



June 26, 2016  
Celebration · 9:00 am  
Pastor David Mitchell

## Serving Others in All Situations Ephesians 6:5-9

**Then:** Issue of Slaves and Masters.

**Now:** Issue of Employees (and those under authority) and Employers (those in authority over others.)

**Guiding principles for today from first century life:**

### Employees and... any under the authority of another person. Ephesians 6:5-8

- **Your duty is obedience as long as you are under another's authority.** Ephesians 6:5  
*"Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh..."*
  - Hebrews 13:17 - in the church
  - Romans 13:1-4 - in government
  - Acts 5:27-29 - limitations on obedience.
- **Your attitude is to serve others as if you are serving Christ.** Ephesians 6:5-7  
*"...with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men..."*
  - An attitude of respect and sincere heart for Christ.  
*"with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ"*
  - An attitude to please Christ in serving others whether people see you or not.  
*"not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ"*
  - An attitude with a positive mindset that you are pursuing God's will.  
*"doing the will of God from the heart with good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men ...."*
- **Your perspective is eternal since the Lord will reward you for your faithfulness.** Ephesians 6:8  
*"...knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free"*  
II Timothy 4:6-8

### Employers and... any in authority over another person. Ephesians 6:9

*"And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him."*

- **Your duty is to care for those under your authority as if you are serving Christ.**  
*"...masters, do the same things to them..."*
  - Do not use fear or threats to achieve results.  
*"... and give up threatening..."*
  - You serve Christ who is your Master and He will hold you accountable.  
*"...knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven..."*
  - Remain humble since you are not more important to God than those under your authority.  
*"...and there is no partiality with Him."*

## Digging Deeper

In Paul's day, approximately 30% of the population was slaves. William Barclay describes the condition of slavery in the first century:

*One Roman writer divided agricultural instruments into three classes—the articulate, who were slaves; the inarticulate, which were animals; and the mute, which were tools and vehicles. A slave's only distinction above animals or tools was that he could speak! The Roman statesman Cato said, "Old slaves should be thrown on a dump, and when a slave is ill do not feed him anything. It is not worth your money. Take sick slaves and throw them away because they are nothing but inefficient tools." Augustus crucified a slave who accidentally killed his pet quail, and a man named Pollio threw a slave into a pond of deadly lamprey eels for breaking a crystal goblet. Juvenal wrote of a slave owner whose greatest pleasure was "listening to the sweet song of his slaves being flogged."*

Obviously, those were terrible living conditions. Interestingly, Paul challenges those slaves and masters that are Christian to live out their new life in Christ by treating each other in a Christ like way. Note how often Paul references Christ and the will of God in today's passage. Jesus changes hearts and minds but does not always change poor cultural norms or the circumstances of our lives.

### LifeGroup Discussion:

While we do not experience slavery in our community as described above, we can learn secondary principles for application in how we should treat people that are in authority over us, or where we are in authority over others.

What kinds of people are in your life that you serve and how do you treat them? What people are under your authority and how do you treat them?

The book of Philemon is the story of a slave, Onesimus, that stole things from his master, Philemon, and ran away to Rome. But in the sovereignty of God, Onesimus encountered Paul while he was in prison and this slave was saved. Now Paul asks for Philemon to forgive his slave and repair that relationship. Philemon and Onesimus, former master and slave, now are equal brothers in Christ. Their hearts were changing and this altered the nature of their relationship to each other. Read this short book and answer how you think Philemon responded. How would you respond?

Certainly employment is one secondary application from today's passage. But also consider how you should treat people that serve you or that you are in authority over such as in a restaurant, grocery store, the DMV, city officials, landscaper, nannie, house cleaner, coaches, teachers, law enforcement, fire fighters, military, trainers, custodians. Who else? How do you treat these people?

Paul provides a beautiful example on how to treat others, whether you serve them or they are under your authority in I Thessalonians 2:5-12

- vs. 5 - What was Paul's motivation and communication?
- vs. 6 - How did Paul use or not use his authority? Why?
- vs. 7-12 - How did Paul treat these people that were under his authority? How should you treat people in the same way?

### Next Steps:

1. **Come to the Discover Jesus class on Wednesdays through July 20 at 7:00 pm in the Worship Center Lobby.** This 9-week course will help you discover how to live and love like Jesus. Come grow in your faith by journeying through the foundational elements of discipleship with a mentor. If you're a new follower of Jesus, or want to become more grounded in the basics of Christianity, this is perfect for you! [calvarylife.org/discover](http://calvarylife.org/discover)
2. **Join a LifeGroup.** LifeGroups are ongoing small group communities that gather together throughout the week to CONNECT in a smaller setting, GROW together in our faith, and REACH out together to our community. They meet both on Sundays here on campus and in people's homes. For more info, visit [calvarylife.org/lifegroups](http://calvarylife.org/lifegroups)