

# FAMILY: God's Way: Christ in the Office

Ephesians 6:5-9

*Pastor Jason Dennett's Notes*

***NKJV - "Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him."***

**I. The Duty of Christian EMPLOYEES.**

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In the days of the Early Church, there were approximately 6 million slaves in the Roman Empire. In this period of human history, the curse of slavery was an accepted institution across most of the world. In the New Testament however, though slavery is not openly attacked or condemned, the Christian worldview clearly opposed it and undermined it. As a matter of historical fact, it was the teachings of Jesus, and the preaching of men like Paul and Peter, that led to the destruction of slavery, and a cultural revolution within the Roman Empire.

In a similar fashion, centuries later, it was Christian ministers such as John Wesley, George Whitfield, and William Wilberforce that resulted in the abolition of slavery, downfall of child labor, the rightful elevation of women, and a revival in the care of the poor and needy. It is historical fact that wherever the Christian Gospel has penetrated, it has contributed to the liberty of mankind, the destruction of slavery, and the spreading of human freedom.

Here the word "**servants**" undoubtedly refers to Christian slaves, but we can certainly apply these words to the Christian employee today.

**Paul gives 3 commands to Christian servants: Obey-Work-Look!**

## #1 - **To OBEY, as unto Jesus!** - "*Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ..*"

- **This command focuses on the employees HEART!** Paul wanted the Christian servants to know that when they were working, they were really **serv**ing **Christ**. Though they had "*masters according to the flesh,*" but their true Master was in Heaven! They were to obey their employers, as if they were doing it unto Christ Himself - "*..be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh..as to Christ.*"
- **The fact that an employee and his employer are both Christians is no excuse for him to be lackadaisical, or disrespectful.** Rather, it is a good reason for the employee to be even more faithful obedient to the instructions of his boss. If regular employees should be obedient to their employer, how much MORE should a Christian - "*..with fear and trembling..*"  
*In 2012 a study conducted by CareerBuilder found that cursing and using profanity is common everywhere, including the workplace. The survey found that more than half of the people who were polled said they cursed while on the job. Of those, 95% admitted that they used profanity in front of coworkers, and more than half said they had cursed within earshot of their supervisors. Even 25% of supervisors admitted that they had directed profanity toward employees. The study also found that using profanity in the workplace is a bad idea. 64% of employers said they think less of an employee who repeatedly swears on the job, and 57% said they would be less likely to promote that person. They may never know their bad language is why they didn't get hired or didn't get a promotion. Curse words are disrespectful and do nothing to help a person gain respect!*
- **The Christians employee should always show proper obedience and respect for his employer.** He should devote his full attention and all his energy to the job at hand - "*..in sincerity of heart..*"
  - **1 Sam 16:7** - "*For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*" (**YOU??**)

## #2 - **To WORK, as unto Jesus!** - "*..not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart..*"

- **This command focuses on the employees HANDS!** The Christian worker must avoid doing "**eye service**" - working only when the boss is watching, or working extra hard when he is watching to give the impression he is doing a very good job. There were tasks assigned to these slaves that they detested, but they were to

perform them just the same, so long as they were not disobeying the will of God, and they were to work **HARD**, as if they were working for Jesus...**because they are!**

- In Paul's day, slaves were treated like pieces of property, and a Christian slaver might receive even harsher treatment from his master because of his faith. However, not even harsh treatment from his boss was not to keep the Christian worker from doing his best. We are to work for Christ, not men.
- **1 Pet 2:18-21** - "*You who are slaves must accept the authority of your masters with all respect. Do what they tell you - not only if they are kind and reasonable, but **even if they are cruel**. For God is pleased with you **when you do what you know is right and patiently endure unfair treatment**. Of course, you get no credit for being patient if you are beaten for doing wrong. But **if you suffer for doing good and endure it patiently, God is pleased with you**. For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, **just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps.**"*
- Doing a good job as an employee is the will of God for Christian employees - "*..doing **the will of God** from the heart."* Christianity knows nothing of "sacred and secular". A Christian should use his WORK as an expression of WORSHIP! The best way to be a great **witness** is to be a great **worker!**

