

How to Serve God as Someone Else's Master

Colossians 3:22 – 4:1

- NKJ** ²² Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. ²³ And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. ²⁵ But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality. ^{4:1} Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.
- BGT** ²² Οἱ δούλοι, ὑπακούετε κατὰ πάντα τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις, μὴ ἐν ὀφθαλμοδουλίᾳ ὡς ἀνθρωπάρεσκοι, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀπλότῃ καρδίᾳ φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον. ²³ ὃ ἐὰν ποιήτε, ἐκ ψυχῆς ἐργάζεσθε ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώποις, ²⁴ εἰδότες ὅτι ἀπὸ κυρίου ἀπολήψεσθε τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν τῆς κληρονομίας. τῷ κυρίῳ Χριστῷ δουλεύετε· ²⁵ ὁ γὰρ ἀδικῶν κομίσεται ὃ ἠδίκησεν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν προσωποληψία. ^{4:1} Οἱ κύριοι, τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὴν ἰσότητα τοῖς δούλοις παρέχεσθε, εἰδότες ὅτι καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔχετε κύριον ἐν οὐρανῷ.

REVIEW

If then you were raised with Christ,

- **BE SEEKING the Above Things (Col 3:1)**
- **BE THINKING the Above Things (Col 3:2)**
- **PUT TO DEATH Sinful Motivations (Col 3:5-7)**
- **PUT OFF Sinful Actions (Col 3:8-11)**
- **CLOTHE YOURSELF with Spiritual Clothing (Col 3:12-14)**
- **LET the Peace of Christ RULE Between You and Others (Col 3:15)**
- **LET the Word of Christ DWELL in You Richly (Col 3:16-17)**
 - **As Wives, BE SUBJECTING Yourself to Your Husbands (Col 3:18)**
 - **As Husbands, BE LOVING Your Wives, and Do Not Be Embittered Towards Them (Col 3:19)**
 - **As Children, BE OBEYING Your Parents in All Things (Col 3:20)**
 - **As Fathers, DO NOT BE AGITATING Your Children (Col 3:21)**
 - **As Slaves, BE OBEYING Your Masters in All Things (Col 3:22-25)**

1. The Role Addressed – Masters

a. God addresses reciprocal relationships in Colossians 3:

- i. Wives/Husbands
- ii. Children/Fathers
- iii. Slaves/Masters

b. Slaves = ones who are under the control of others

- i. Verse 22 – Bondservants (lit. slaves)
- ii. Verse 22 – not with “eye-slaving”
- iii. Verse 23 – “for the Lord you are slaving”
- iv. Verse 4:1 – Masters be granting “to the slaves”

c. Masters = ones who are in control of others – the term *kurios* (**lord**)

- i. Verse 18 – “as is fitting in the Lord”
- ii. Verse 20 – “for this is well-pleasing to the Lord”
- iii. Verse 22 – slaves obey your “of the flesh” lords
- iv. Verse 22 – fearing the Lord
- v. Verse 23 – be working, as to the Lord
- vi. Verse 23 – from the Lord you will receive compensation
- vii. Verse 23 – you are serving the Lord Christ
- viii. Verse 4:1 – the lords, be granting...
- ix. Verse 4:1 – you have a Lord in heaven.

d. God has expectations for every person in any position.

2. Thre Responsibility Assigned – Be Granting! (or Be Showing!)

- a. Lit. “the lords, that which is righteous and that which is equal, be granting”
- b. Paul doesn’t address slavery (“free the slaves”).
Masters are not equivalent to “owners” oftentimes. Your boss at work may not be the owner of the company. He might be your master, and someone else’s slave.
- c. The focus is on two characteristics on how to be granting
- d. Just – regarding treatment – What is proper, honest – righteous (applied to a just measure, a just rule) – do right by your slaves; what is “right” by them as God’s creatures created in the image of God; humanitarian treatment beyond the law.
- e. Fair – Regarding payment – What is equal – fair – fair return on the hard work of the slaves
- f. In the converse, as slaves, we should not expect pay beyond our work – the Bible teaches us to work for what we eat, not to expect handouts. It is not wrong to enjoy the generosity of a master, but it is wrong to expect it as a debt owed to you when you have not worked for it.

3. The Reason Stated – Knowing...

- a. Knowing that you also have a Master (lit. “Lord”) in heaven.
- b. Our actions are based upon things that we know. (thus the importance of knowing!!)
- c. Same phrase as used for the reason for slaves in verse 23.
- d. You might be “a” lord but you answer to “the” Lord.
- e. Even masters have a Master in heaven.
- f. God is in charge of everyone. (God oversees your boss!)
- g. All roles answer to God.
- h. God takes responsibility for those He places over us.

Though there may be times that we can approach those that are assigned by God to be over us to confront sin or encourage or assist, our focus is not to “fix the earthly lord” but to serve our heavenly Lord. If we cannot approach our earthly lords, we can be confident that the heavenly Lord is still in charge.

- i. **We all will account to the Lord for what we do.**
 - i. **Rom 14:10-12** ¹⁰ But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. ¹¹ For it is written: “As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.” ¹² So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.
 - ii. **2 Cor 5:9-10** ⁹ Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.
 - iii. **Eph 6:5-9** ⁵ Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ⁶ not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he is* a slave or free. ⁹ 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.

What is your role (or what are your roles)?

Are you living your life as a Christian in each role?

Are you fully committed to serving the Lord in each role, as opposed to reacting and responding to men?

We serve the Lord in any role. God will reward us for eternity how we serve Him here.