

# **Masters & Slaves... Employers & Employees**

Ephesians 6:5-9

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, April 25, 2021

If you would take your Bibles and open them with me to the book of Ephesians. And as you're doing that, I'm going to say, it was a wonderful to have Tedd Tripp with us last week, wasn't it? Did you guys enjoy having Tedd Tripp minister to us? If you missed that, Dr. Tripp is the author of 'Shepherding a Child's Heart'. It is a key book on parenting. And we had him speak to us remotely up here on the screen. And I was telling, our congregation- we have a lot of young families. And this has been a season of life where they've just been around their kids a lot. They've been at home with them more than normal. And so we wanted to provide a ministry for them in this way. And so we had Ted Tripp record a sermon for us, and we put it on the screen. If you didn't get a chance to see that, it's available on our YouTube channel, on our website as well. You can look at it there. But it was a real privilege to have him join us. We've had, I counted it up the other day, we've had about 10 guest speakers come minister to us throughout the years, and we've been blessed with a lot of them. And this was just another blessing that we had from the Lord, last Sunday.

If you would look in your Bibles in Ephesians, we're going to be in chapter 6 this morning. I was thinking earlier that, you know what a time like this, when you're meeting in a tent in the cold, you've got to wonder, well, what do you what do you talk about? What do you say in the book of Ephesians, like several books in the Bible was written at a time when the apostle Paul was in prison. He was in jail, chapter 3 tells us, and so he was in a setting that was even worse than this, in a setting that was even harder. And this is what was on his mind as he was sitting in that jail cell. If you look in chapter 6:1. It says

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise) SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG UPON THE EARTH. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.”

We'll end the reading there. Just to say a few words about that, as you read that, you can tell that this chapter is all about relationships. It's all about the bond that we share with other people. In other words, as Paul is in jail, as he's in prison, suffering for the name of Christ, he's thinking about parents and children, wives and husbands, masters and slaves. Later on, he's going to talk about the armor of God, we'll get into that next week. But the reason he writes about the armor there, starting in verse 10, is because relationships are hard, aren't they? It's hard to get along with other people. So you'll need God's armor to help you in that. We often think of the armor of God as something that's going to help us go out and do something grandiose like beat up the devil or something like that. But that's not the way Paul writes it here. Paul says, you need God's armor to be a better husband. You need God's armor to be a better wife. And before he gets into the armor passage, he mentions one last relationship in verse 5, that we'll talk about today, where he says, "Slaves, be obedient to your masters." Down in verse 9 he mentions masters doing the same thing to their slaves. I'll mention this to you in a moment, we'll walk through this passage together. But that phrase 'slaves and masters', it refers to a relationship that we don't have in the world today, an institution that's no longer with us. And that is the institution of slavery, where one man owns another, where one man serves as another man's property. Just to explain that a little bit, the ancients didn't have machines like we do today. They didn't have modern invention. So they had people do all the work for them, they made slaves do it. So they would take someone captive, they would take someone hostage and make them wash their clothes, and do their dishes and plant their fields, just all the work they didn't want to do. They wouldn't pay them for it, they wouldn't give them money, they would force them at the point of a sword. The Romans were notoriously lazy. They were very selfish people because they thought manual labor was beneath them, they thought they were too good for it. So in order to get someone to do it for them, they would capture slaves. And they did it to the point that in some parts of the Empire you had almost as many slaves as you had free men, you had almost as many slaves as you had masters, and you couldn't tell who they were, if you just looked at the ancient society, you couldn't tell the slaves apart from the masters because they look like everyone else.

Where I grew up, in the southern part of the United States in the 1800s, they had slaves. In fact, there was a slave that was buried in the cemetery next to my house, and they were all of the same race. That was the horror of it, they were all of the same skin color. But in this world, in the first century, it wasn't like that, slaves could look like anybody. Blue eyed slaves, brown eyed slaves, light skinned slaves, dark skinned slaves, and you couldn't tell who possessed them. You couldn't tell who the owners were, because they didn't have a uniform. They didn't all wear the same type of clothes and that sort of thing. They just blended in. But whatever the case, once you fell into it, you were essentially a slave for life. While there were some ways to gain your freedom and buy back your liberty and that sort of thing, for the most part, once a slave always a slave.

