

## Thursday, October 12, 2023 ▫ Read Titus 2:9–10

*Questions from the Scripture text: Whom is he to address in v9? What are they to be? Unto whom? What are they to attempt to be in all things? What aren't they to do? What else aren't they to do (v10)? What are they to show? In order to adorn what? The doctrine of Whom? In how many things?*

**How can lowly Christians glorify Christ?** Titus 2:9–10 looks forward to the second serial reading of in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these two verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **lowly Christians glorify Christ by being inexplicably godly by the grace of their Savior.**

The last group that the apostle tells Titus to address specifically is bondservants. Christians are not to think like the world thinks. A slave who is a Christian has a high calling. He has good reason to live carefully and diligently.

**God's calling.** When the apostle says "their own" masters in v9, he is reminding us that our standing, our employment, and our relationships all come in the providence of God. How did that man become a slave? Possibly as a spoil of war or due to economic disaster. How did he become his master's particular slave? Probably through some choice by the master or by one who gave him to him. But these are all under the sovereign control of his God. Thus, we can receive even lowly class, employment, or economic circumstances as gift from God and assignment from God. This is true for you, dear reader—whatever God's providence to you has been! But especially in circumstances where the world sees no dignity, the believer has a great opportunity to show the difference that it makes to belong to the Lord.

**God's commandments.** If a slave's work is an assignment first from God, and only secondarily for his earthy master, then it must be obvious that he is to serve according to God's instruction. God's way will often run at direct cross-purposes with our flesh.

We see this in a parallel passage in 1Tim 6:1, where a slave considers his master worthy of "all honor." Compare this to "honor" for widows in 1Tim 5:3 and "double honor" for elders in 1Tim 5:17. The flesh resents that our labor might enrich another man—even if that man is caring for our food, clothing, and medical needs, besides considering us to be members of his household! But the Spirit says to count an earthly master worthy of "all honor." What a difference this would make in employment situations, where we are tempted to begrudge how much prosperity is coming to our employer by our labor! This fleshly resentment is ingrained in the writer's present culture—giving Christians a particular opportunity to show the grace and glory of Christ by contrast.

Here, in Titus 2:9, the first instruction given is that slaves be obedient. This seems straightforward enough (though our hearts will often rationalize against plain commands). But this is joined by the grammar to the idea of being "well pleasing." Here is not just complying with orders but striving for excellency—wishing to do well enough that the master cannot help but be pleased with the service. There is a motivation here that goes to the heart. If the life of a slave is dignified by his union with Christ, then he can be zealous and even cheerful from his heart to show how excellent a Christian slave can be. And so with any Christian of low standing in the home or the society! Shall we now show, by our zealous and cheerful work, "how excellent a Christian \_\_\_\_\_" we can be?

And of course, he should obey the 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> commandments (guarding his tongue to be used only in an honoring way), as well as the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment (not stealing—whether it be property, time, or effort). Incidentally, as the writer lives in the American South, he is aware that some think that not permitting children to talk back is somehow a Southern thing. No, it is a Christian thing. If the slave was not to talk back as a derivative application of the fifth commandment, how much more must a son or daughter only reply to parents with honor and respect as a *direct* application of that commandment.

The Christian slave should be dependable. The word translated "fidelity" here is a form of the word "believe or trust" that means, literally, that his master can put his "faith" in the slave. Not faith for salvation. The idea is that he can trust his servant with everything, as Potiphar, the jailer, and Pharaoh all ended up doing with Joseph. From food service, to housekeeping, to the president's cabinet, a believer aims so excellently to labor that whoever is over him knows that he can trust anything to his hands.

**God's commendation.** The goal, of course, is described further in v10, "that they may adorn the doctrine of God." All of these instructions have been in order to live appropriately to sound doctrine (v1). We considered the high calling of younger women that they labor "that the Word of God may not be blasphemed" (v5). A Christian who does not love for God to commend him, by making his life to commend Christian teaching, is a weak and immature Christian, if he is one at all. But for those who love to please God, and who love to be used to bring honor to God's Name, how great a motivation he has for his daily labor!

**God's care.** And let us not worry that laboring excellently in this way is a "dead end" for us in the workplace or the home. For, God is "our Savior in all things" (v10)—whatever our place in life is (cf. v11). We are able to humble ourselves and cast

our cares upon Him, because He cares for us (cf. 1Pet 5:6-7). That is to say not only that He cares about us, but that He is attending to everything that is necessary to bring us at last into perfect blessedness and glory.

What do you consider to be your most tedious or lowly tasks? How will you bring the teaching of this passage into how you think about them and do them? What are you hoping to “get” out of your life?

