” – but being honest and forthright in ALL things.
- b. Not hiding your mistakes (my example), not taking company supplies without permission,

**15. Interesting principle – Your company NEEDS for you to be honest.**

- a. One of the worst things an employee can do is hide bad news
- b. Because if it’s bad – then something is broke – and it needs to be fixed!
- c. If you don’t know what’s broken – you cant fix it.

**16. Funny thing about integrity – it is easy to lose, and hard to gain back. Once you are caught in a lie, people will always wonder if you are telling the truth.**

**Should have more wisdom**

**17. Did you know that you have a supernatural advantage over the unsaved person at work?**

- a. Fact is – your unsaved co-workers do not have the Holy Spirit and the truth of the Word of God to guide them.

**18. Two examples come to mind – Joseph and Daniel**

- a. Both were put into service as slaves
- b. Both rose to high levels of importance and responsibility
- c. WHY? The wisdom of God made them stand out among their peers.

**19. In the same way, your wisdom should stand out among your co-workers**

- a. But that does not come naturally – it only comes by becoming a student of the Word, and by submitting yourself to the Spirit of God.

- b. When I think of Joe and Dan – they were very outspoken about the source of their wisdom – the God they served.
  - c. And it was a WITNESS to Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar!
  - d. Don't be ashamed of whom you serve, and don't think that you have to have the wisdom of the world to succeed
  - e. Quite the contrary – the wisdom of God will win our every time!
20. Getting back to our earlier thought – impressing your boss – THIS is how you impress your boss!
21. Some Christians don't see it this way – they are “spiritual” at church, but carnal at work.
- 25 But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.
22. The unsaved person might slack off, or do wrong at work and never get caught – our earthly masters may never see
- a. But the Christian answers to a higher authority!
23. This applies to the master as well
- 4:1 Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.
24. This was a RADICAL statement in a slave-driven society – because slaves were due NOTHING
- a. Yet here Paul tells the Christian master - “Take care of the people who work for you”
  - b. Basically making them employees.
  - c. So if you have employees, this verse is for you!
25. Give them what is - “just and fair” is better than “kind and good”, it means doing what is right by your employees.
- a. Interesting thought – The Christian slave is also a free man in the Lord, and the Christian master is also a slave to Christ.  
*1 Cor 7:22 For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave.*
  - b. Regardless of what your position and status is, we are all accountable to God for our lives
26. Bottom line - with the world it's all about power, position, and money –
- a. Get all three – get the dream!
  - b. For the Christian its all about the power of God, our position in Christ, in our lives, and the riches of His glory
  - c. All summed up in our PERSPECTIVE!

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