

# The Christian Worker

In our text, Paul continues his teaching about how believers, filled with the Spirit, relate to one another in relationships that involve authority. Here he speaks about the relationship between slaves and masters. Listen to the first 10 minutes of Sandy's 2/9/14 AM sermon to hear what the New Testament has to say about human slavery, but also notice how applicable this text is to all of us in our workplaces.

## Ephesians 6:5-8

**5** Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, **6** not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, **7** rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, **8** knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.

Let's make three primary observations: 1) Christ cares about your work, 2) Christ transforms your workplace into a sanctuary, and 3) Christ will richly reward you for your faithful service.

### I. Christ cares about your work (vs. 5)

We notice this truth in the very first word Paul speaks: "Slaves..." In the first century, slaves were not addressed by ethicists, only the masters; but Paul speaks four verses to the slaves, and only one to the masters. He obviously takes their work (and your work) very seriously.

### II. Christ transforms your workplace into a sanctuary (vs. 5-7)

Paul's big idea is that we work not ultimately for our earthly master, but for Christ Himself. We find the name of Christ in all four verses. This being the case, then, we work:

- respectfully ("obey...with fear and trembling")
- sincerely—even when the boss is not looking
- wholeheartedly ("from the heart {soul}")—from our deepest religious convictions
- enthusiastically ("with a good will")

Only the Spirit-filled believer in Christ can possibly walk in this way.

### III. Christ will richly reward you for your faithful service (vs. 8)

Christ indeed rewards us even in this life with the deep satisfaction of knowing that we have pleased Him, but here Paul is no doubt pointing primarily to the great day to come when we stand before the throne of God. No words will be more beautiful than these: "Well done, good and faithful servant...Enter into the joy of your master."

## Discussion Questions

1. Why is it vital that followers of Christ learn how to submit to their earthly masters?

2. What are the traits of Christian submission in vv. 5-7 that are most rare in today's workplaces?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What are the motivations of the believer in the workplace? What are some practical ways in which we can cultivate those motivations in our work experience?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. How does Christ reward us now for our faithfulness? How will He do it later?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What are the keys to dealing successfully with an incompetent or unkind boss?

**Going Deeper**

1. What is your biggest struggle in offering godly submission to those over you in the workplace?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What steps can you take to put Paul's teachings into practice?