

Slaves of Christ

Colossians 3:18-4:1

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Let's turn our Bibles to the Book of Colossians this morning. The Book of Colossians chapter number three, and we'll consider together verses 18 through chapter 4 verse number 1.

Colossians 3:18-4:1:

"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye service as men pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality. Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven."

Let us pray. Father, we come before You now in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, and we ask, O God, that You would speak, O Lord, and renew our minds to the power of the Word of Truth. We pray that You would send Your Holy Spirit to open the eyes of understanding, to make us good recipients of the Word of God. Give us willing hearts to subject ourselves to its truth, that You would also grant me the power that is needed, Lord, to rightly divide the Word of Truth and honor the Name of Jesus in the midst of Your people and ultimately, Lord, in the midst of Your presence as You are here now with us. So help us, we ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

We've been considering our series Through The Family, and we considered last week that In The Family was an odd group of people that we're not too familiar with seeing in most Australian households, and that was servants and masters. And we considered then the entire last sermon defining what a slave was in the ancient times and also defending the biblical position that it does not condone slavery, but the reasons why Paul doesn't deal with the overthrowing of slavery in the time. And so, having dealt with some of those accusations that are made against the Christian faith in re-

gard to slavery, we actually now move into the text itself and seek to learn and to understand what is the teaching here, what is the teaching of the passage, and what does it mean for us today as God's people as we come face to face with the truth of God even now in our generation.

And so, what I want us to do at first is to understand the attitude of how we are to approach this passage. In this passage that we're going to look at today that we just read, there's a high order, meaning there's a high priority that Paul is seeking to bring out that if we don't catch that high priority and that high order, we will miss the very heart of what this text is about. And that high order is that the priority of our relationship to Jesus Christ far exceeds the priority of our relationship to any earthly or social relationship. I said again, the high order or the high priority by which we are to approach this text is to understand that our relationship to Jesus Christ far surpasses our social relationships, whether it be husbands, wives, whether it be slaves, masters, whether it be children, parents, or parents in regards to their children.

And what Paul is seeking to do is to exalt our relationship to Christ as the preeminent one above all our earthly relationships. Now he does this particularly with the three groups of people in this passage that are considered the subordinate people, the ones that are called to submission. Now, you know that being called to submission, whether you're a child, a wife, or in the context of the Bible, even a slave, can be a very difficult thing. But I want us to see what Paul does in relationship to that, to help these people that are called to submission to understand the high priority of their submission as ultimately to Christ.

In verse 18, when he talks to the wives and addresses the wives, he says, "submit yourselves to your own husbands," and he says, "as is fitting in the Lord." In Ephesians, he says you do it as unto the Lord. Then when he speaks to the children, he says, "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord." He reminds the children that obedience to your parents ultimately pleases God. He reminds wives that your submission to your husband ultimately pleases that most high relationship with your relationship to God. And what he does also here is with the servants in regards to their masters, he helps them realize that your obedience to your master is not about your master, it's about your Master, which is in heaven, namely the Lord Himself. And so, what Paul seeks to try and do is to exalt the divine priority, the relationship of the divine to us rather than the relationship of men to men. And that's a very important thing to comprehend as we approach these texts of Scripture, and I want us to have that attitude as we approach these texts.

All those points can be made for a case also in Ephesians as well, that Paul

keeps pointing back to that relationship with Jesus Christ as the ground for their submission. And so, what Paul is simply saying here is he's trying to reorient the believers' thinking to not be so caught up in their earthly relationships that they forget their heavenly relationships, but to rather deal with their earthly relationships in light of the heavenly. To realize that the ultimate relationship that counts is their relationship toward God, and therefore what's important is that God expects us to behave this way to one another. But the first commandment and the greatest of these is, "Thou shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength." And the second is likened to this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The priority of loving God serves to our submission and our interrelationship with others. And what Paul is simply trying to say in this passage of scripture is this is to help the believers realize that what is important is not that we get our own way, but that God gets what He commands and desires. It's not about the husband getting what he wants, it's not about the wife getting what she wants, it's not about the children getting their way or the parents necessarily getting their way, it's not about the masters getting their way or the servants getting their way. What Paul's saying is all those relationships and the obedience of those relationships is so that God may be obeyed, glorified, and submitted to.