**#3 - To **LOOK**, as unto Jesus!** - "*..as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.*"

- **This command focuses on the employees **HEAVEN!**** Paul's third argument is that the employees must remember, that one day, **they will be rewarded** by the Lord Himself for their labor and attitude. Christian employees today must remember that we shall receive our rewards from Christ, not from men.
- **Heb 6:10 NLT** - "*For God is not unjust. He will **not forget how hard you have worked** for Him.."*
- **2Tim 4:6-8 NLT** - "*The time of my death is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. **And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me** on the day of his return. And **the prize is not just for me** but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing."*
- **Rev 22:12 NLT** - "*Look, I am coming soon, **bringing my reward with me to repay all people** according to their deeds."*

## II. The Duty of Christian **EMPLOYERS.**

### #1 - To bless your employees, **PRACTICALLY.** - "**And you, masters, do the same things to them..**"

- If the Christian employer expects his workers to do their best for him, then Paul commands that **he must do his best for them in return!** The Christian boss must serve Jesus from his heart, if he expects his employees to do the same. He must not exploit them!
- **From 1992 to 2002, Swedish researchers at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm tracked more than 3,000 men, rating them and their perceptions about their bosses. By the end of the study, 74 of the men had suffered heart attacks or other serious cardiac events. The lower an employer's leadership score, the higher the worker's risk of heart problems. The chance of heart attack also increased with the number of years of exposure to the bad boss.**
- **"A friend of mine was promoted to a place of executive leadership and, unfortunately, it went to his head. He enjoyed all of his executive privileges and more, and never lost an opportunity to remind his employees who was in charge. But he lost the respect of his workers, and production and efficiency went down so fast that the board had to replace him. Because my friend forgot that he had a "Master in heaven," he failed to be a good "master on earth." - Warren Wiersbe**
- **With a salary of \$350,000, Raymond Burse is paid well for the challenges he faces as the president of Kentucky State University. In August 2014 Burse took a voluntary pay cut to \$260,000. Burse directed that the \$90,000 the university didn't pay him should be used to provide \$3 per hour raises to all the university's minimum-wage workers. When asked why he was willing to do this, he replied, "You don't give up \$90,000 for publicity. I did this for the people. This is something I've been thinking about from the very beginning." Caring for others is a character matter. It is one thing to your employees should be paid more. It's quite another to put your own paycheck on the line!!**
- **One of the greatest examples of this in the Bible is **BOAZ** in the Book of Ruth.** He greeted his workers with, "**The Lord be with you!**" And they replied, "**The Lord bless you!**" (**Ruth 2:4**) Boaz was **sensitive to the needs of his employees** and generous to the stranger, Ruth. His relationship with his workers was one of **mutual respect and a desire to glorify the Lord**. It is unfortunate when any employee says, "**My boss is supposed to be a Christian, but you'd never know it!**"

## #2 - To respect your employees, **SPIRITUALLY**. -

*"..giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him."*

- This is when a Christian boss practices the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Jesus taught that the way to be "the boss" is first to be "a slave" (Mt 25:21). Biblically, any Christian leader who is not operating under Jesus' authority themselves, really has no right to exercise authority over others.
- This is why many of the great men of the Bible were first servants before God made them rulers: Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, and Nehemiah are just a few examples. Even after a man becomes a leader, he must still lead by serving. An African proverb says, **"The chief is servant of all."** But Jesus said it even better: *"And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Mt 20:27)*

*During the NFL off-season, two employees in the Denver Broncos front office were convicted of DUIs. Team president John Elway suspended both of them, but he did not fire them. When asked why the 2 employees weren't fired, Elway replied, "Well, I've made a lot of poor decisions too. I believe in second chances."*

- Christian Bosses are to treat their employees as their "Heavenly Boss" would have them do! They should relate to their workers knowing that their "Boss" is watching over them, and how they treat their people:

*An upscale bakery in Split, Croatia, had a problem with break-ins until they put one of Hollywood's leading tough guys to work. As a joke, employees of the bakery put a life-size poster of Chuck Norris in the window along with a sign reading, "The shop is under the protection of Chuck Norris." When the sign went up, the break-ins stopped. Employees said the idea worked better than anyone thought. They said everyone in town is familiar with Norris' movies; even the thieves seem to respect him and have left the shop alone. Since the sign went up, several people have even stopped in to ask for Norris's autograph!!*