

Wednesday in the Word

Digging Deeper

February 17, 2021

Colossians 3:22-4:1

Servants and Masters

Colossians 3:22-4:1 KJVS [22] Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: [23] And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; [24] Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. [25] But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

In the book of Colossians thus far, Paul has been stating and establishing right thought and behavior among the Christian community. He first sets the order of Christ over all creation in chapter 1:10-20. He cautions believers to beware false teaching in chapter 2:6-23 and then in chapter 3:1-17 he gives us clear guidance toward Christian character and finalizes the teaching by organizing the Christian home 3:18-21. This top down approach from God Himself on through life's most important concepts lands in the family for a reason. God's influence begins with the throne of heaven and winds its way on down to the throne of individual life. He truly is Alpha and Omega. Revelation 1:8. To the believer, God's will and way are all encompassing. To you and I, Jesus, Who is very God, fully envelopes all we are. Hebrews 2:9-10. Remember also Colossians 1:14-20.

In today's passage Paul seeks to sum up all previous teaching by making a strong analogy imposed by the master/servant relationship and implying a parallel to ourselves who are willing servants of the Lord. While not making the case to end all slavery our author acknowledges its existence but demands its fairness. Slavery as imposed on the innocent is surely sin and must be called out and corrected but most slaves of the day were willing servants who indentured themselves to pay off debts or to secure employment. As surely as any boss can become a tyrant, any master could likewise unjustly demand service for an unfair wage or compensation. As the bible laid the foundation for the equality of all, (Galatians 3:28) it also laid the groundwork to encourage the correction of societal sin. Proverbs 6:16-19, 31:8-9. Review the book of Philemon for an understanding of this. Our scripture for today provides a strong case for fairness and equality among social classes and the precepts of Christ demand it. James 2:1-4.

The core of the teaching here is not purely to secure proper treatment of employees and servants. Rather it clarifies our true position as believers. Following the flow of our text we see that we must serve God by doing our jobs earnestly and faithfully. Verses 22-23. Proper payment will be made by the Almighty Master when He has His Day. V24. Verse 25 takes a bit of a twist as we view it on a higher level. The payment for 'wrong' in this context implies the 'wrong' of rejecting the work of Christ on the cross thereby incurring the payment due as the loss of eternal life with Him. God does not respect one person over another in giving the gift of eternal life. Salvation is the pure result of accepting Jesus Christ as Savior and the application of His Blood to the payment for our sin. Our Master in Heaven is truly just and equal. He died for all but only accepts those who receive His offer. So we see here the parallel of servanthood among men and the supreme servant/master relationship we enjoy with our Wonderful

Counselor and Mighty God. Isaiah 9:6, 1 Samuel 12:24, Romans 12:1. By the way, when you find yourself in the master position, whether boss, manager, business owner, teacher or leader, that same justice and equality must be maintained. Serve loyally and lead righteously.