And just to give you a perspective on this, so you can see what we're talking about, I'll give you a few quotes from some people back then, some ancient scholars on this issue. One is from the Greek philosopher Aristotle. So if you want to know what the philosophers thought about slavery, here's what

the philosopher's said. He said, "A slave is nothing but a breathing tool, or an animated instrument on the same level as a shovel. He doesn't have a heart, he doesn't have a soul. He is a thing." Aristotle said a slave is a thing. Another Roman statesman named Cato said, "There's nothing more worthless than a slave, there's nothing more useless, especially than an old slave. Because they should just be thrown out with the trash, because they're not human. They're not a real person."

And in response to that, writing against that sort of thing, if you notice in our passage, if you look in verse 9, this is what Paul says, he says, "And masters, do the same thing to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven." I can't tell you how revolutionary that was, to have said something like that. I can't say how shocking it would have been for this society. But Paul says- masters, you should treat your slaves with dignity, you should treat them with honor and not like trash, especially if they are Christian, because you both have the same Master. You both have the same Lord.

It's not like one of you is saved one way and one of you is saved the other. It's not like one of you is up here and the other one's down here, you're all the same in God's eyes. You are no different. And while we don't have slaves today, well, we don't have people that fit this description, thank the Lord, there is a simple way this applies to us. And that is that we do have jobs. We all work for somebody. We have bosses who give us money for our labor, they give us money for our time. And so this would relate to that, you can apply all this to our jobs today. Because slavery was an economic institution in the first century. It was more than that. It was it was about more than that. But it was generated, created primarily to generate money. And so the lessons Paul gives us can relate to that issue. As you guys know, it's one thing to be a Christian at home, it's another thing to be a Christian at work, isn't it? And it's one thing to honor God when you're here, when you're at church on a Sunday with other people that believe like you and think like you and talk like you. It's another one to do it when you're at the workplace with people who don't. They don't think like you at all. They think very differently and this is what Paul is talking about.

One commentator said it like this, he said, "In our day the struggle between employers and employees has reached monumental levels. Conflicts rage constantly between workers and management with each side accusing the other of selfishness and greed. And in fact, there is some justification for it. Because Western society may be the greediest one in world history, it may be the most selfish one the world has ever produced. So this is the greatest place for a Christian to shine, we need to shine in the workplace." Would you guys agree with that? Would you agree that this world has become a greedy, selfish place? I've talked to two people this week who told me, that it's like a rat race out there. We're all going for the piece of cheese. It's a doggy dog world, it's a jungle, all that sort of thing. And it all goes back to our sinful hearts. This is especially important for us today. I don't know if you guys saw this. But according to a recent article in the Progress, the city of chilliwack sold \$360 million worth of real estate in the month of February alone. \$360 million, that's a quarter of a billion dollars pumped into our economy in one month. And at one time, the price of housing was going up \$20,000 a week, we've talked to people

in the church who have bought a home and before they could move into it, the price had gone up \$50,000. Which means all the money is going somewhere. It's going into somebody's pockets and making them richer, and at the same time, it's making someone else jealous, because they don't have it. They're not getting it. And it's causing strife. And it's causing conflict. And what Paul says in this passage is that conflict does not need to come in here. That conflict and strife and that war does not need to come into the church. Because we all have the same Master. God doesn't see us as masters and slaves, he doesn't see us as rich and poor. And so that type of mentality does not need to creep its way into the church. I told the folks earlier, this is one thing I love about our church, the one thing I love about our congregation is that you can't tell who the rich and the poor are in our church. You can't tell who has money and who doesn't. Because we all sit together. We sit side by side, we all shiver in the cold in the same tent. Amen? That's the way it's supposed to be. That's the way the church is supposed to be. There's a real tendency, if you don't watch your heart to hate those who have more money than you do. There's a real tendency to resent them and despise them and talk about them behind their backs and all that stuff. It can't happen here. It can't happen in the Church of God.

And that's what we're talking about this morning. So if you're taking notes, in Ephesians 6:5-9, we're going to look at two groups of people that are told to get along in the church. That's our outline for today. That's what we're talking about in Ephesians 6:5, we're going to look at two groups of people who were told to get along in this passage. And this is really significant. It's really important because no one had more trouble in the first century than this group of people. Nobody had more issues, relationally speaking, than the masters and the slaves. You know, we've looked at husbands and wives, we've looked at parents and children in Ephesians 6, but none of that could touch this issue. These people hated each other. They didn't get along at all. And so the fact that Paul is addressing them in this chapter is huge. It's amazing that he could talk to them and tell them to get along. It's been said that God is colorblind and He's class blind, He can't see either one. There's no social ladder in the kingdom. It doesn't exist. And you see that here, maybe more than any other passage in the Word of God.

