

Metro Calvary Women's Bible Study
Ephesians 6:5-9

Lesson 15

It is important to keep in mind sisters, that God's commandments always include His enablements! These commandments to slaves can only be fulfilled supernaturally by Spirit-filled slaves, who have cast off the Old Man they were in Adam and put on the new garment of righteousness in Christ. Although at the moment of salvation every believer puts aside the Old Man and puts on the New Man; for the rest of his and her earthly life there will be a daily (even moment by moment) need to cast aside the old man and put on the garment of the new man.

DAY ONE: Read Ephesians 6:5-9

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet and another Bible translation or paraphrase.

2. List below the subjects(s) covered in Ephesians 6:5-9.

Verses 5-9

OPTIONAL: From the list below record the key words on your chart.

God and Jesus (Christ/Lord/Master)

New to this lesson: *bondservant/master*

Contrast: *but*

OPTIONAL: Using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words every time they are used in Ephesians 6:1-4. Remember, as you mark the words for *God, Jesus*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to them.

3. This section of Ephesians continues Paul's teaching on submission. List the instructions given below. (**Note:** we will look at the instructions in detail as we continue this lesson. For now, simply record the basic instruction.)

Bondservants: _

Masters:

4. God rewards obedience. What reward for obedience does God give to:

Bondservants:

5. God also warns those who rule over others. What is His warning to:

Masters:

DAYS TWO & THREE: Read Ephesians 6:5-7

1. This section of Ephesians addresses a different relationship. What is it?

a. Look up the Greek word *bondservant* in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

Bondservant (servants, slaves)

b. If you lived long ago and were a slave, what would be the worst part of being someone's property?

c. What would you have expected from a Christian master that you would not from a non-Christian master?

2. Look up the Greek word *master* in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

Masters

Note: Although we do not have slaves in our modern culture (some of you would argue this point I'm sure!), the master-slave relationship clearly parallels the employer-employee relationship. As we studied the relationships between husbands and wives and children and fathers, the principle Paul is emphasizing is that of authority and submission as a manifestation of one who is filled with and controlled by the Holy Spirit.

3. According to Ephesians 6:5, how should employees (bondservants) respond to their employers (masters)?

a. Why is Paul's exhortation of *obedience* important to understand in the context of 1 Timothy 6:1?

b. Have you as an employee or employer had any conflict at work in the area of obedience? What were the circumstances? How was it resolved?

c. How would a disregard of resolving conflict affect your witness as a Christian and give others a reason to blaspheme Christ? Have you experienced this?

4. To be obedient literally *means to hear under or to listen from a subordinate position with compliance*. To obey *is to submit or hearken to a command*. Why is obedience an important behavior according to the passages below?

Titus 2:9-10 "Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all *things*, not answering back, not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things."

Romans 13:5 "Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake."

Conscience is that inner judge (the Holy Spirit) that accuse & condemns us when we have done wrong and approves and commends us when we have done right.

1 Peter 2:18-21 ¹⁸Servants, *be* submissive to *your* masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. ¹⁹For this *is* commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. ²⁰For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable

before God. ²¹For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.”

1 Timothy 6:1 “¹Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and *His* doctrine may not be blasphemed.”

R Kent Hughes explains that...We are to be in subjection not just because we are afraid of being punished, but because, unlike the world, we understand that the office of Master/Employer is divinely instituted and are wittingly or unwittingly God’s instruments. Christians who are able to see this big picture, are able to live in profound submission.

William Barclay adds some interesting historical background on slaves in Paul's time writing, The terror of the slave was that he was absolutely at the caprice of his master. Augustus crucified a slave because he killed a pet quail. Vedius Pollio flung a slave still living to the savage lampreys in his fish pond because he dropped and broke a crystal goblet. The slaves who were maids to their mistresses often had their hair torn out and their cheeks torn with their mistresses’ nails. Juvenal tells of the master “who delights in the sound of a cruel flogging thinking it sweeter than any siren’s song,” or “who revels in clanking chains,” or, “who summons a torturer and brands the slave because a couple of towels are lost.”

5. Verse 5 goes on to say that bondservants are to be obedient, *with fear and trembling*. What might be a modern-day term or description of this behavior?

6. Why do you think Paul said that *fear and trembling* should be the attitude of the bondservants (employees) behavior? See the quote below.

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

JOHN MAC ARTHUR’S COMMENTS ABOUT EPHESIANS 6:5, “The believer’s attitude in obeying his employer is to be one of **fear and trembling**. The idea is not that of cowering fright but of the honor and respect that make a person anxious to please. If he cannot honor and respect his employer for the employer’s own sake, he respects him for the Lord’s sake as one under whom he is to submit. Although men terribly abuse it, the principle of authority and submission is God-given and is always to be honored. God has allowed bosses to be where they are and subordinates to be where they are, and the faithful believer willingly and graciously submits to those under whose authority God has placed him. The place where a believer works is part of his field of service for the Lord, and it is often a mission field. When he does his work carefully and respectfully it is a testimony to unbelievers, an encouragement to believers, and an act of service to God.”