*Sample prayer: Lord, we rejoice to see how even a Christian slave has a glorious calling to adorn the gospel and display the great difference that Christ makes in the heart and the life. But, we confess that we have often been discontent with our place in life or our daily labors. Forgive us for so despising you, we ask through Christ, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP117B “O All You Nations of the Earth” or TPH533 “Have Thine Own Way, Lord”**

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Titus 2 versus 9 and 10. These are God's words. Exhort bond servants. 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.

So, for the reading of gods inspired and And then toward The slave is a very low thing in the eyes of men. But a slave who belongs to christ. Already has the grace of god knows god. Our savior. Who brings that salvation. To all sorts of men. As we will read and hear.

Lord willing next week in verse 11, And therefore a slave has. A very high opportunity. Among the. People that tied us among the different groups that Titus's Here in this chapter instructed, to Exhort. In the church. You remember the young men just had the one thing be so reminded.

There's a list of several things here. For the slave. And the first thing we need to see is That the slave has called. To his. Work and life. By god, it's slavery, comes in god's providence to him. It is an assignment. There's a gift given. In the same love that gave him christ and assignment unto the god.

For whose glory, he desires. To live. And so, God has assigned to him as a specific master. You see that in the phrase, their own there, which is translating a Greek word? Of course, it means the same thing. The bone slaves are to be obedient to their own masters.

God has selected for them in his wisdom and his degree. The. Providence of where they are and The providence of what master they have, they May have come. Into slavery and various ways. Spoil of war economic disaster. And so forth and they may have come to that particular man in various ways.

And yet. All of those ways are under the superintending. Providence of god, just as a Wife is to submit herself to her own husband. And the lord has. Has in his providence attached. Her to him. So here Slaves. Or to be obedient to their own. Masters. And this principle of the providence of god, and therefore, The idea of calling.

It applies to all of us. All are under the sovereign control of god. And so We, we can receive. Circumstances of being lowly in class or employment or economic circumstance. As a gift from god and assignment. From god. Whatever God's providence to us has been. Um, but especially in circumstances.

Or the world sees. No dignity. The believer has a great opportunity. To show the difference that it makes to belong to the lord and the circumstances that he's in You can imagine reading verse 9 and 10. The great difference between a christian slave. And an unbelieving slave. This is one of the places where The.

The reality, the awareness of god calling me to Do the The things that he has given me to do, can Really helped me. And therefore, since We are in whatever vocation we are. By god's calling, then we should do it according to god's commandments. And there are several here.

Given to these slaves. The. This goes. Harmony with.

This corresponds, well to what we're thinking about in the sabbath school. In 1st Timothy 6, where Um, He told bond slaves to. Consider their masters worthy of. All honor. Which is pretty amazing because he had started the beginning of chapter 5. Saying. They, they should honor widows. And then, That got upgraded when he got to the elders later in chapter 5 and he said, let them Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, and then he turns to the bond slaves and he says, Consider your masters worthy of all.

All honor and what a difference. A slave. Um, is the How different a slave is who is glad he considers from his heart. His master worthy of all honor, he his master does of course have to The tend to his food and his clothing. Matter any medical care that you needs considering part of his household.

Um, a good master do all those things. Well, Even a bad master has to do those to some extent. About regardless of the, the master, In God's providence, you end up under one, can let him. That's a slave. Consider him. Worthy of all honor. Um, well, here in this passage, he starts out with For the slave to be.

Obedient. Uh, but not just Obedient. In all things, but Uh, to be well pleasing in all things. That. The slave wants to. Um, Do his work so excellently. That it is. Praiseworthy to his master. It is acceptable. And well pleasing. Not just complying with orders then with obedience. But striving for an excellency wishing that, he would do well enough excellently enough.

In his service. That the master cannot be cannot help but be Pleased with it. And so there's a motivation here that goes to the heart. The slight the life of the slave is dignified by his union with christ. And this is a calling from christ, and so he's zealous and even cheerful from his heart.

To do his slave work. In a manner that shows how excellent a christian slave. Is. Because he wants to show how Excellent christ. Is.

This means, of course that he Wants to obey the fifth and ninth commandment. With respect to his tongue. Someone who is? Doing excellent work, but then Um, Impertinent in his speech. That is he speaks in a way that is not appropriate to his Position. Um, then he Takes away from the well pleasingness from the display of the excellence of christ.

And he talks back. Not talking back. At the end of verse 9. There is also part of god's commandment here. It doesn't mean he never says anything. It means that he

Speaks in a way that is appropriate to his position. He does not. Um, argue or vile?

And so forth, but he He does not talk back.

One of the things that, I was exposed to. For the first time in my life, when I came to the south was. A cultural. Value for children who did not talk back. Children? Who said? Yes sir. Yes, ma'am. And, Uh, would not. Question, or oppose. What their parents? Had spoken.

There's a difference between asking a question and questioning, those are two different things. And at the time, Because I didn't. Well, remember Titus 2 verse 9 and other places didn't think clearly about the fifth commandment. It seemed to me to just be a southern thing, a cultural thing. That was.

