

NEW HOPE CHURCH OF GOD

ALTAR WORKERS TRAINING

LESSON 2 Part E: Masters and Servants

“With goodwill doing service, as to the Lord and not to men” (Eph. 6:7 NKJV).

For a better understanding of the verse noted above it will help if you read the context in which it was taken from (**Eph. 6:1-9, note carefully Vv. 5-9**). This will be a rather brief presentation but it is my prayer that it will be beneficial and bring praise, glory and honor to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. You will also notice that it is an emphasis on our **Theme Verse for New Hope Altar Workers** . . . at least verse 6 as quoted above and at the close of each our lessons.

A. Introduction to the Passage (Outline Only)

In Ephesians 6, Paul addressed three important areas of concern.

1. **Wholesome Family Relationship (Vv. 1-4).**
2. **Workers and Masters (Vv. 5-9).** (Our area of focus).
3. **Warfare of the Christian Believer (Vv. 10-24).**

B. Ephesians 6:5-9 Our (Area of Focus)

1. This passage points out in strong terms what the world’s problem main problem is. It is not an economical problem but a spiritual one.
 - (a) Hunger and economic relationship between individual nations can only be solved when men turn to the Lord Jesus Christ
 - (b) He is Lord, and when men serve Him, they commit their everything to Him. Jesus is Lord of their lives and they ought to serve Him in all that they do
 - (c) This commitment is demonstrated in the fact that they work to the glory of Jesus Christ and desire that their lives will be an evidence of His abiding presence in them!
 - (d) They work and partake of the fruits of their labor; then they give to others. Such is the will of God for every man and for the world which He made. **But remember what it is that stirs men to live such sacrificial lives: It is Jesus Christ and their commitment to Him!!**
2. Slaves played a significant part during the New Testament period. There were millions of slaves in the Roman Empire during the days of Paul.
 - (a) Because many slaves and owners had become Christians; the early church had to deal straightforwardly with the question of master/slave relations. Paul’s statement neither condemns nor condone slavery. Instead, it tells masters and slaves how to live together in Christian households.

- (b) In the church, however, they had freedoms that society denied them.
3. The church did not come out publicly and condemn slavery because of many reasons including persecution as well as other ways of opposition.
 4. The church, however, held on to great principles, such as equality of all men in the sight of God, etc.
 5. The instructions to slaves and masters in the New Testament are applicable to every generation.
 6. In Ephesians 6:5-9 Paul addressed two areas of interest:
 - (a) **The Employee Vv. 5-8.**
 - (b) **The Employer v. 9** (*We will not be discussing the Employer's role in this presentation*).
 7. Obviously, as seen above Paul was addressing **Masters and Servants** (Masters and Slaves); however, there are guiding principles that are imperative to **the worker in general** and **also applicable to Kingdom Workers (God's Workers)**. As we saw in our previous presentation: “. . . **an ordinary servant labors for his Master, God works through His servants.**”
 8. What we are seeing in Eph. 6:5-9 is the duty of the servant, summed up in one word— “obedience.” We also saw in our presentation on “*Being God's Servant*” the importance of obedience. Allow me to quote from our previous lesson: “***Did Elijah bring down fire from heaven, or did God do it? God did. What was Elijah's role? Obedience.***” Oh, Beloved! May we: “Trust and obey for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus than to trust and obey!!”

C. THE EMPLOYEE Eph. 6:5-9.

Note the **six specific instructions** Paul gave to the **Christian Worker in Eph. 6:5-9** and you will observe that these governing principles are fundamentally important in our service with God.

1. **The Christian workman is to work with fear and trembling Eph. 6:5a**
“Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, . . .” (v. 5a NKJV)
 - (a) The word “**fear**” is not the slavish fear of men, but with the fear of God in the heart.
 - (b) They were to “**reverence**” or “**respect**” those who were over them.
 Note the following translations (Eph. 6:5a):
 - (1) **Amplified Bible's Translation**
*“Servants (slaves), be obedient to those who are your physical masters, **having respect for them . . .**”*
 - (2) **New International Version**
*“Slaves, obey your earthly masters with **respect and fear, . . .**”*
 - (c) Displaying a fear before God lest our performance bring reproach upon the Lord's name.
 - (d) **Briefly applying this concept to our service with God, I can see . . .**