7. Verse 5 closes with the words *as to Christ*. In Colossians 3 we find a parallel passage on *obedience/submission*. Before giving specific instructions regarding obedience, Paul gave general instructions to be applied as we *obey/submit*. What did he write in Colossians 3:17?

As to Christ - as if Christ were watching, (which He is) is a heart attitude that seeks to please Him!

8. Look up Greek word for *eyeservice*, and *men-pleasers* in your Concordance and write out the English translation. What insights did you glean?

Eyeservice-

Men-pleasers-

9. This verse exhorts us to work as bondservants. What is the difference between working as a man-pleaser or as bondservants of Christ?

a. How does Galatians 1:10 add to this?

10. What is the exhortation in Colossians 3:22-23 to bondservants, and what does this verse reveal about the attitude of our heart in how we work/serve others?

Colossians 3:22-23 “²²Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. ²³And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.”

11. Paul is saying that believing slaves/employees must avoid eye-service and pursue a **deeper motive**. We saw this revealed in the passage above, but write out the last phrase of Ephesians 6:6 to find the answer.

a. What do you learn from Hebrews 13:20-21, regarding doing the will of God? How does this verse encourage you?

Hebrews 13:20-21 “²⁰Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.”

12. Paul exhorts us in verse 6 to obey our earthly masters/employers with a singleness of heart.

Our focus is not on men, but doing the will of god from the heart. **Heart in the Greek (2588-Kardia)** does not refer to the physical organ but is used figuratively in Scripture to refer to the seat and center of human life. The **heart** is the center of the personality, and it controls the intellect, emotions, and will. No outward obedience is of the slightest value unless the heart turns to God. How are you challenged by this definition?

13. Ephesians 6:7 starts with the words, with goodwill -- expressing the attitude that a believing slave should have towards his master. You might be working under a person's direction, but remember that you are really working under the Lords! Your daily tasks should be looked at as if He has given them to you to do. So sisters, do every task as unto Him! What glory this gives to every task at hand. If you approach your work like this, you will never again look at routine tasks as humdrum of what you have to do, but rather, you will recognize that one day it will be made open and clear to all whether you did it as unto the Lord or unto men!” What does, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord and not to men, look like in your life; at work, at home, in church, your neighborhood, or with your friends? Share a struggle or a victory.

a. What does 1 Corinthians 3:13-15 reveal about our works that are not done *unto the Lord*?

1Corinthians 3:13-15 “each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.”

b. Stop and ponder the above verse. Our works will be put through the fire! Does knowing this challenge you to change your attitude and the way in which you are performing your tasks? Please explain.

14. What should be the essential **motive** in the area of authority and submission in *doing the will of God*? See verse 5b, verse 6b and verse 7b?

a. Why does Paul repeat, that the motive of the bondservant should be *from the heart and to the Lord*? See proverbs 4:23

b. How is the motive/attitude of our **heart** important for us as Christians today; not only in the business world but wherever we are working or serving others?

DAY FOUR & FIVE: Read Ephesians 6:8-9

1. According to verse 8 how does Paul encourage slaves to work for their masters?

Knowing (1492) (**eido**) means to see with the mind's eye, signifies a clear and purely mental perception. It describes one as having come to a perception or realization of something.

2. Many believers minimize the place of *good* works in the Christian life reasoning that because we are not saved by good works, then good works are something to be shunned. But our Lord reminds us that it is our incredible privilege and our testimony as believers to do good works. How does Ephesians 2:10, Matthew 5:17 & Colossians 3:23 add to this thought?

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Matthew 5:16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Colossians 3:23 "And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

3. **Every good work** signifies every activity that is undertaken for the name of Christ. When we undertake each activity in this way we bear fruit. It is only through the power of the Holy Spirit, that can we do this! One way to think of this is as a process. In salvation God does work for us, in sanctification He does work in us and in service He does work through us and bears fruit that remains. God builds character in us before He calls us to service. He must work in us before He can work through us. Are you bearing fruit in every good work?

It is not only by words that we give testimony to the greatness of God, but also by our works. Our good works in fact pave the way for witness with good words. If our walk contradicts our words, we lose our testimony. Our "walk" and our "talk" must agree. Good works and good words must come from the same yielded heart. Too many believers today emphasize guarding the truth, but downplay living the truth. One of the best ways to guard the truth is to put it into practice. It is good to be defenders of the faith, but we must not forget to be demonstrators of the faith by letting them see our **good works!**

You are writing a Gospel,
A chapter each day,
By the deeds that you do
And the words that you say.

Men read what you write,
Whether faithful or true:
Just what is the Gospel
According to you?
Author unknown

4. Verse 8 tells us that God sees and rewards us when we do *good works*. We don't do good works for the reward; we do good works because it pleases Him! How wonderful of God to reward us for pleasing Him! What do you learn about being God's rewards from the following passages?