If you remember what we have looked at is that the Bible teaches us in Colossians, which is the theme of this book, in chapter 1 verse 18, he says that in all things He might have the preeminence. What does that look like? Well, it looks like obedience to Him as the priority rather than mere obedience to man without thought to God. He must have the preeminence in all things, and that would then teach us the attitude that should teach us and inform us as we look at this text.

So, I want you to look at verse 22 as we look at masters and slaves and how their responsibilities are to one another. And verse number 22 says, "Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God." Here we see that the position of a servant or a slave was one of obedience and submission, and it was in all things. Those all things are obviously limited by the authority of Scripture, as it was to all the other relationships which were commanded to obey or submit in all things. However, what is important here is Paul doesn't spend most of his time explaining what they are to submit to, but he is more concerned with how they are to submit, and he does this in verse number 22. He says, "Submit, obey your masters in all things according to the flesh," and he says, "not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, verse 23, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men."

And what Paul begins here is giving instructions to slaves, and he starts

with a negative, and he simply says, "So then, this is something in which you should not do in your service to your masters." And what you should not do is, "Bondservants should obey their masters in all things, but they should do it not with eye-service, as men-pleasers." And that simply means that they're not to please and they're not to serve their master to please the eye of the earthly or to render service as if and only for the fact that it is going to be inspected. What Paul wanted them to understand is to not have the attitude of, "I'll just do enough to get by because I know that my master is going to watch me." So, if my master watches me, all I simply need to do is enough so that he can tick it off and we can move on, and I won't get in trouble, so to speak. You know, the bare minimum attitude – that's when you're serving the eyes of men and not the eyes of God. This is having your eye on the taskmaster rather than the task. We all know what that's like: we have a duty to do, and we do it thinking about the person who told us to do it, making sure that we are doing enough to satisfy them, and we lose sight of the task. Therefore, we don't have joy in the task; we perhaps don't even do our best in the task. We're just thinking about how we're going to pass the test, and then the master will be fine with us or the person who gave us the instruction.

But Paul encourages the servants here not to serve with eye service as men pleasers. And he says to the Philippian Church, in the Church at Philippi, he commends them for their obedience, as he says, "because you obeyed not only in my presence but now, so much more even in my absence." When Paul spoke to the church at Philippi, he rejoiced in their obedience, not because they served in his presence only, but because when he was away, he heard that they were doing even more than when he was there. And this is what the Bible is teaching us about serving: that the servants are to serve in such a way that they are not just appearing to be present in the presence of the master, but they are to serve not as men pleasers, not just to satisfy men, but also, he gives not only the negative but gives positives on how we are to serve – not only not like this, but like this.

And he says that in verse number 22, "not as according to the flesh, not with eye service as men pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men." And he gives some positive instructions here for how they are to serve. He uses the word "sincerity." The word "sincerity" is a Greek word where we get the idea of "without folds," and it's like a napkin or a blanket that's open, and there are no folds or crevices. The idea is that when a napkin is folded or when the blanket has folds in it, there are hidden places that cannot be seen to the eye. And what Paul is saying here is that you serve without folds, meaning that you serve in such a way of sincerity that there are no hidden crevices in your heart or hidden agendas or motivators or things in your heart that are hidden. You serve in simplicity; you serve freely; you serve

openly and honestly. The idea is that you don't have pretense or craftiness or ulterior motivations in your service.

In fact, this word is picked up by Paul in Romans 12:8 when he talks about those who have the gift of giving, and he says that to those who have the gift of giving, you are to give with simplicity. What he is simply saying is you give with no strings attached; you don't give with all these complex thoughts going through your mind. You just give, as it could also be translated, liberally, freely. The idea is that in your heart, there are no reservations; you do this thing openly, without any hidden motives and ulterior motivations or strings attached to what you're doing.

And so, he says you serve positively with sincerity; you serve in a way that doesn't expect in return necessarily or with strings attached or with other motivations. But he says you don't need to serve this way, but he also says in verse number 22 that you are to serve in sincerity of heart and fearing God. You know, the sincerity of a man's heart or a woman's heart is measured by the amount in which they fear God. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and the fear of God is the consciousness that God sees and knows all things. The fear of God is the realization that, as the scripture says, all things are naked and open to the God with whom we must give an account.

