

DOING GOOD: "The Gospel at Work"

INTRODUCTION

- Question for Evaluation: Do you see your work as a means of worship and as a means of witness?
- **Titus 2:9-10** speaks to servants and slaves in the Roman Empire and by implication speaks to all of us who are employed or who work for someone.

THE CATEGORY (TITUS 2:9)

- "**Bondservants are to be submissive**" (v.6.) – Slavery was pervasive in the Roman Empire.
- Paul **speaks with dignity** to slaves, celebrates their freedom in Christ and calls them to live a transformed live for the glory of God.

Question: Why didn't Paul call for the abolition of slavery? Does the Bible tacitly endorse slavery?

1. The Bible clearly condemns the kidnapping of people (1 Tim 1:10 – "enslavers", Exodus 21:16 – kidnappers were to be put to death).
2. Submission does not mean that the Bible is endorsing the authority (e.g. 1 Peter 3:1-6 – submission even if the husbands does not obey God's Word).
3. The New Testament forbids Christians from voluntarily entering into slavery (1 Cor 7:23-24).
4. The New Testament encourages slaves to get out of slavery if providence permits (1 Cor 7:21).
5. Christian ethical behavior undermined slavery. Paul did not embrace the status quo. (Philemon 15-17).
6. The Bible censures racism (Acts 17:26 – "he made from one man every nation of mankind"; Gal 3:28-29). In the Roman Empire, slavery was not racially discriminate.
7. Paul was silent on the issue of abolition. The church does not exist for social revolution.

THE CONDUCT (TITUS 2:9-10)

Character Quality	Definition
1. Be Submissive ("to be submissive")	• "To come under rank; to take one's proper place."
2. Be Productive ("well-pleasing")	• "To do excellent work, to have a good attitude."
3. Be Respectful ("not argumentative")	• "Not answering back. Not a loudmouth."
4. Be Honest ("not pilfering")	• "Not stealing what is not yours."
5. Be Faithful ("showing all good faith")	• "Showing reliability, dependability, faithfulness."

Martin Luther was once approached by a working man who wanted to know how he could serve the Lord. Luther asked him, "What is your work now?" The man replied, "I'm a shoemaker." Much to the cobbler's surprise, Luther replied, "Then make a good shoe and sell it at a fair price."

THE COMMENDATION (TITUS 2:10)

- "so that in everything they may **adorn** the doctrine of God our Savior." – the Greek term *kosmeo* means to "make attractive", "to make appealing", "to beautify".
- The world is going to judge the gospel message based on what they see in us as Christians and how we live it out.

Sermon Application Questions

August 4, 2019

PERSONAL RESPONSES

1

Howard Hendricks tells the story of the exemplary flight attendant who summed up her perspective in this way: "I don't work for American Airlines. I work for Jesus Christ."

How would your conduct in the workplace change practically if you saw your work as an expression of worship to the Lord Jesus Christ?

2

Review the seven points Pastor Philip gave us in response to the question: "Why didn't Paul call for the abolition of slavery?" Of these points, which were the most helpful to you in your understanding of the New Testament's treatment of slavery?

DIGGING DEEPER

1

Take some time and reflect on some of the key passages related to this week's sermon. Ask the Lord for help in making application of these truths to your life.

Exodus 21:16 (ESV)

Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death.

1 Timothy 1:9-10 (ESV)

understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, **enslavers**, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

1 Corinthians 7:21-24 (ESV)

Were you a bondservant when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) For he who was called in the Lord as a bondservant is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise he who was free when called is a bondservant of Christ. You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men. So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God.

Philemon 15-16 (ESV)

For this perhaps is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back forever, no longer as a bondservant but more than a bondservant, as a beloved brother – especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

Galatians 3:28 (ESV)

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 4:28 (ESV)

Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

Acts 17:26 (NKJV)

And He has made from **one blood** every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,

2

Read Colossians 3:22-24. In your own words, answer the question: “How is the Christian motivation to excellence in the workplace radically different than that of an unbeliever?”

Evaluate your own motivation in school, business or sphere of influence. Is your heart motivation in line with the teaching of this text?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

1

Many Christians labor in difficult workplaces where management is unjust or where there are job practices that cause frustration.

Review the five character qualities of an excellent employee in Titus 2:9-10. Keep in mind that these were written to those who were slaves in the Roman Empire.

What is the most frustrating job you ever had? Of these five qualities, which do you find to be the most challenging to apply in a negative job environment?

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My reflection:

2

Pastor Philip exhorted us to live a life “adorn the doctrine of God our Savior” (Titus 2:10). Reflect on his closing exhortation:

“The gospel message will be judged today by the world looking at those who profess it. . . People have every right to judge Christianity based on your life and mine. The credibility of Christ and the respectability of reputation of Christianity hangs around our necks. You know this, Christians are the best argument for Christianity, but they are also the worst.”

Is there anything in the conduct of your life that is detracting from the reputation of Christianity in this society? What steps will you take to address this area of your life?

My Application: _____