



Outward Group Discussion Guide

August 23, 2026

SUMMARY

Drawing from 1 Timothy 6:1-2, this sermon explores how Christians are called to navigate authority structures in a way that honors God and advances the gospel. While addressing instructions originally given to slaves in the first-century Roman Empire, the pastor draws out timeless principles applicable to all believers in any position of submission. The sermon argues that rebellion and disrespect within the body of Christ undermine the church's gospel witness, while humble, Christ-like servanthood adorns and amplifies it. The ultimate goal of every instruction regarding authority is not merely social order but the fame and glory of God. Grounded in the example of Jesus, who humbled himself to the point of death, believers are called to a radical, inside-out transformation that produces joyful, worshipful submission in even the most difficult circumstances.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The sermon describes our conduct under authority as either adorning or reviling the gospel -- in what specific ways have you seen your behavior at work or under authority either attract others to or push others away from faith in Christ?
2. Paul instructs slaves to regard their masters as worthy of all honor even in unjust circumstances -- how do you personally reconcile the call to honor authority with the call to pursue justice, and where do you think the line is?
3. The sermon suggests that the gospel gives us power to do things we would not naturally do, such as serving cheerfully in difficult circumstances -- can you recall a time when the gospel enabled you to respond in a way that surprised even yourself, and what did that reveal about God's power in you?
4. C.S. Lewis argues that an internal posture of humility is what preserves genuine equality in the world -- do you agree that hierarchy and equality can coexist, and how does the example of Christ in Philippians 2 shape how you think about that tension?

5. The sermon warns against 'eye service,' acting one way in front of authority and another way behind their back -- in what areas of your life are you most tempted toward this kind of inconsistency, and what does that reveal about where your true allegiance lies?
6. Paul's priority in this passage is the inside-out transformation of the heart rather than the immediate dismantling of unjust social structures -- do you find this emphasis freeing or frustrating, and what does your reaction reveal about what you most deeply believe God cares about?
7. The sermon draws a parallel between first-century slavery and the modern employer-employee relationship -- where else in your life do you experience authority structures, and how intentionally are you thinking about those relationships as opportunities for gospel witness?
8. Philippians 4 describes contentment as something Paul had to learn in every circumstance, not just favorable ones -- what does it look like practically to pursue that kind of learned contentment rather than waiting for your

circumstances to improve before you can thrive spiritually?

9. The sermon suggests that rebellion against authority, even when that authority is flawed, can undermine the church's gospel influence -- how does a community of believers balance holding leaders accountable with maintaining a posture of humility and submission?
10. The pastor describes worship as the act of placing ourselves under God's ultimate authority and acknowledging that we were created to be ruled by him -- how does understanding your daily submission to earthly authority as an act of worship change the way you approach those relationships?