And so, Paul says you serve in sincerity of heart, without any hidden motivations, and you do it in such a way that you fear God, knowing that God sees right through your heart. This is how you are to serve. It's a conscious awareness of God's nearness, of His presence, that the God who made us sees us, He knows our thoughts, He knows the intents of our heart, He knows the motivations of our own hearts. And what Paul is saying is that these servants don't degrade; don't fall into this kind of service that is not pleasing to God, where you try to please man and you have all these other motivations in your heart and you're not thinking of God, and you're just stuck in this relationship where you just have to do these things to get by, to please the master and move on so you can do the things you want to do. He's saying, don't think about that. You need to fear God and realize that God is calling you to do these things. He is spelling it out here in His Word for you, and Paul wanted them to understand this and to comprehend this.

But he also gives another way in which they are to positively serve, not only in sincerity of heart fearing God, but in verse 23, "Whatever you do, you are to do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men." Now, the word "heartily" literally means "out of the soul." And what he simply is saying is when you serve your masters, you are to serve them not merely out of the head, not merely just from the body and just going through the motions, but you are to be engaged. It's a soul work. Give your soul to it, give your

life to it, give your energy to it, give your diligence to it, give your love to it. Don't let this just be something that you do for the sake of doing, but do it with your heart, as it says there, "Whatever you do, do it heartily." But he says you do it as to the Lord.

And if I was to tell you, if you were a slave living in the ancient day, and I was telling you to serve your master not with eye service as men pleasers, but you need to be sincere, you need to fear God, and you need to do it in such a way that it comes from the heart, and imagine I never mentioned the words "as unto the Lord," that would be a very, very difficult thing to do, don't you think? So you want me to serve this man, you want me to serve this person, you want me to do this and obey my parents and do this and do that, and they're not very good to me all the time, they don't deserve such things, and you know, only if you knew them, and whatever you can add to the list of the murmurings that flow from our hearts when challenged with difficult tasks ahead of us. All you have to do is add on the words "as unto the Lord," as unto the Lord. And what Paul wanted them to understand is that I'm not telling you just to do it heartily for the sake of doing it heartily or sincerely for the sake of doing it sincerely. I'm telling you to do this as unto the Lord. God wants you to do this. Do it for Him. Would you do it for Him? Would you do it for His name? But it's serving man, it's not serving God. You know what Jesus said, "As much as you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto Me."

And then he proceeds to give instructions to masters in Colossians 4:1, he says, "Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven." He says to the masters that you have responsibilities too. You're going to be fair, you have to measure out your provision for the servants that are under your care, and you have to do that not partially, you are to do this impartially, and you have to do this with equity, with equality. You're not to favor one over the other, you ought to be fair, you ought to be righteous in how you deal with people under your care. He says you're not just to favor the ones that you love most necessarily. What he's basically saying to the masters is that you need to imitate God in the way that God deals with people. He's just, He's not unjust, He's fair in all His dealings, treats people as image bearers of God, not by how you feel or not in a way that is abusive, but in righteousness, meaning that the masters are bound by the instruction of God to be just and to be fair to those who are under their care. And therefore, they can't just operate under their own impulsive passions. They must deal in such a way as accountable to God.

This is what the Apostle Paul says in the next part here, knowing that you have a Master in heaven. He is basically reiterating the words, "Fear God." There is One who is above you, that is your Master, who looks down

on you and watches how you treat the people under your care. Do so, remembering that God is watching. You have a Master in heaven, and that Master in heaven is the Master, as it says in verse 24, who will reward and is the Master in verse 25 that will repay. He will reward good; He will repay evil for evil, as the Judge of all the earth shall do right. When He opens the books and judges every man according to his own works, God will justly judge the world, as Jesus will say, in righteousness, as the Scripture says, by that Man, Christ Jesus.

So, Paul is saying, you masters, you better realize that there is a Master in heaven that's watching you. He's coming again. Behold, the Judge stands at the door, and He's ready to come. And when He comes, He's going to set everything straight, and He's going to see the way you treated the people under your care, and you're going to have to give an account of the way that you've spoken to them, treated them, rewarded them, or lack of rewarded them for the things that they have done.

What Paul is saying here is wonderful. He's simply saying, as a master, you also are a servant. In Colossians 4:1, he says, "Masters, give to your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven." Here is the Apostle Paul saying to them, as a master, that you also are a slave. You have a Master, and by implication of the fact that you have a Master, that means you are a slave to someone else. It's not just the person under your care that is serving you; they're actually serving the Lord. But listen, you also need to serve the Lord. You're also going to give an account of yourself to the great Master, and you also are His servant.