- (1) Reverence for God and His cause is imperative!
 - (2) We should never lose that **holy awe** . . . He is still God Almighty!! Above Him there is no other!! For example, see Isa. 6:1-7; etc.
 - (3) That reverence for God ought to permeate and saturate all that we do (Luke 1:50; Acts 10:35; 1 Peter 1:17; etc.)
2. **The Christian workman is to work in singleness of heart, as to Christ Eph. 6:5b**
“ . . . in sincerity of heart; as to Christ.” (v. 6b NKJV)
“ . . . in singleness of your heart as unto Christ.” (v. 6b KJV)
- (a) In singleness of heart; not pretending obedience when they design disobedience, but serving them with faithfulness. Jesus Christ specifically noted that **“A double-minded man is unstable in ALL his ways”** (James 1:8 NKJV).
 - (b) **“Singleness of heart” means with purpose and focused attention, in sincerity and without pretense or hypocrisy or slack.**
 - (c) It means the workman does not beat time; he is totally committed to his work.
 - (d) The Christian worker is a good worker; **his heart is single-minded and focused upon doing a job well done.** Why he is doing it . . . **“as unto the Christ!”** (v. 5b KJV) . . . **“as to Christ”** (v. 5b NKJV). *Oh! Beloved!! Our lives ought to be ALL ABOUT JESUS CHRIST!!! Can we truly practically live on a DAILY basis the song “Take My Life, and Let It Be”*
 - (e) **Relating this to our Christian walk: (Briefly)**
 - (1) We have seen the awful results of half-hearted service . . . see for example 2 Kings 10:31; 2 Chron. 20:33; 25:2; Jer. 3:10; etc.
 - (2) Christ also speaks of the need to be **“single eyed”** . . . Matt. 6:22; Luke 11:34 (See also Acts 2:46; Col. 3:22).
 - (3) The Scriptures from the Old Testament to the New Testament have shown that there are some who serve God sincerely and some hypocritically (Phil. 1:15-16; etc.).
 - (4) This listing could go on and on but what we are saying, in essence is that **we ALL need to serve God sincerely, with full attention, consistently to the very end of our days** (Take Caleb for example can't go there now but see for example Num. 14:6-12; Josh. 14:13-19).
 - (5) **Fidelity, in whatever situation, is of paramount importance no matter what is the situation we are experiencing—Beloved, this is acceptable service to the Lord!**
 - May we hear on that great day” **“ . . . well done you good and faithful servant . . .”** (Matt. 25:14-30).
 - Like the Apostle Paul we must remain faithful to the end under all situations and circumstances ... **faithfulness TO THE LORD!!** (2 Tim. 4:6-8)
3. **The Christian workman is not to work with eye service as a man pleaser Eph. 6:6a**
“ . . . not with eye service, as men pleasers (v. 6a NKJV).

- (a) They should have an eye to Jesus Christ in ALL the service that they perform to their masters.
 - (b) The Christian worker is not to work just when his boss is looking.
 - (c) Those who seek to **“curry the favor”** of the boss; or slow down when the boss is not around, etc. are among those who rob labor of its dignity and bring ill repute to the name of Christ.
 - (d) When a man returns home from a day’s work there is only one question to ask: **“Has he pleased his Lord?”**
 - (e) The Bible speaks of the futility of seeking the praises of men (the truth is, when we seek the praises of men in such a situation **that is all we will get the praise of men**); see Luke 16:15; John 12:43; Acts 12:1-3; 24:27; Gal. 1:10; etc.
 - (f) Instead of seeking the praises of men we are to sincerely seek the approval and commendation of God, nothing is better **Rom. 12:1-2. NOTE CAREFULLY how God regarded: Moses:** Num. 12:7; Deut. 34:10; Josh 1:2. **Job:** Job 1:8. **Jesus Christ:** Matt. 3:17; 17:5.
 - (g) Jesus must have the preeminence in our lives—**He will be Lord of ALL or He will NOT be Lord at ALL!!**
4. **The Christian worker is to work as the servant of Christ doing the will of God from the heart. (Eph. 6:6b)**
“ . . . but as bondservants of Christ doing service as to the Lord and not to men.” (v. 6b NKJV).
- (a) **“From the heart”** means with interest and energy.
 - (b) It is the opposite of routine and listlessness, of having no energy or heart for work.
 - (c) The Christian workman must remember this: even if the boss is not looking, Christ sees what kind of work he is doing.
 - (1) Therefore, he must work as though he is working for Christ
 - (2) In fact, the very drive of his heart and life must be to work for Christ.
 - (d) The Christian workman must work:
 - (1) To serve Christ.
 - (2) To do the will of God.
 - (3) To do both (a) and (b) from the heart.
 - (e) Applying the above to our spiritual service. We are responsible not only for the quality of work but also for our commitment to God as it relates to the way that we pursue His work. We will be judged accordingly (Matt. 25, NB Vv. 14-30; etc.). Ultimately, it all depends on God but we need to make ourselves available and remain wholeheartedly committed to Him. **As a committed worker here are some facts to be considered . . . this listing is not comprehensive ... in fact it is a concise listing:**
 - (1) Where a man’s treasure is (Matt. 6:21, NB Vv. 19-34).
 - (2) Loving God with our ALL (Luke 10:27, NB Vv. 25-37... also Matt. 22:37-40 and Mark 12: 28-31).