Galatians 6:7-10 "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith."

2 Corinthians 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

Revelation 22:12 "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done."

5. What phrase in verse 8 lets us know that God rewards believers with a servant's hearts regardless of their position?

a. What is the promise of Proverbs 11:18?

6. Let's personalize verse 8. How can we submit when we *feel* that the value of what we do seems to have no more value than that of a slave? What is Paul's challenge to us in Ephesians 5:18 and 6:10?

Note: Being filled with the Spirit that **He** might enable us with this supernatural submission from the heart.

7. Remember God never condoned slavery, but Paul also recognized that there was a bigger issue at stake for believers than their social status. Verse 8 ends with, *whether he is a slave or free*. The issue is obeying and pleasing God in whatever position a person is in. What do you learn from 1Corinthians 7:20-23?

1 Corinthians 7:20-23 "Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. ²¹Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. ²²For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave. ²³You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.

8. In the Phillips translation verse 9 reads: "And as for you employers, be as conscientious and responsible towards those who serve you as you expect them to be towards you, neither misusing

the power over others that has been put in your hands, nor forgetting that you are responsible yourselves to a heavenly employer who makes no distinction between master and man.”

a. According to this verse, how are employers to treat their employees?

b. What is the exhortation in Luke 6:31

9. What specifically are masters (employers) to *give up according to verse 9*?

Note: In the Romans Empire there were upwards to sixty million slaves, largely because the Roman citizen considered it beneath his dignity to work. In many of the cities of Asia Minor slaves outnumbered the number of freemen. Thus practically all work was done by slaves. This was so pervasive that even doctors, teachers and secretaries of the Roman emperors were slaves! Although some masters were kind to their slaves, that appears to be the exception rather than the rule.

a. What does Leviticus 25:43 reveal about the area of *threatening* in regards to masters?

b. Last week we learned about the Father/Parent role in training their children. How might this exhortation of *Masters* (or those in authority) *giving up threatening*, apply to us with our children? Is there a right or wrong way to use threats?

10. Jesus, the perfect Master became the perfect Servant. What might an employer (master) learn from Jesus' example? See Philippians 2:5-7.

Philippians 2:5-7 “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ⁷But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.”

11. How is Jesus' standard for authority contrary to the world's view of authority? Read Mathew 20:25-28. Highlight and explain your answer.

Mathew 20:25-28 “But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, you know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

a. We all have roles of being in authority over others, whether it is as employer, a mother, a teacher, or some other position. According to the above verse how should we view that authority?

12. In addition to *knowing their own Master is in heaven*, (verse 9) what are employers also to *know*?

13. It is hard to believe that in our culture today of employer/employee that **God** shows no partiality. How do the following passages confirm this truth?

Romans 2:11

Galatians 3:28

1 Timothy 5:21

Partiality (4382) (**prosopolepsia** [prosopolempsia] from **prósopon** = face, presence, person + **lambáno** = receive, take into account) literally means to “receive face” or receive one’s countenance or one’s person. The idea is that of looking to see who someone is before deciding how to treat them! In other words, one judges by appearance and on that basis giving special favor and respect (or the converse - refuses to give respect). This noun then pertains to judging others purely on a superficial level, without consideration of the person’s true merits, abilities, or character.

a. While God shows no favoritism or partiality, we know that others do. Have you had to deal with this at any time in your life? How did you respond? What is the correct way to respond?

b. Have you been the one showing favoritism or partiality? How will you change this?

Wiersbe has an excellent summary statement writing that... This is practicing the lordship of Christ. The wife submits to her own husband “as unto the Lord” (Eph 5:22), and the husband loves the wife “as Christ also loved the church” (Eph 5:25). Children obey their parents “in the Lord” (Eph 6:1), and parents raise their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph 6:4). Servants are obedient “as unto Christ” (Eph 6:5), and masters treat their servants as their “Master in heaven” would have them do. Each person, in submission to the Lord, has no problems submitting to those over him. Jesus said the way to be a ruler is first to be a servant (Mt 25:21). The person who is not under authority has no right to exercise authority.

DAY SIX: Review Ephesians 6:5-9

1. In what way might you apply the teaching regarding the *bondservant/master* relationship to your life?

2. How does knowing God rewards *obedience* encourage you to *obey* those in authority over you?

3. Describe the believer who serves all people wholeheartedly, as a *bondservant* of Christ.

4. Look at Colossians 3:23-4:1 in context of Ephesians 6:5-9. Highlight and summarize what you personally learned from this passage.

Colossians 3:23 - 4:1 “And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. 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.”

5. Record on your worksheets, **“Truths about God, Truths about Jesus, Truths about the Holy Spirit, Truths about the Believer, & Instructions.”**

“Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power, ¹²that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Thessalonians 1:11-12