

- II. Body
 - A. Spiritual Life is Found Only in Christ..
 - B. Spiritual Growth is Found Only in Christ
 - C. Live With a Heavenly Perspective
 - D. Put Off Old Sinful Habits.
 - E. Put on New Spirit Filled Habits.
 - F. **Live for Christ in all God-Given Roles.**

Live for Christ in all God-Given Roles

Slaves & Masters

A Study in Colossians

I. The Context - Colossians 3:18 - 4:1

1. How many groups of people does Paul address in this section?
2. How does Paul address each group of people?
3. How are these groups organized?
4. In what order does Paul address each pair?
5. As Paul addresses each pair, what consistent theme is given to one group and not the other?
6. As we look at instructions given to slaves, what is different about Paul's exhortation to this group?

II. The Text - Colossians 3:22-4:1

***Bondservants**, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.*

***Masters**, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.*

III. The Meaning

A. Instructions to slaves

1. The dilemma of slavery and the Bible.

- Does the Bible outlaw slavery?
- Is the Bible pro-slavery?
- As Americans, what shapes our view of slavery?
- Consider the following verses. If these verses were obeyed, what effect would it have had on American slavery?
 - *Exodus 21:16 - Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death.*
 - *1 Timothy 1:8-10 - Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine,*
 - *Exodus 21:26-27 - "When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free because of his eye. If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free because of his tooth.*
 - *Deuteronomy 21:14 - But if you no longer delight in her, you shall let her go where she wants. But you shall not sell her for money, nor shall you treat her as a slave, since you have humiliated her.*
 - *Deuteronomy 23: 15-16 - "You shall not give up to his master a slave who has escaped from his master to you. He shall dwell with you, in your midst, in the place that he shall choose within one of your towns, wherever it suits him. You shall not wrong him.*
- In Genesis 50:20 how does the bible view the act of Joseph being sold into slavery?
- Does the Bible allow for the type of slavery that took place here in America?

2. The obedience of slaves

a) Paul commands slaves to obey their earthly master in _____.

b) Paul explains how slaves are to obey by contrasting what not to do with what to do.

➤ Do not obey for _____ or _____.

➤ Do obey with a sincere heart knowing the Lord is _____.

- What does it mean to obey with eye service or as a people-pleaser? Why is this a negative way to obey?
- Did the character of a master (being just or unjust) have any bearing on whether or not a slave was to obey? Why or why not? (See also 1 Peter 2:18-21)

3. The work of slaves

a) Slaves were to work with all their _____.

b) Slaves were to work for their masters with all effort, because the real motivation was to please _____.

c) When slaves worked heartily in every circumstance they could expect a _____ from the Lord.

d) When slaves did not work heartily they could also expect to _____ rewards from the Lord.

- Because there are no slaves in our church, what applications can we draw from this passage?
- If employees are mistreated or unhappy with their employers, how should they respond?
- How does being a bad employee hinder the gospel message?

B. Instructions to masters

1. The command to masters.

a) Masters were commanded to treat their slaves with _____.

b) Masters were commanded to treat their slaves with _____.

2. The submission of masters

a) Masters were to treat their slaves with justice and fairness because they themselves were _____ of Christ.

b) The responsibility given to husbands, fathers, and masters is still under the authority of Christ who is _____ of all things seated in heaven.

- How can we apply Paul's teaching to masters for us today?