

Ephesians 6:5–9

"Working Heartily and Lovingly as Slaves of Christ"

In what way is the Bible pro-slavery? Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. In these five verses, we learn that Christians should all be delighted to be the slaves of their perfect Master, Who is worthy of their sincere, diligent, cheerful, loving behavior in whatever role they have and whatever work they do.

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Ephesians chapter 6.

Ephesians chapter 6 verses 5 through 9. These are God's words. Bond servants be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh. With fear and trembling and sincerity of heart as to Christ. Not with eye service has been pleasers but as bond servants of Christ. Doing the will of God from the heart.

With goodwill doing service as to the Lord. Not to men. Knowing that whatever good anyone does it will receive the same from the Lord whether he is a slave or free. And you masters do the same things to them giving up threatening. Knowing that your own master also is in heaven.

And there is no partiality with him.

So far the reading of God's inspired and air inward.

Well one of the reasons we are not against slavery as an idea is because we are all slaves. The kidnapping and stealing of men is condemned and while many places but the same a false on first Timothy one nine through eleven gives one of those lists of examples of great wickedness and those who are man's dealers appear in that list.

So. The kind of slavery that existed and this land once that was built upon that was wicked because it was built upon that. But there have been other kinds of slavery temporary slavery that someone would sell himself into to pay off a debt such as the Lord permitted the Israelites to do even in among their own people and of course that was a limited time and when the year of Jubilee came they were all released and slavery was a big part of the Roman Empire as many as 30 percent of all of the people in the empire.

Were slaves and some of them by the man stealing way and others more similar to in the Bible. But. Whether we are slave or free with respect to man. If we believe in Jesus and belong to Jesus we are slaves of his and we are joyful slaves for the kind of slave in the mosaic cloth when the time came for us to be released we'd say no bring me to the door post to the house, here's my ear there.

I love to be this master slave and I would rather be his slave than have anything else that would be called freedom. And it's wonderful that we can be slaves of Christ because the truth of the matter is that there's no one who is free either your slave of Christ or your slave of yourself and your own sin.

And Christ is an infinitely better master than myself or my sin. And so that's the point he's making to these who he addresses and whom he addresses and beginning of verse 5 and he's as bond servants and the word is slaves von slaves be obedient to your masters according to flesh and fear and trembling.

In sincerity of heart asked to Christ not with eye service as men pleasers, so he gives them instruction about how to be slaves of men why do it all of their work for their earthly masters this way because verse 6 says in the middle but as bond servants slaves, it's the same word of Christ doing the will of God from the heart.

So believers are all slaves when he gets to the masters right he says in verse 9, you masters do the same things to them giving up threatening knowing that your own master. Is also in heaven so they too have a master they too were slaves Christians or slaves of Christ and were joyful slaves of Christ.

So we're all bond slaves of Christ we all have a master in heaven. So the apostle here brings slaves and masters all down to the same place. Some people say oh why didn't he command slavery to end well first of all not necessarily all slavery was wrong? If it was then we would have a problem with what God did in the Old Testament but second of all he's here not telling people how to

end slavery, although he tells them in 1st Corinthians 7, if you were a slave when when you became a Christian try to get your freedom so that you can serve Christ more freely, and if you're free when you became a Christian do not become a slave.

But here he's telling us how to conduct ourselves and the way he does that is he brings us all down to the same place reminding us that we are slaves of Christ now if you have an earthly master who is hard. And mean and doesn't recognize the good that you do and doesn't reward you it is very freeing to know that you're a slave of Christ.

Can your earthly master stop Jesus from being kind to you can your earthly master stop Jesus from noticing and delighting in for his own sake and his own grace that produced it the good that he sees in you can your earthly master stop. Jesus from rewarding you he can't stop any of this things.

So he may feel like he's very in control of death all this power over you. But. If you're a slave of Christ, there's all sorts of things that your earthly master just can't do and just can't touch. Have that frees you. That's important because. Even in America today, we still have slavery.

It's not called that but when you sell yourself as an employee to someone for 40 or 60 or however many hours a week and they tell you where to go and what to wear and what to do and when you can take a break and not it certainly feels like slavery.

It's kind of there's a short term defined contractually defined agreement how long you're gonna be their slave and for what pay but it's similar. And this keeps you from grumbling in your heart about the tasks that you're given and how badly you're treated now and appreciated you are and how poorly you're paid all of which might actually be true.

And yet the Lord Jesus is being good and kind to you through all of it and it's in his providence that you are doing that job and he appreciates his own image in you that he's recreating by his spirit and he will reward you not because you have merited by how well you have done but because the good things you are done are done in him and he is there worthiness and so you even get rewarded for the good things you do by way of grace.

And so if you are thinking of your work that way then even if your employer is doing all those terrible things. You can still be cheerful and diligent being obedient to those who are your masters versus five. With fear and trembling and sincerity of heart not just putting on outward obedience to another because I'm a Christian but with sincerity of heart think about it if you have a good master and you might feel like doing it for your master on earth and your master and heaven if you have a bad earthly master then there's actually some measure of preciousness isn't there in doing it in the Lord Jesus being the only reason you have to do it well.

