

# The Gospel Goes to Work

**Ephesians 6:5-9 – <sup>5</sup> Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, <sup>6</sup> not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, <sup>7</sup> rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, <sup>8</sup> knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. <sup>9</sup> Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that He who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with Him.**

**Opening:** Ephesians 6 tells us that Jesus cares not only about what we do on Sunday, but also what happens in our hearts while working, be it our attitudes between 9-5 or our motivations while vacuuming the carpet.

- Martin Luther: “The maid who sweeps her kitchen is doing the will of God just as much as the monk who prays—not because she may sing a Christian hymn as she sweeps but because God loves clean floors. The Christian shoemaker does his Christian duty not by putting little crosses on the shoes, but by making good shoes, because God is interested in good craftsmanship.”
- Jesus calls us to walk with Him for His glory in our daily lives and mundane tasks (1 Corinthians 10:31), in contrast to having my “Jesus life” and then my “real life.”
- **Roman 11:36 – For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen.** This tells us that your work is from Jesus; your work is through Jesus; your work is to Jesus; and your work is for the glory of Jesus.

1. We display Jesus in our work by having a submissive behavior (5a).

<sup>5a</sup> **Bondservants, obey your earthly masters.**

a. Why use *bondservants* and *masters*? It is written in the time of Roman slavery.

b. Christianity and Roman Slavery. Why didn’t Paul just directly condemn slavery?

1) Although Paul did not outrightly condemn slavery here, he did not condone it.

2) Paul’s instruction focuses primarily on Gospel heart-change rather than institutional change.

3) It was this new Gospel ethic (that all persons are fully made in God’s image) which ultimately destroyed slavery and continues to transform work relationships today.

c. That is our ultimate answer to the critic who asks, *Why didn’t Paul condemn slavery?* The answer is really a counter-question: “Why are you not treating other people as God has treated you now?”

2. We display Jesus in our work by having a respectful attitude (5b).

<sup>5b</sup> **Obey...with fear and trembling.**

3. We display Jesus in our work by having integrity (5c).

<sup>5c</sup> **With a sincere heart.**

4. We display Jesus in our work by having this motive (5d):

<sup>5d</sup> **As you would Christ.**

➤ **Colossians 3:23-24 – <sup>23</sup> Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.**

5. We display Jesus in our work through diligence (6).

**<sup>6</sup> not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.**

6. We display Jesus in our work by having joyful enthusiasm (7-8).

**<sup>7</sup> rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, <sup>8</sup> knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.**

7. We display Jesus in our work by treating our employees with Christ's care and love (9).

**<sup>9</sup> Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that He who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with Him.**

**Conclusion:** Our study this morning reminds us that the Gospel of Jesus redeeming believing sinners changes our lives in very practical ways of grace – how we approach our jobs, retirement, schoolwork, and housework each day.