

Vocation as the Mask of God (Ephesians 6:5–9)
GCC, 12/9/21, Ephesians SS Class

- I. Introduction–
 - A. What is Vocation?
 - B. What is the difference between non-Christian and Christian vocation?
 - 1. Purpose—
 - 2. Motivation—
 - 3. Ethic—
- II. What is a household code?
 - A. How relationships and purposes within household were supposed to function
 - B. Purpose of Household Codes
 - C. Paul’s Purpose in Household Codes
- III. Clearing the 1st Century Brush and Finding a 21st Century Application
Slaves (δοῦλοι) were part of the ‘household codes’ given to the NT Christians in the first century.
 - A. Slavery in the first century had both similarities and differences with the slavery of America before emancipation.
 - B. Paul does not include instructions in the household code regarding slaves because slavery was God’s ideal social institution. Rather, Paul assumes the institution of slavery as a reality in which all, especially the early Christians, lived.
 - 1. **Gospel change happens inwardly, not from imposition on social structures.**
 - C. So Paul was not condoning slavery as much as giving instructions to Christians on how to conduct themselves *within* the reality of a world that operated with slavery.
 - D. What is the rough equivalent today of the relationship between slaves and slave owners?
- IV. Vocation and the Reformation
 - A. In medieval times, having a vocation or having a calling” referred exclusively to full-time church work. If a person felt a calling, this was a sign that he or she might have a vocation. Which meant becoming a priest, monk, or a nun. The ordinary occupations of life—being a peasant farmer or kitchen maid, making tools or clothing, being a soldier or even king—were acknowledged as necessary but **WORLDLY**.
 - B. The Impact of the Reformation
- V. The Purpose of Vocation: Providence as The Mask of God
 - A. Vocation as a Mask of God
 - 1. Prayer is typically answered through providence.
 - 2. Understanding Vocation within the Two Kingdoms
- VI. The Motivation of Vocation
 - A. Seeing a greater authority behind the derived authority (v. 5) Obey (ὕπακούω) your “masters according to the flesh” (Lit.) as you would Christ. not the same. My vocation is not unto salvation, but unto the well-being of my
 - B. Doing good to your neighbor (vv. 6–7)
- VII. The Ethic of Vocational Obedience
 - A. Not doing something to be seen by man but to for the Lord (vv. 6–7)
 - B. Actions have consequences in God’s economy (v. 8)

- C. Doing the will of God means we do it well, not lazily, not half-heartedly (Eccl. 9:10)
 - D. Doing the will of God means that you take dominion and fulfill the Cultural Mandate
 - E. The integrity of Masters (Bosses) [6:9]
- VIII. How do we know our vocation?
- A. Gifts, skills, external circumstances.
 - B. Vocation is not about self-fulfillment or personal success.
 - C. All legitimate vocations are expressions of love to neighbor even the ones that seem irrelevant and menial.
 - D. Best way to figure out your vocation is to ask, "Who is my neighbor?" And in what sphere? Serve those people. Vocation is not about you, it is about them.