Not with eye services men pleasers doing the will of God goodwill service to the Lord so this cheerful diligent service. We freeze us to do our daily work as the highest of callings out of love to Jesus with joyous diligence, but it's not just earthly slaves who are liberated by remembering they're the slaves of Christ earthly masters are humbled.

By remembering they're the saves of Christ because if you're under a heavenly master, you're gonna have you're gonna have to answer to him and so those who feel like they answer to no one and there are lots of people who feel like they answered and no one some people even seem like they do some people very recently and our country with all that they did and the election and they seemed to be getting away with it.

I'm sure they feel like they are and there are many who are discouraged because they feel like they are. One ever gets away with anything. They will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and they will answer. Threatening is easy to do if you feel like you're on top and no one will take up the the side or the.

Plea isn't the right word. I can't remember the word. Well, no one will stand up for the slave that you're threatening, but your heavenly master will stand up for the lowly he reveals himself in scripture as God who exults the lowly and brings down the proud. And so he says here giving up threatening.

Knowing that you also have a master your own master also is in heaven. So the apostle warns those who are tempted to threaten that they are not unaccountable earthly masters are under just as much obligation to lead and govern cheerfully diligently kindly gently as their earthly servants are under obligation to obey them and to be diligent and cheerful and, And work hard.

Why? Because the obligation of the master is to Jesus. Just like the obligation of the slave is ultimately to Jesus.

Now, this is very difficult on both counts. In some ways, it's more difficult to be the one who is a master. Because if you aren't being held accountable by others on earth, then the only thing the only way you are going to remember is by the Holy Spirit making his word to be fruitful in your heart and your mind.

And you guys experience that sometimes too. If mom or dad aren't home or you think they can't see or you're all by yourself. It

can be easy to feel like you won't be held accountable. But the Lord sees and the Lord hears and he's always with you. And so in some ways, it's actually harder to be the master in this case.

And that's. You know, that's a pretty big deal because there's very hard to be the servant. I've been an employee kind of em now although my masters and isn't a hard one now but I've been an employee who was overworked and under appreciated and you know what happened when I worked cheerfully and diligently and even when the boss wasn't around.

I was given more jobs and I was held to a higher standard. There'd be much more disappointed if I messed something up. And you know, although I might get a little extra something here or there. I wasn't particularly paid well. Or even that much better than you know, the other people who had similar jobs.

So. It can be it can be hard and unrewarding from an earthly standpoint to work cheerfully and sincerely and so what we need in either case whichever one we are is for the Holy Spirit to keep reminding us of our master in heaven who laid down his life for us and who has given us whatever job we have whatever school we have whatever chore we have even cleaning a room.

Or whatever else it is, but that's been assigned to you by Jesus you do it cheerfully and diligently for his sake and that's that's one of the encouraging things about this message because you remember before we got into marriage and children and parenting and now the workplace he was talking about being filled with the Holy Spirit.

As those who were darkness and are now light and as soon as we're done with this next week, it'll be the putting on the whole armor of God and fighting the spiritual war, so if you think it's hard you're right. But you've been given the Holy Spirit and you have been given the armor of God the Gospel of Jesus Christ by which you may be cheerful and diligent in your work.

So. Me encourage your children, especially. That you apply this in your schoolwork and your chores because if you practice. Grumbling and disliking work and viewing it as a necessary evil to get through until you can have fun and you let your mind and heart build that habit that attitude towards your work, you will not suddenly be able when you're a mom or have a job or whatever else it is, you're doing later to be cheerful and diligent receive all of your tasks as assigned to you by Jesus.

If you grumble now about math and chores and cleaning your room, you will grumble about teaching your kids math and all the chores that come with being a housewife or all the work and especially paperwork and government paperwork and people that you have to deal with in your job and all these other things that you help now.

That when you get there you will be like this is an assignment for Jesus. I'm serving him and you could be cheerful with all the grumpy people in the workplace and you can fill out your paperwork as someone who has been given something that has only worthwhile for Jesus's sake and there's a presence to it.

But if you build bad habits of heart and mind now then later when you come and you read a passage like this and you try to apply it to your life, you know find it very hard. Because you'll have all of those years of bad mental and emotional habits to ever come so let's pray that God would help us to.

That he would make this part of his word fruitful in our hearts.

Father.

Thank you that you have.

Been so gentle with me to give me the kind of work where. It's really quite obvious even on the surface. How much it was assigned by and. For Christ. And I ask for the help of your spirit because my sinful nature. Even grumbles against tasks that I have to do in this calling.

So I have mercy on me. And I pray for. Heather and for the children. And for my sammy who are doing jobs where and sometimes harder for them to see immediately how it's assigned by Christ. I pray that your spirit would make this portion of your word to take root not hearts that by his helping us each of us would see all day every day.

Set the tasks that you have given us to do have been appointed to us for the glory of Christ and and service to him make our daily labor as we pray sweet to us by the fact that they are done for our master in heaven who bought us. Not with earthly worthless money, but who bought us with his own blood make us rejoice to serve him.

We make us to know his pleasure and his love and look forward to him rewarding us with good not because we have earned it but because he has earned it and he's the one who is working in us all of these things, so do this we pray in his name even the name of Jesus.

Amen.