- (3) Christ acknowledged that some drew nigh with their lips but not their hearts (Matt. 15:8, NB Vv. 1-9)
- (4) In the Epistle of 2 Timothy we have many characteristics of a servant of God (*we are not limiting these ONLY to those in full-time ministry... we are all in ministry to the glory of God*) **I am briefly noting four of these qualities:**
- He is a courageous worker 2 Tim. 2:3-4.
 - He is a diligent worker 2 Tim. 2:14-18.
 - He is a sanctified worker 2 Tim. 2:19-22.
 - He is a gentle servant 2 Tim. 2:23-26.
5. **The Christian workman is to work with goodwill, and he must do it to the Lord and not to men Eph. 6:7**
“with goodwill doing service as to the Lord and not to men.” (v. 7 NKJV)
- (a) Again, the drive and energy of his life must be to work as the servant of Christ.
- (b) **It could be stated no clearer: The Christian workman serves the Lord, not other men!**
- (c) No matter where he works and no matter what he does . . . if it is not immoral or unjust labor—the Christian workman is to work diligently.
- (d) He is to work as though his boss is the Lord Jesus Christ and not man.
- (e) **As to us working with Christ is easily seen and details are not necessary, however, consider:**
- (1) Joseph would not transgress and bring shame to the cause of God (Gen. 39, NB v. 9).
 - (2) Christ remained fully focused on doing exclusively His Father’s will (John 4:32-34).
 - (3) Paul was completely sold to the glory of God (100%) . . . **“For me to live is Christ”** (Phil. 1:21).
 - (4) As in cases above, here also, we could make a long list of Scriptural references but there is no doubt that the message that God is communicating is very clear!!
 - **“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful”** (1 Cor. 4:2:
 - See also 1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Peter 4:10; etc.
6. **The result of such diligent labor is to be a corresponding (equal) reward Eph. 6:8.**
“Knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free” (v. 8 NKJV).
- (a) Think of the slaves that Paul was giving instructions—what situations some must have worked under?
- (b) For these slaves being addressed, deliverance from slavery may not have been a possibility.
- (c) Many masters (employers) have used the reality of such condition to their advantage and disadvantage of those in their service.

- (d) Christianity does not approve slavery.
- (e) Christianity nowhere requires its friends to make or to own a slave.
- (f) A master may fail to render suitable recompense to a slave. But if the servant is faithful to God, He will recompense him in the future world.
- (g) **As Christian workers we too may work under unpleasant circumstances but let us do what we have to do to the glory of God and He will do what must be done for us His children.**
- (h) See for example: Matt. 35:23, 34; Mark 9:41; etc. Note also 2 Cor. 5:10; Col. 3:25.
- (i) We are definitely out of time but allow me to make a few more comments. In our spiritual service with God we must always give our best. We have a Master who has lifted our heavy burden, who has guaranteed us rest; He is not like earthly masters, He is meek and humble and His yoke is easy and burden light (Matt. 11:28-30).
- (j) **Do not worry about compensation you are in “good hands!”**
- (1) The disciples were concerned about what they would receive for following Christ.
 - (2) **Beloved! The “What is in for Me” attitude is not the way to serve God!**
However, as you know in the account referred to above, Jesus did respond to the disciples concerns . . . see Mark 10:28-31
 - (3) I do not have the time for even a brief explanation of the passage but note five things in this passage (**Mark 10:28-31**).
 - Rewards in Question v. 28.
 - Return—will be—Manifold v. 29-30a.
 - Receiving Persecution is Possible v. 30b.
 - Reassurance of Eternal Life v. 30c.
 - Reversing the Order of Men by God’s Standards v. 31.

CLOSING THOUGHT

As we look at Eph. 6:5-9 and lifting out verses 6-8 we observe Paul’s instructions encouraging responsibility and integrity on the job (and that includes our Altar Ministry or any other Christian ministry). Christian employee should do their jobs as if Jesus Christ were their supervisor. In your secular jobs can you be trusted to do your best, even when the boss is not around? Do you work hard with enthusiasm? While we are focusing on the “**worker**” (*servant, slave*) within these verses (and God’s Word in general) there are challenges for the “**master**” (employer) who should treat their employees fairly and with respect. So as we close, remember that no matter whom you work for, and no matter who work for you, the one you ultimately should want to please is your Father in heaven!

Church work can be discouraging, difficult, etc. but we must keep our eyes on Jesus and sincerely love Him with **ALL** our heart, soul, mind and strength, and at **ALL** times give Him the best because “**Only The Best Is Good Enough!!**”

The second verse of: **“Give of Your Best to the Master”**:

Give of your best to the Master;
Give Him first place in your heart;
Give Him first place in your service;
Consecrate every part.
Give, and to you will be given;
God His beloved Son gave;
Gratefully seeking to serve Him,
Give Him the best that you have.

LEADERSHIP IS SERVANTHOOD

**Because we children of Adam wanted to become great,
He became small.**

**Because we will not stoop,
He humbled Himself.**

**Because we want to rule,
He came to serve!!**

LET US LEAD BY EXAMPLE

1. **CHRIST’S EXAMPLE John 13:15**
See also Heb. 3:1; 12:2; etc.
2. **PAUL’S EXAMPLE 1 Cor. 11:1**
See also Acts 20:35; 1 Cor. 4:16; Phil. 3:17; etc.
3. **MINISTRY WORKER’S CHALLENGE**
1 Tim. 4:12 KJV
*“Let no man despise thy youth; **be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.**”*
See also 2 Thess. 3:9; Titus 2:7; etc.

Eph. 6:7 NKJV

“ . . . with goodwill doing service as to the Lord, and not to men, . . . ”

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