And so let's talk about this morning by looking at two groups of people that are told to get along. **The first one is the slaves.** The first group of people that are told to get along in this passage are the slaves, which referred to the lowest class of people back then, it referred to the lowest class of society. Because not only did they not have any money, they didn't have any freedom to make any money. Not only did they not have any possessions, they were a possession. They were in the worst place, humanly speaking, that you could be in. And if you read starting in verse one of chapter six, it says, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise. So that may turn out well for you, and that you may live long on the earth. Fathers do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh."

You know, as you read through this passage, and you go through this chapter, you might be wondering why Paul starts off the way he does here. You may be wondering why he starts off talking about

children and slaves instead of the masters. But the reason he does that, is because if you remember back in chapter 5:20, it says, "Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father, and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ." In other words, this passage is about being subject to one another in the fear of Christ. It's about submission. This whole section of the Bible is on that topic. And so Paul starts with the slaves here, because submission would have been hardest for them. He starts with the captives, because this would have been the most difficult because of their situation. And just to explain what he says here, the word slaves, it's the word 'doulos' in Greek. It means captive or a prisoner, someone who was owned by another. The Greek language had a word for servant, it had a word for someone who was paid, but that's not this guy. This guy is a slave. Some of your Bibles may have the word 'bondservant' here. And that was actually a way for the interpreters to kind of soften the blow of this word. But the word is slave. It was someone who wasn't paid for what they did, they worked for free.

In fact, this was one of the criticisms the ancient people had against the church. It's one of the complaints they had about it, and that is that the church was full of slaves. It was full of the worst type of people. If you read some of these ancient authors, and their rebukes against Christians, this was the rebuke. Because the gospel was so appealing to them, it meant so much to slaves, because it said salvation was for everybody, anyone can have it if you believe, no matter who you are, that the slaves just poured it into the doors. They just came rushing in and embraced it wholeheartedly. No other religion offered that. If you read the religions of Greece, and Rome and Zeus and all that stuff, nobody gave slaves an opportunity. Again, they weren't considered to be human. It was a very pessimistic outlook on life. And the idea was, that if you were in this condition, it was your fault. You couldn't get out of it. Christianity came along and offer them something totally different. And they all embraced it.

In fact, there were some famous slaves in the Bible. So when you read the Bible, there were several famous people who fit this description, like Onesimus. You might remember the name Onesimus. He was the slave who ran away. He was a slave who left his master behind until he got saved, he became a Christian. And he met the Apostle Paul who told him to go back and make it right. I can't imagine anything harder than escaping your master and being told to go back. And he did that. You can read about that in the book of Philemon, the smallest book in the Bible was written about that story. There's also a slave named Rhoda in Acts 12, who went to answer the door when Peter escaped from prison. And that was a really funny story. Because she went to answer the door, saw Peter, slam the door and ran off because she thought it was his ghost. She thought he had died. But she was a slave. There was another one in Acts 16. She was possessed by a demon. And she followed Paul around saying these men are slaves of the Most High God. It was an ironic kind of thing because she said, "I'm a slave, but these men are slaves of God." But the point is that they were everywhere. You read the Bible slaves were all over the place. They were lurking behind the scenes, they were kind of in the shadows, because of their low situation in life.

And here Paul tells them to do several things. He gives them a couple commandments. One is that they are to be obedient to those who are your masters. That means they should listen to them. They should do what their masters say. Paul says, don't rebel now that you're a Christian. Don't cast off all restraint, you still need to submit. He adds you are to do this with fear and trembling. That means you are to serve your master with humility, serving with respect because you mean it, you're being sincere. And then he adds in verse seven, this is a kind of a long statement here. But he says in verse seven "With good will render service as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free." And that is a mouthful there. But the last verse really sums it up. And the idea is that even though your master may not see the good things you do, even though he may not notice it, God does and He'll reward you for it. You will receive it back from Him, whether slave or free.

You can imagine that the job of a slave would have been miserable in the first century. It would have been very discouraging, because you were never thanked for what you did. You just worked or you didn't get a beating. That was your only options. And to encourage the slaves here, Paul says you need to work hard, knowing that God sees everything you do. Your master may not see it, but God sees it. Your master may not reward you for it, but He does. And that leads to several applications here, it leads to several ways you can apply this to our situation. One, this means you should work hard, no matter what job you do, because God sees it. God sees everything you do. Just like it was with the slaves, and He will reward you for it, even if your boss doesn't. This is interesting here, but Paul doesn't say this as a negative. He says it as a positive. He doesn't say God is watching you as if it's a bad thing. And God is out to get you and you better look out. He says God is watching you, and that should encourage you. Because He'll reward you for it. He will pay you back for the good things you do. Some of you have jobs that are pretty ungrateful. You do work that's pretty unthankful, nobody ever thanks you. Nobody ever tells you good job, way to go. Paul says God does. God will thank you in the end. And He's the one that you work unto. No matter what men say.

