

Rooted in Christ – A Study of Colossians—Lesson 19

Women of Grace | GraceLife Church

Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but with integrity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. Serve the Lord Christ. For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality. Masters, show to your slaves what is right and fair, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.

--Colossians 3:22-4:1

Day 1—Verse 22

Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but with integrity of heart, fearing the Lord.

--Colossians 3:22

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1. Why are wives to submit, but children and slaves are to obey?
 2. None of us are slaves to an earthly master, so how might this verse apply to us?
 3. Are there limits in the command to “obey in all things”?

Heart Check:

- Are there any areas where you are desiring to please man? How can this lead to compromise in your walk with the Lord?

Day 2—Verse 22

Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but with integrity of heart, fearing the Lord.
--Colossians 3:22

1. Define integrity of heart.
 - a. Why is it so important that the heart matches the outward conduct?
2. What should be our motivation to obey those who have authority over us?
3. In Scripture, the Lord and the Apostles use the spiritual picture of slavery to define our relationship to Christ. Why is this? Use Scripture to support your answer.

4. Why do you think that Paul did not simply command the abolishment of slavery?
 - a. Does this mean we should never work to abolish slavery?

5. Slavery was a normal part of life in the ancient world and was considered a foundational pillar of society. Slaves held various positions from cleaning and mining to the raising of children and running of businesses. Slaves were sometimes forced into slavery and sometimes became slaves voluntarily. What do we learn about slavery from the following verses in the Old Testament?
 - a. Exodus 21:16

 - b. Exodus 23:12

 - c. Leviticus 25:39-40

 - d. Leviticus 25:44-45

 - e. Leviticus 26:13

f. Deuteronomy 15:12-18

g. Deuteronomy 23:15-16

Heart Check:

- Do you only work when someone is looking?
- Is your heart towards your work or do you do it begrudgingly?

Day 3—Verse 23-24

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. Serve the Lord Christ. --Colossians 3:23-24

1. What is the connection between verses 17 and 23?
2. What does it mean to work heartily?
3. Who are we actually working for?
4. What do these verses teach us about work?

- a. Genesis 2:3
 - b. Genesis 2:15
 - c. Proverbs 14:23
 - d. Proverbs 12:11
 - e. 1 Timothy 5:8
 - f. 2 Timothy 2:6
5. Where does our inheritance come from?
6. What is our inheritance?
7. When we are submitting to earthly authority, who are we really submitting to?

Heart check:

6. What aspects of God's character does His impartiality towards the slave and the master point to?

7. How can we imitate God in His impartiality?

a. What should our response be when faced with situations in which partiality is taking place?

Heart Check:

- Do you often think about wrongdoing being punished? How can this cause you to live in greater fear of God and at the same time with hope when you see all the evil taking place in our world?

Day 5—Verse 4:1

Masters, show to your slaves what is right and fair, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven. --Colossians 4:1

1. How might this command have been shocking to first century people?

2. Define right and fair.
 - a. How is this a picture of God's character?

3. How might a slave and master who lived out these commands from Paul have been a powerful witness to their watching culture?

4. How might commands such as these have led over time to the abolishment of slavery?

5. How might the passage in James 2 on the sin of favouritism have been needed in a church with slaves and masters?

6. Read the parallel text in Eph. 6:9. What does Paul add to the instructions given there?

7. Col. 3:18-4:1 give a household code. How might it be comforting that the commands to wives, children, and slaves who were under authority are balanced with commands given to husbands, fathers, and masters?
 - a. How might it be challenging?

8. How might this verse apply to us today?

Dig Deeper:

- Read the book of Philemon. How does this book help you to better understand the master/slave relationship in the kingdom of God?
- If you are having trouble in your work, read Reagan Rose's *Redeeming Productivity* or go to his site: <https://redeemingproductivity.com/> for further resources to help.
- Read or listen (on Hoopla) to *Teach them to Work* by Mary Beeke. Erin found this book not only useful for teaching our children to work but for all areas of parenting. The book really helps teach you how to teach your children to work.