

How Should Our Work Be Done? Ephesians 6:5-9

Introduction

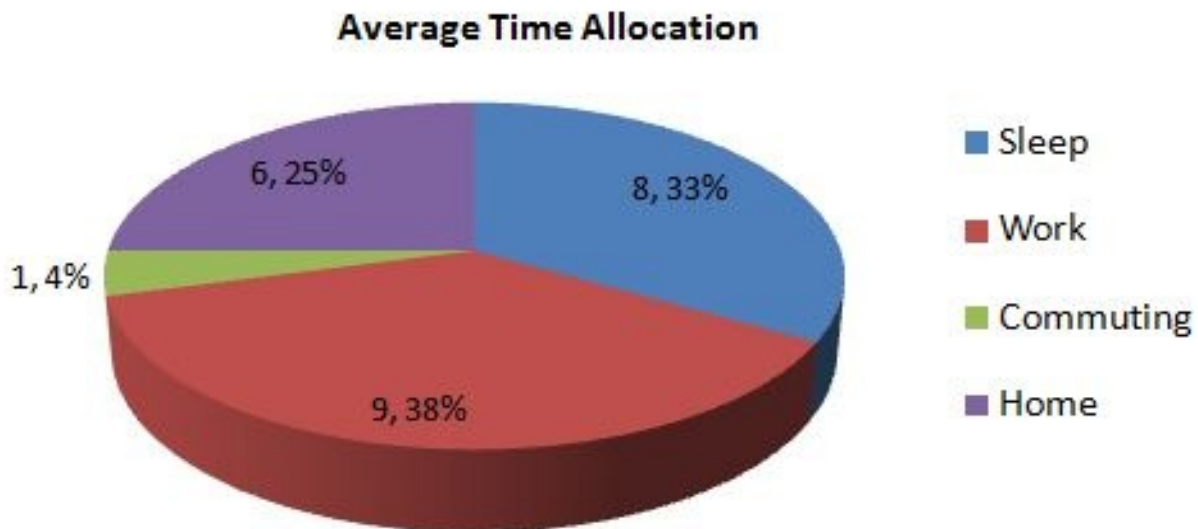
A couple of weeks ago we finished up family relationships. The relationships in the church are patterned after the relationships in the home. For us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling, we must walk in love. We must be imitators of God, and pattern our lives after Christ, who laid His life down for us.

Husbands must love their wives. Wives must love their husbands. All of us must love one another. Jesus said I give you a new commandment that you love one another just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

(John 13:34-35) ""A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. {35} "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.""

We also saw that we must all honor one another. Husbands are to give honor to their wives as joint heirs. Wives are to honor and respect their husbands. Children are to honor their parents. All of us are to honor one another.

Outside of the home, the second most common place that we interact with people is in the workplace. If we say that the average person works eight hours a day, and sleeps eight hours a day, then half of his awake time is spent at work. Then, if we add an hour for lunch at work, and an hour for commuting to an from work, then he actually spends more time at work than at home during the week. The work place is a very large part of our lives. Paul finishes this section on how to treat one another by discussing the workplace. Our text this morning is Ephesians 6:5-9.



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(Ephesians 6:5-9) "Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; {6} not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. {7} With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, {8} knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. {9} And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him."

How should our work be done?

1. The Actions and Attitudes of slaves are unto the Lord.
 - a. Slaves are to be obedient to their masters as to the Lord.
 - i. They should do this with fear and trembling.
 - ii. They should do this with sincerity of heart.
 - b. Slaves are to serve as unto the Lord.
 - i. They should serve with expectation.
 - ii. God will reward them for the good things they do.
2. The Actions and Attitudes of Masters are unto the Lord.
 - a. Masters should not threaten their slaves.
 - i. God will judge masters for how they treated their workers.
 - ii. God will judge righteously, with no partiality.

There are common principles regarding work that are found throughout Scripture. Paul's main point in this passage is that all our work should be done as unto the Lord. This applies in our relationships with one another, and also in the actual work that we do. It also applies to both sides of a work relationship, the slaves and masters or employees and employers.

If there is one point that I want everyone to take away from the message today, it is that the way that we treat people and the things that we do should all be unto the Lord. Let's take a look at a few examples.

When Karen shared a few weeks ago on the responsibilities of a wife, she said that wives were to be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord. When they submit to their husbands, they are doing this unto the Lord. When Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him Lord, she was actually doing this unto the Lord.

(Ephesians 5:22) "Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord."

(1 Peter 3:6) "Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear."

This principle is not just in marriage. On Tuesday morning this week, the Holy Spirit woke me up with an old Keith Green song about separating the goats and the sheep. The song is taken from Matthew 25:31-46. After my quiet time, I looked up the song on YouTube.com and listened to it. I would have played it for you, but I did not want to take eight minutes of message time. One of the main points of the song is when we do something to the least of the brethren, we are doing it unto the Lord.

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(Matthew 25:31-46) ""But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. {32} "And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; {33} and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. {34} "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. {35} 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; {36} naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' {37} "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? {38} 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? {39} 'And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' {40} "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.' {41} "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; {42} for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; {43} I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' {44} "Then they themselves also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' {45} "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' {46} "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.""

And, here in this passage, we find that servants are to serve their masters, as to the Lord. Then, Paul switches to the masters, and says for them to do the same thing to them. He is not referring to being obedient to them. He is referring to rendering service to them as unto the Lord. In all our relationships, we must treat and honor one another as unto the Lord.