The word 'eyeservice' in verse 6, it really sheds a lot of light on this. Because it's the word 'ophthalmoudoulia' in Greek and it comes from 'ophthalmos' - eye and 'doulos' - slavery. It means eye-slavery. And Paul says you shouldn't work to be an eye-slave to someone, you shouldn't work only when the boss is watching. You guys know what this is like. But we all work harder when the boss is watching, don't we? We all perk up and our back straightens up every time the boss comes around. Paul says in reality, the Boss is always around. In reality, the Boss is always watching, because God's always there. And we need to work with that in mind. This is one of the principles or the major issues of the Protestant Reformation. The Catholic Church said that the only ones who can work unto the Lord are the priests. And the clergy. They're the only ones who can do holy work. No one else can. And the reformers came around and said, 'No, that's not true. Any work is holy, if it's done unto the Lord. Any work is good if you do it unto Him.' That's what this says here.

It leads to another application to this. Just another way to tie this into our lives today. And that is that you need to work hard, because no matter how bad your job is, I promise you it's not this bad. You're not a slave. You're not in the condition these people were in. So if they could do this, you can too. If they could work hard at their job and not get discouraged and not quit. You can do the same because you don't have it as bad as them. I think this is one of the reasons Paul put this in here. I think this is one of the reasons this has been preserved in the Word of God. It's to emphasize the fact that if these guys could do it, it's possible for anybody. I mean, I don't know about you, but I can't think of anything worse than being a slave. I can't think of anything worse than being somebody's property. And yet, look at the high calling God gives them.

You know, when I talk to people from our church, many of you tell me, you come from other countries. You come from other parts of the world and you say that we have it so good here in Canada. We're so blessed. It's why the immigration rate is so high. I mean, people just want to come here to work. They want to come here to experience what we have to offer. I mean, if you think about it, we have workers comp here in Canada. We have workers' rights. There are countries that have no rights at all for workers, you get hurt, there is nothing to help you whatsoever. But we have that here. We have national holidays, we have paid national holidays. I'm trying to keep up with them. I think there's one a month. Most of the time I find out about a national holiday a couple days after it occurs, but I'm catching up, working hard on that. We have universal health care, we have doctors and nurses to take care of us when we're sick. But all this is to say, we have so much to be grateful for here, so much to be thankful for in the country. And it needs to give us some perspective. I mean, these people here in this patches, they worked and then they died. That was it. They worked. And then when they got sick, they were probably put to death. And they were buried in a mass grave. And nobody remembered them. Nobody gave them a second thought, except God. Paul says God remembered them. He remembers the work that they'll do, if they do it unto Christ. And He'll remember the work that you do as well. Some of you have jobs, you work all alone, right? Nobody looks over your shoulder. Nobody sees the things you do. But the Lord does. And that should give you some encouragement.

It leads to another point to consider this morning. You know, another group of people that are told to get along in this passage. The first one is the slaves. The first group of people that are told to get along in here are the lowest class of society, the lowest group of people, those at the very bottom of the food chain, but to give us a contrast here to fill the issue, Paul talks about the next group here, and that's the masters. **The second group** of people that are told to get along in this passage **are the masters**, which referred to the highest group of people back then, the highest class of society. I mean, not only did they have some money, they had all the money. Not only did they have some wealth, they had all the wealth. We don't really know what this is like today, because we have a strong middle class here in North America. And we have the bottom and the middle and the top, and a lot of us are in the middle. But back then there was no middle class. It was just the bottom and the top. I remember visiting Brazil years ago, in 2001. And watching someone go down the street with a donkey pulling a cart, picking up cardboard

boxes out of the trash. That's what it looks like to have no middle class. And that's the world these people are in. And this is what Paul is writing to.

I mean, if you read again, in verse 5, he says, "Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eyeservice as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him."