Beautiful and orderly and commendable. But it was. Um, But over time I realized there's not a southern thing. The south got that from the bible, that's a Christian thing. And the less. Uh, Christian, the South becomes The more that will. Disappear. Well, it's needful for The slave as well that not just his service, his work.

Would be excellent and well pleasing, but his His behavior has department how he carries himself, how He relates. And then of course, also not stealing. And here not just with. With relation to. Material things, but not stealing time and not steaming stealing effort. Um, by doing things that

That aren't. What he has been instructed to do or by halfheartedly doing the things that he's been instructed to do? These two are things that we all in. In all of our various callings, even those who are in high position. We need to think not only about Uh, doing well in our work.

But how we relate to others, and The not wasting of time and not doing things. Halfheartedly. That is Um, a form. Of stealing. But the the point Of these things, particularly the, the not stealing, and not talking back. Is inverse in verse 10. Is that he shows? Oh, good fidelity.

Um, The words translated the word translated fidelity is one. That comes from the word for faith or trust and really here in this context, it means that he himself is trustworthy. That his master knows that anything that he puts into this servant's hand, he can trust his servant with it.

And one of the great examples of that in the bible, of course, is Joseph. Where Potiphar? Uh put more and more into Joseph's hands and Until the only thing he did for himself was feed himself. And then Joseph gets an unfairly thrown into the jail and the jailer does the same thing.

He discovers that. Joseph is trustworthy, he can trust Joseph with anything and Joseph ends up basically doing all the work and the jail and then thorough finds him trustworthy. And puts in his hand. All of the governing of the entire land of Egypt. And so, we want to Uh, we want to obey God's commands.

In our work that comes from God's calling. And part of that. It will be that we hope. That people will find us. Trustworthy. Or is it translated here, showing all good. Fidelity. So God's calling and God's commands. Um, so that We may have God's commendation first. That the way that we conduct ourselves would commend, God, and his gospel.

Verse 10 again, that they may adorn the doctrine. Of God. But also that we may be commended by God. That. God, who has given us righteousness of Christ. God who Has forgiven us, our sins God who has taken us. To be his own. Will show that he is continuing to save us.

He's doing that. Which is yet to be done. The sanctifying work, the glorifying work, bringing us into it all blessing forever. And a big part of that is his ongoing work in our lives. He shows himself to be God, our savior Who is working in us by his grace?

And as we do these things independence upon his grace, We are much encouraged. For we have the The commendation of God, he makes our lives. To match. His word. And, We are much encouraged and assured that God is doing that in our lives. Now, a Christian who does not love.

For his life to commend God. And the gospel is at best, a weakened immature. Christian if one at all, The more we grow in grace, the more we will love that God would be honored and praised As a result of our lives.

And then the last place and this is very closely tied to God's comment, commending us, but God's care. He is our savior in all things. There are those who worry that laboring excellently in a low position is a dead end. Or is dishonorable. And, Yet, God is our savior and all things, whatever our place in life is.

We are to humble ourselves and cast our cares upon him. Because he cares for us. When we say he cares for us with 1st Peter 5:7, Uh, we are not. Merely saying that he cares about us. We're saying that he attends to everything that is necessary. For our good.

And so since God is our savior and all things Even if we're a slave. As those specifically to whom verse 9 and 10 are addressed. We may. Embrace God's calling in what we are doing. And we may do it according to God's commands, which includes especially doing it excellently.

Desiring that the gospel of God would be commended and we Would be commended by matching. What Christ does in those whom he says, As we depend. Upon God's care. Now, I dare say that. Children was such liberty and comforts and privileges and advantages as you. Have no business thinking of yourselves as slaves.

And yet, we do find our work to just sometimes. And wonder if it's worth it. And what is the point? Especially maybe a menial, labor type tasks. And yet, if the point is to show the excellency of our savior, Who is bringing us? To. To rule as kings and priests to our God forever and ever.

Which is what we sing at the last. Then showing his excellency and serving him. And what he has called us to is very, very worth it. And may he give us to Live the rest of this day and all our days in this world. According to these, exhortations, In Titus 2:9 and 10.

Let's pray.

Father, that you'd help me and My dear wife and these children, dear children whom you have given me. That we would see the excellence in having, Christ, and having A calling from him. And grant that today. And every day, We would put our hands to the work with.

A cheerful heart. Desiring that everything that we do would be done in a way that shows What a great savior. You are. And we pray that you'd help us to trust you. Not only that you care about us but that you are caring for us. So that we will not be distracted with Anxiety or Arrogant, thoughts about how beneath us?

Our work is. But give us to humble ourselves. Under your mighty hand, knowing The great heights to which you will lift up all who are united to Jesus. And his name, we ask it. Amen.