

## **Masters and Slaves**

Ephesians 6:5-9

### **INTRODUCTION**

<sup>18</sup> *Slaves, in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. <sup>19</sup> For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. (1 Peter 2:18-19)*

***Am I willing to endure unjust suffering because I am conscious of God?***

### **A Word to Slaves (6:5-8)**

<sup>5</sup> *Slaves...*

“Slaves were the lowest class of society and even freed criminals had more rights. Slaves had no rights at all in fact and certainly no legal status or individuality. They could not create relations or families, nor could they own property. To all intents and purposes they were merely the property of a particular owner, just like any other piece of property - a building, a chair or a vase - the only difference was that they could speak.”

<https://www.worldhistory.org/article/629/slavery-in-the-roman-world/>

*...obey your earthly masters...*

And now he outlines HOW they should do so:

#### **With Respect**

*...with respect and fear...*

Related passage: Philippians 2:12

#### **With Sincerity**

*...and with sincerity of heart...*

*...just as you would obey Christ.*

## **With Integrity**

*<sup>6</sup>Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. <sup>7</sup>Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people...*

*<sup>8</sup>because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.*

Related texts: Matthew 5:16; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10

## **1 Peter 2:18-23**

### **A Word to Masters (6:9)**

*<sup>9</sup>And masters, treat your slaves in the same way.*

“in the same way” as what?

- With respect
- With sincerity
- With integrity

*Do not threaten them...*

*...since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.*

## **Questions for Personal Reflection/Group Discussion**

1. If you someone UNDER authority, what might it look like to submit/obey with all due respect, sincerity of heart, and integrity of character? Brainstorm several ideas.
2. If you someone IN authority, what might it look like to lead with all due respect, sincerity of heart, and integrity of character? Also, to NOT leverage your power to manipulate or control. Brainstorm several ideas.
3. What might it look like to endure unjust suffering because I am conscious of God?
4. Have you thought about the idea of facing persecution? If so, what kind of emotions and thoughts does this stir? How might we challenge one another to be ready to suffer for the cause of Christ?