To make sure that he covers every angle of this, you know, after telling us what God requires of slaves here, Paul tells us about their masters and that's the word 'kurios' in Greek. It means master or lord, someone who owns another. It's an interesting word, because in other parts of the Bible, it's actually used for the Lord. So if you read other passages, the word 'Lord', it's often this word in the Greek. But on a human level, it was an ugly word, it was a bad word. Because like I just said, these people they didn't own part of their slaves, they owned all of them. They didn't own them 9-5 at their job, they owned them all day long, every day. In the ancient world they didn't have the concept of human rights like we do today. They didn't think all human life had value. And so they treated their slaves that way, as if they were worthless. And yet in spite of this, if you notice, Paul starts off in verse 9 by saying- masters, do the same thing to them. It points us back to the previous passage in verse 7, where it says, with good will render service, as to the Lord. In other words, masters should have good will toward their slaves, not ill will. They should treat them with courtesy and respect, not with violence.

Again, it's hard to express how shocking this would have been back then, because the whole system of slavery was built around violence, the whole thing breaks down if you're not punishing your slaves. Paul tells them not to do that here. This would have upset the whole applecart, it would turn the whole world upside down. But just to explain this, he tells them several things here. But the main thing he says in verse 9 is to give up threatening. It says, and masters do the same thing to them, and give up threatening, that means to give up bullying them, give up abusing them verbally or physically. Which was another shocking thing to say, because slaves weren't paid at the time, you didn't give them any money. And so the only way to get them to work was to threaten them. Threaten them with a beating, threaten them with a flogging, threaten them with murder. You couldn't take their money away, you couldn't take away their pay because they didn't have any pay. So you took away their sense of security. Slaves worked under a dark cloud, right? And if you took the dark cloud away, the system collapses. That's what Paul says here. He says why in verse 9, he says, because both their Master and yours is in heaven. You both have the same Savior. He says, despite what you may think, despite what you may believe, masters, you're not at the top of the food chain. You're not as high as it gets, because there's Someone higher than you. There's Someone greater to you. And you'll all have to answer to Him one day.



Paul adds to this, he says, there is no partiality with God. It means there's no prejudice with Him, there's no bias. Some of your translations say, He is no respecter of persons, because God doesn't see people the way that we do. He doesn't see them as master and slave, rich and poor. He sees beyond that. And Paul tells masters to do the same. You know, I've had people ask me throughout the years, you know, why doesn't the Bible condemn slavery here? What doesn't it tell us that it's wrong? And the answer is that it does tell us that, it does say that in its own way, because if people would do this, the problem of slavery would vanish. If they understood what this is saying here, the whole thing would collapse, because they would understand you can't own slaves and be a Christian.

And that's what happened in the Roman Empire. That's what happened as the centuries went on, is that the institution of slavery disappeared. Because people understood what this was saying. They didn't have to have a revolution for that. They didn't have to collect votes, and pass a law. It just happened organically, which leads to several applications here. several ways to apply this to our lives. For one, this is what the gospel does, it changes people. It makes a difference in their life in the way they do business. It's one thing to change at home. It's one thing to change as a husband or a father, but the gospel goes farther than that. It changes the man you are at work. It changes the person that you are there. Again, we don't have slaves and masters like they did back then. But we do have other things. And I can't tell you how many times someone has told me that so and so is a great man it at home. He's a great man at church, but he's a horrible person at work. He is a terrible person there, because he treats people like their slaves, he treats them like they're his own property, because he lies and cheats and steals from them. He blows up and yells at them every chance he gets. But this passage says you can't do that. You can't be a different person at work than you are at home. Because Jesus is supposed to change your life there as well. He's supposed to change your life where it hurts. It hurts when it starts affecting your pocketbook, doesn't it? It hurts when it starts affecting your income. But the gospel is supposed to do that too. It's supposed to hurt in those ways as well.

By the way, that's one of the greatest ways the gospel can change a person, because it doesn't cost you a lot to be a Christian in here. It doesn't cost you a lot to be a Christian when you come to church. It costs you a lot when you go to work. That's where the sacrifice is often made. Because you can't act like they do. You can't talk like they do. You can't think like they do. It leads to another application here, another way to apply this to our lives. And that is that this is what salvation does as well. It's changes the way you treat people. It changes the way you interact with them. Because if you remember this whole passage, it's about relationships, relationship between a husband and a wife, and a parent and a child. And now this is about the relationship between master and slave in the work environment. Because it's supposed to impact how you treat people there. It doesn't just change you in a theoretic way, it doesn't just change you in a heavenly spiritual way, it also changes the way you talk to the guy sitting next to you at your desk. And this is important. I mean, it's such a big deal, because we often think that people are so expendable at work don't we? We often think people don't matter there, because at work, it's all about the bottom line. It's all about the almighty dollar. Because the company needs to turn a profit, it needs to make some money. And if people can't do that, you get rid of them, right? You fire them, lay

them off. You can add to this, that we're all so busy nowadays. Our lives are so crazy that it's hard to pay attention to people at work, it's hard to give them the time of day, because you have so much going on. It's like a rat race. But Paul says that as a Christian, you need to pay attention to people. You need to make time for them. That's what pleases God the most, that's what honors Him. I mean, some of you may need to change jobs. If your job is such that you can't, you're losing your testimony with people, you can't serve people, you don't have time for people, you may have to switch careers, it may mean some of you will have to make less money, less income. But there needs to be a change on the personal level.