This is revolutionary to any relationship. This revolutionizes the way in which we view those relationships. Paul is saying to the servants, "Stop looking at your masters; look at your heavenly Master. Get your eyes off them and look at the heavenly Master; otherwise, you won't have grace to serve." And then he says to the masters, "Get your eyes off the slaves and look at your Master in heaven because He's going to judge you for the way that you treat those slaves."

What Paul is doing is revolutionizing the societal relationships, and he's saying it's not about your relationships; it's about Him and your relationship toward Him. It's not about the master and the slave; it's the fact that you're both slaves to Jesus Christ. It's not about the husbands and the wives who need to do what and be what; they do what they do because they're looking to Him. Get your eyes off your husband, get your eyes off your wife, look to Jesus Christ. Get your eyes off your parents, get your eyes off your children, look to Jesus Christ. I'm not saying we're not to minister to them, but if you are doing it as unto them, you will soon be discouraged and soon give up hope and not obey the word of truth. But

Paul says higher priorities need to be had in all these relationships: look unto Jesus and see that you are to serve Him and not man.

What Paul is simply saying is, in all your relationships, the one face that you should see as you're serving others is the face of Jesus Christ. He's your Owner; He is your Master. And that really takes out all the drudgery that may exist in your heart toward submission or obedience. Such a drag to obey mom and dad, you know, like better things to do with my life. Submitting to my husband, what is this? He doesn't even know what he's talking about, you know. As a husband, I have this great responsibility that I need to lead my wife, and it's too much to bear. Look, I can't be bothered with it.

You know what Paul is saying? All those attitudes that exist on that social level are taken away when we look at Jesus and we serve our wife, and we serve our husband, and we serve our children, and we serve our masters and our bosses and whatever it may be. But we are serving, ultimately, looking to the face of Jesus Christ, not to the earthly relationships themselves. This is revolutionary. That means that Christian service should far supersede the service of nonbelievers. We should have a certain amount of endurance, grace, and a heart and soul attitude in what we do because we see Jesus, whom they do not see.

What Paul is saying simply here is that we are all slaves. Does the Bible teach this? It most certainly does. Throughout the entire Scripture, the Bible presents believers in Jesus Christ as servants of God. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says those very things: "You have been bought with a price; you are not your own. You've been bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." It belongs to God; you belong to God.

We spoke about this last week: a slave was someone who was possessed by his owner, the property of his owner. A slave was also somebody who not only was the property of his owner but didn't have rights. A slave was somebody that lost a great measure of his independence. He was dependent on his master even to provide for him and to supply for him because he was sold into slavery under the care of one only.

The Bible picks up this analogy and applies it to all believers in Jesus, saying, "You have been bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, and therefore you belong to Him." That means you are not your own. As a believer in Jesus Christ, we lose our ultimate independence, as it were, and our great expression of ourselves gets submitted to the great glorification of His name as servants of Jesus Christ. It's not about our rights; it's about God. It's not about us getting our way as servants of Jesus Christ; it's not about "this is my life." No, the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the

faith of the Son of God, who loves me and gave Himself for me. Paul says, "I live because He lives in me."

This revolutionizes life entirely, not just our relationships but everything we do. That's perhaps why Paul said, "And whatever you do, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Do whatever you do heartily as to the Lord." Because this revolutionizes everything. We have been bought with a price.

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 7:22-23, "For he who was called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman; likewise, he who was called while free is Christ's slave. You were bought at a price; do not become the slaves of men." See those words here: "He who was called while he was free is Christ's slave." If you think you're a free man, well, if you're called, if you're a believer in Jesus Christ, you're the slave of Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:20-22 says, "You were the slaves of sin, but now being set free from sin, you have become slaves to God." Matthew 6:24 says, "No man can serve two masters. If you love the one, you will despise the other; you will hate the one and hold fast to the other. You cannot serve God and money or idols." You cannot do that. What is simply being said is that if you are committed to Jesus Christ, you are committed in a relationship that is a relationship that could be defined as slaves of Jesus Christ, as servants of God, people that do His bidding.

