



## Lesson #5: Your Work (Colossians 3:22-4:1)

We've recently looked at how the Gospel is lived out at our homes and family and today we are going to focus on what it means to wrap up in Jesus at our workplace. While throughout history there have likely been scores of people who have attempted to use today's text to oppress others let me be clear about what this text is not teaching. The Bible is NOT pro - \_\_\_\_\_. The Greek word *doulos* (used here in this text) is used \_\_\_\_\_ times in the NT and \_\_\_\_\_% of the time it is translated as "\_\_\_\_\_."

Paul is telling the servants that they need to obey their earthly masters in everthing not out of fear of the masters, but out of service and respect of the \_\_\_\_\_ who is ultimately their \_\_\_\_\_. Since most of us will one day spend \_\_\_\_\_ or more of our waking hours involved in work, if we are wrapped up in Jesus, what better place to start than at the workplace. Thus the key phrase of this passage is found in verse 24: "*For ye serve the Lord Christ.*"

What then should a Christian worker look like? In Colossians 3:22-4:1 Paul addresses both roles in the workplace – employees and employers – and provides each one with keys for Jesus-wrapped employment.

### When Christ is Lord, Employees will work \_\_\_\_\_ (3:22-25)

Believing employees actually have a higher calling than unbelieving employees, since they are "elect, holy, and beloved" (cf. 3:13). Indeed they are employees of Christ. But to help them make that invisible reality a visible practice on earth, Paul provides them with three key things to keep in mind in the workplace.

#### A. Working heartily means \_\_\_\_\_ to your authority (v.22a)

Obedience is fundamentally what employees are called to by Christ. The word "\_\_\_\_\_" used here is the same word used earlier in Paul's command for children to "\_\_\_\_\_" their parents (3:20). It is also the same word used to describe the obedience of the Savior Himself that accomplishes righteousness for us (Romans 5:19; Hebrews 5:8). Therefore, those who have submitted to the Lordship of Christ will be careful to wear His same garment of \_\_\_\_\_. Paul says you should "*obey in all things*" which further emphasizes the non-negotiable nature of this command.

B. Working heartily means \_\_\_\_\_ in your doings (v. 22b-33)  
We discovered with the Lord's command to children that Jesus wants both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ respect. Similarly, the obedience of an employee to his employer must be done with genuineness and sincerity.

#### C. Working heartily means \_\_\_\_\_ directed compensation (v. 24-25)

In the realm of employment, we may witness grave inequity and mistreatment. We may understandably complain about our wages on earth, but by faith we must recognize that in the big picture, we will \_\_\_\_\_ what we \_\_\_\_\_. There is both a positive and negative aspect to this verse: Heavenly \_\_\_\_\_ for sincere obedience and \_\_\_\_\_ for insubordination.

### When Christ is Lord, Employers will Command \_\_\_\_\_ (4:1)

In this verse, Paul in one sense puts the employers in the same boat as the employees reminding them that "*you also have a \_\_\_\_\_ in Heaven.*" Therefore, believing employers should view themselves as employees under Christ.

#### A. Healthy employers will treat their employees \_\_\_\_\_

God unequivocally commands masters to "*give unto your servants what is just and equal.*"

- That word "*just*" could be translated "right" or "upright" and refers to that which is in accordance with God's \_\_\_\_\_.
- The word "*equal*" could be translated "\_\_\_\_\_" and carries the idea of equality.

This kind of justice is practiced in the context of graciousness. Employees have been instructed to demonstrate the highest Christian ethics in performing their duties from the heart. The employers are now commanded to do the same in relation to their employees.

#### B. Healthy employers will take their responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Paul wants believing employers to preach to themselves the reality of their own subjection to Jesus, for they "*know that you also have a Master in Heaven.*" The Christian employer should remember that he too is a person under \_\_\_\_\_. He must stand before God and given an account of how he handled his responsibility to boss others.

### Concluding Thoughts

Let's not forget who we work for. Whether we are employees of employers we all work for the same \_\_\_\_\_. From this text a theology of work emerges. Genuine service in honest vocation brings \_\_\_\_\_ to God. To summarize simply, believing employees and employers should wrap-up their workplaces in Jesus Christ.