You know, I'll never forget the first time I ever worked for somebody. The first time I ever had a job in high school because I worked for a store called 'The Furniture Barn'. It was just this old furniture store that had me come in on Saturdays and sweep the place and take out the trash. There's nothing special. But the reason I'll never forget it is because of how they treated me. They were they were so kind to me. They were so gracious. They were kind of like my adoptive grandparents. When I go back to my hometown now, they still ask me how I'm doing. They keep asking me if I ever found a girlfriend and I show them Katie. And they're very blessed by that. I don't remember what they paid me. I think it was \$4.25/hour if you can believe that. It was minimum wage back then. But all I remember is how they took an interest in my life. And that's what this passage is talking about. We need to do that for people. We need to take an interest in their lives, at work, on the job. We can't lose sight of this. Because listen, friends, our town is growing economically. I mean, this town is getting richer. People are making more money than ever before. And there's a temptation to have your head turned by that. There's a temptation to lose perspective. I mean, the money is good for the economy, but it brings its own problems. Because the Bible says the love of money is the root of all evil. It doesn't say the money is evil. It doesn't say money is wicked, but the love of it is. The worship of money is wicked. It also says that greedy people will not inherit the kingdom of God. It says they won't go to heaven, because their loyalties are divided. They can't tell which one's more important to them- God, or money.

You can't go to heaven like that. You can't have one foot in this kingdom and one foot in that one. Both feet have to be in the same place. That's why Matthew 6:24 says, "No one can serve two masters for he will either hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." And that's an interesting passage there. It's an interesting statement, because it actually gives you a choice. It gives you an option and says, you can serve God or wealth. You can have God or treasure, but you can't have both. So the question is which one will it be? Which one will you serve this morning? I hope that you choose God. I hope that you serve Him, because let me tell you, He is a good Master, amen? He's a wonderful Lord. And I want to tell you also that money is a terrible one. Money is a terrible master. Because it's never satisfied. It's never enough you can never make enough money. It is like being on a rat race, just chasing the cheese. But God is a guy that you can always be satisfied in. You can always take delight in Him.

You know, the story is told at the time, that John Wesley, the pastor was visiting with a wealthy man in England, very, very rich man. And the rich man showed him all his treasures and his wealth and his gardens and his servants and all these people. And afterwards, he asked John Wesley, he said, "Well, what do you think?" And John Wesley said these words, he said, "I think you're going to have a hard time giving it up." To remind you friends, one day, you're all going to give it up. The money won't go with you. But the treasures in heaven will. Be sure to store up your treasure in heaven. Let me pray for us now that we would learn that important lesson.

Heavenly Father, as we study this important passage, and these very practical lessons, we pray for your grace and your help in taking them home with us. We don't want to hear the Word and just go out as those who ignore it, but we want to do what it says. We want to apply it Lord, we want to take these lessons home. So I pray Father, for my friends, that they would serve you above all else. Lord, that our hearts would not be taken in by the trappings of this world that we see among us. On one hand, we're grateful for the growth of the town. We're grateful, Father, for the new people, new faces that we see among us. But on the other hand, Father, we don't want to be tempted. We don't wanna lose our testimony. So I pray, Lord, for the men and women who are here, those who are listening online, that they would grow as Christians at work. That their stands for the gospel, their love for the truth and their their passion that they show here, for you, would transcend this place and go there. Would you bless them in their jobs on Monday as they're swinging a hammer, as they're looking at patients, as they're driving a truck, all the things that they do, Lord, that Christ would be glorified and magnified in that place? Would they be reminded of these important things? And for those who are bosses and managers and overseers, that they would see the great responsibility they have, to care for people. Lord, would we all remember this. Thank you for your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Savior, and our Master, and our Lord. And may we please Him now, as we celebrate the Lord's Supper, would He be glorified. We pray in Jesus name. Amen.