This happens to all who believe in His name. We read about the conversion of the Apostle Paul, Saul of Tarsus, a man going about doing many wicked things against the cause of Jesus Christ. But what we find in this text of Scripture is that when he met the Lord and when the Lord shone the light of His glory into Saul's heart, how did Saul of Tarsus respond? The first words that came out of his mouth were, "Lord, who are You?" Jesus replies, saying, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting, and it's hard for you to kick against the goads." And what did Paul say after that? "Lord, what will You have me do?"

That is the language of a slave to a master. Whatever You want from me, Lord. What Paul was experiencing that day was being joined to a new master. He was enslaved by sin, going about his passions, fulfilling the will of his flesh, met by Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, revolutionizing his relationship to God. And what happens is he cries out, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" It's like a servant at God's beck and call. "Lord, what is it next? What is it, Lord? Tell me anything; I'll do it."

And all we see from that day forth is that this man, who was threatening the Church of God, is now preaching the faith which he once persecuted. And he goes about and he preaches the name of Jesus because God, Jesus

said, "I've chosen you to be a vessel to the Gentiles, carry My name." And all you see Paul doing all the days of his life is carrying the name of Jesus throughout the entire world. He's not living for himself, he's not worried about his dependence, his independence. He's not worried about his best life now. He is concerned about living for the glory of Jesus Christ and Christ alone.

And he lives, and he labors, and he serves, and he suffers, but he keeps on going. How does he keep on going? The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ was upon him. And Paul writes his letters, and a lot of the letters, this is how he starts: "Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ, to this church, to that church, to these people. I want you to know me not merely as an apostle, but I want you to know me as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ."

And this is true of all who believe on Jesus Christ, that your life is no longer your own. I hope you can see the connection to the things that we've been looking at today. Here are instructions to masters, and here are instructions to slaves. And ultimately, in light of that high priority, what Paul is simply saying to us is, "You are all slaves," meaning all the instructions that are made to slaves apply to you, apply to me, in our relationship to Jesus Christ.

And what does this mean for us? Well, it means a lot. It means that we are to serve not with eye service as men pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. That means what you do for God, you are to do with your eye toward God and not toward men. Whatever you do, whether you're sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ, whether you're praying, whether you're fellowshiping with God's people, whether you're singing His praises, whether you're playing musical instruments, whether you're serving, reading, preaching, whatever you do, your eyes are to be on God and not on men.

You are to serve as if your only audience was God Himself, as if the only eyes that were upon you were the Master Himself, who sees right into the depths of your heart. You see, it was the Pharisees who blew a trumpet before them so that they may be seen of men. They would go and put money in the offering box, but they would make sure that they blew a trumpet or made themselves known. "Hey guys, look at this big dollar note going in there." And they went into the streets and they'd pray loudly on the streets, very loudly on the streets. "Lord, I'm not like this person. I'm so grateful that I'm this, and I'm a Pharisee."

You know what the Bible says? They have their reward. You know what their reward was? The praise of men, not the praise of God. Why? Because what they did, they did it with eye service as men pleasers, and therefore that indicated that what they did was not out of sincere hearts.

They were more concerned about these motivations that would drive them towards getting the appearance of men and the praise of men, rather than the praise of God. The praise of men is what they sought for, therefore they were insincere, motivated by men, for men, for the glory of men.

See that? Motivated by men, for men, for the glory of men. That's not how the Christian is to serve. Motivated by God, for God, for the glory of God, to honor His name, to praise His name, to do the things that make Him glorified, that reflect His glory and praise His name.

You know, we're living in a society that is full of pleasure-seeking, a society that loves the praise of men. You just have to have a little cursory browse of Facebook or Instagram or whatever social media platform there is, and we are absolutely addicted to dopamine, the rush of the likes and the love hearts and the clicks for all the things that we post. We put something up, and we get excited. It's like, man, it's like we just smoked pot or something, you know? Like, I don't know, like we just got drunk or something. It's almost like this release of, it's a drug, like a drug.

We pursue that, and then what happens is people say, "I'm going to post something else, and I hope, and if I don't get the same likes that they had last week, what happens?" Depression. If they get 300 love hearts for the photo for how beautiful they looked but only a hundred for the next one, there's only trying to please people that don't love you, and so you feel like no one loves you. This is how it works, same with same with same. Admit this is a really common, serious problem that people have, and they get addicted to this. And if they don't have this release, what is this being motivated by? Men, for men, for the glory of men. This is essentially what we're simply saying here is, "I need the praise of men to keep on in my life. That if I don't have men spurring me on and if I don't have people telling me how good I am and keep giving that back to me, I can't continue."

My friends, don't live in the lowlands of that kind of motivation. Whatever you do, your post, something, post it to the Lord, not unto men. Whether one person sees that or no people see it or ten thousand people see it, you should turn and say, "Praise God that they are receiving something that brings glory to God, that honors His name." We are not to be caught up in those things. Do things with a simple heart, a pure heart, a heart that fears God, that is concerned about what God thinks about me. He got you're fearfully and wonderfully made. That's what God thinks of you. He loves you. He made you perfectly after His likeness in glory and in beauty. And we have to be careful lest we fall into this insincere motivation. Sometimes I don't even know that we're doing it. My friends, rise higher than those earthly relationships and live in the realm of doing things as unto the Lord. It says, "Whatever you do, you do it heartily as to the Lord and

not unto men." And I wonder, I wonder so often how much of our Christian service will be burnt up at the last day. You know, when God comes in the judgment seat of Jesus Christ and He judges our service as believers to see what is wood, hay, and stubble and what is gold, silver, and precious stones. I wonder how much of what we've done for Jesus will last in that day, whether it's been done with sincere motivations, whether it's been done for the glory of His name. When the fiery eyes of our Lord will try our works, how many people will remember the days in which they played music for the music director, where they preached for the pastors that were sitting in the pew, or preached for the people's praise, or they did what they did simply because of the applause of men? The day will declare it when the fiery eyes of our Lord try our works and see what remains. And I must pray to say that perhaps for many of God's people, there won't be much left.

How much of our submission as wives to our husbands has simply been out of our service as men pleasers, not from a sincere heart as unto the Lord? How much of our leadership as husbands has just been so we can escape the next fight that might come along because of our neglect? How much of our obedience as children has simply been on the basis that I just got to tick the boxes to make my mom and dad happy, and as I service as men pleasers, not fearing God, not looking to the Lord? Sometimes we just do things merely because we're worried about people finding out if we don't do them or if we get caught doing something that they'll find out. But my point is, whatever motivates your service determines the genuineness of your service. And then let it therefore be the high priority, which is the priority of the Lord. Let your service come from the heart, as to God. Let it flow from the soul. Let it run from the most inner depths of your being. Let it be motivated by the power of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of God, out of love toward God for what He has done for us in Christ Jesus. Let it be a disciplined conviction. Let it be the burden of your conscience that drives you to serve others. Don't drag your feet. Pray voluntarily. Have this spirit of obedience. Don't drag your feet to spread the gospel. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace," not feet that are to be dragged, but feet that are to be carried by the grace of God as we proclaim the message of the Almighty King.

My friends, when you worship, worship as unto Him. When you work, work is unto Him, not because whether your boss is going to be happy or not, but please your boss in such a way that it pleases God. Not just to do the minimum, but even to go the extra mile. House duties, like doing the dishes, can be done to the glory of God. Dear sisters and brothers, whatever you do, verse 23 of this text says, "Do it heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men." Look at it, it says this, "Knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance, for you serve the Lord Christ," meaning you serve Christ as His slaves.

I'm telling you now, the Bible teaches us this because God wants to revolutionize the way that we relate to everything in this life. He wants us to work for Him, not for riches, not for praise, not for power. My friends, if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you are a slave of Christ. If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, you are a slave to sin. Turn to Jesus, like Paul on the road to Damascus, cry out, "Lord, what will You have me to do?" and be saved today. Be free from that slavery which brings condemnation and enter into the liberation of serving Jesus Christ, of being one that is owned by a Master that makes us kings and priests unto God, a Master that makes us sons and heirs, although we are slaves. It's unbelievably wonderful, but this is who our Master is, and He will be yours if you come to Him and believe on His name.

Christians, never forget Colossians 1:3-4. You have been risen with Christ. It says to us, "If you were then raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth, for you died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." You know, Paul is saying, "Listen, you're risen with Christ. Seek things above, not things on the earth. Your life is one that's died in Christ. Your life is one that is hidden with Christ in God, and therefore it's all to be done to the praise of the One who is in all things to have the preeminence, that is Jesus Christ. Him alone we serve."

So let us forget ourselves, amen, and be swallowed up in the great privilege of being a slave of Jesus Christ. Let us pray.