Before we get into the nitty gritty of the message, let me say a few comments about slavery. At the time that Paul wrote this to the Ephesians, slavery was a common thing. Historians and theologians have identified about nine different ways that people could become slaves. You could be born a slave. You could become a voluntary slave. You may do this because while you were a slave, your master gave you a great slave wife and you do not want to leave her. The most common reason for slavery was financial bondage. When a person was not able to meet their financial obligations, he became a slave to the person that he owed money to. A certain time period could be established for the person to work off their debt.

Slavery was not the way it was in our early American history, where people were taken by force from their homes, families, and countries and then sold as slaves in a foreign land. That kind of slavery violated people's rights. The slavery in Paul's day was generally caused by poor stewardship.

People today do not become slaves when they cannot meet their financial obligations. They simply declare bankruptcy. They re-establish their credit and then carry on with their lives. Even though we do not have the same master-slave relationships, we can use this passage to make applications of our work relationships, which are generally employee-employer.

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In this passage Paul deals with the attitude and work habits of the slaves or bondservants, and their masters. We can apply these same principles to the marketplace today, with employees and employees. In verse 8, he says that whatever a man does, whether slave or free, he will receive back from the Lord. This specifically opens up the principle that he is sharing with everyone in the workforce, not just slave-master relationships. Paul first addresses the attitude and work habits of the servant, and then he shifts his focus to the master or employer. The overall message to both the master and the slave is that their work is unto the Lord.

1. The Actions and Attitudes of Slaves and Employees

Paul tells the slaves to be **obedient** to their masters.

The Greek word for obedient is *hupakouo*, which means to hear under, listen attentively, to heed or conform to a command, or to be obedient. This was the same word that Paul used when telling children to obey their parents. It is used twenty-one times in the New Testament and all but one of them it is translated as obey or obedient. It nearly always has to do with obedience to a higher authority.

G5219. *hupakouo*, hoop-ak-oo'-o; from G5259 and G191; to hear under (as a subordinate), i.e. to listen attentively; by impl. to heed or conform to a command or authority:--hearken, be obedient to, obey.

For example, in Matthew 8, people marveled that the winds and the sea obeyed Jesus. Jesus had authority over the winds and the ocean. In Mark 1:27, people were amazed that the unclean spirits obeyed Him. Again, Jesus had authority over the unclean spirits and they had to obey Him. When we looked at the battle in our minds a few weeks ago, we looked at how we are not to obey the lusts of our flesh, but we are to present ourselves to God and our members as instruments of righteousness. Children are to be in subjection to their parents and obey them. Slaves are to be in subjection to their masters and be obedient to them.

(Matthew 8:27) "And the men marveled, saying, "What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

(Mark 1:27) "And they were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

(Romans 6:16) "Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?"

Paul tells the slaves to be obedient to those who are their masters according to the flesh. We know that in the temple that the Lord is building, there is neither slave nor free man. There is neither Greek nor Jew. There is neither male nor female, for we are all one in the Lord. However, in the flesh, we can have some differing positions and roles.

(Galatians 3:28) "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is

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neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Paul tells us in Galatians 5:1 that it was for freedom that Christ has set us free, and we are not to be subject again to the yoke of slavery. His context was about being under the law again. The Gentiles were not to get under the bondage and yoke of slavery that the law put people under. Christ set us free and we are to remain free. I believe the principle still applies to us in other areas. It is better to live as a free man than a slave. If we have a choice in the matter, we should remain free.

(Galatians 5:1) "It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery."

However, if we are in a position of slavery, or servanthood, we need to obey our masters in the flesh. Paul says that we need to do it with the right attitude. He says that we are to be obedient with fear and trembling and with sincerity of heart.

(Ephesians 6:5) "Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ."

Why fear and trembling? Because He finishes the statement with the phrase as to Christ. Then, he tells us that we are to render service as to the Lord. God is going to judge every thought and action in our lives. We are going to have to answer for how we served the people that we worked for.

(Ephesians 6:7-8) "With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, {8} knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free."

This principle is true in all our relationships, even in the church. He tells church members in Hebrews 13:17 to obey their leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over you, as those who will give an account. Then, he adds this thought, "let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you." He is saying that God is going to judge our actions and if we cause problems for those who are in charge of us, it will not be profitable for us. There are consequences for our actions. At the same time, those who are in a place of authority also have to give account. If they are selfish or poor shepherds, then it will not be very profitable for them in that day of judgment.

(Hebrews 13:17) "Obey your leaders, and submit to them; for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you."

Paul then tells them to be obedient with sincerity of heart. The King James says with singleness of heart. The Greek word is haplotes, which means single or singleness. A servant is not to be double-minded. A servant cannot have two masters. Scripture is very clear that we cannot serve two masters, either in the spiritual or the natural.

G572. haplotes, hap-lot'-ace; from G573; singleness, i.e. (subj.) sincerity (without

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dissimulation or self-seeking), or (obj.) generosity (copious bestowal):--bountifulness, liberal (-ity), simplicity, singleness.

James deals with those who are double-minded. He says that their ways are unstable. In the context of the passage, they will also not receive the things that they are asking from God. A few chapters later James gives the remedy for those who are double-minded. He says to repent. He says to cleanse our hand, and purify our hearts. We purify our hearts by putting off the old self and putting on the new self. We replace the old thoughts with God's thoughts. We must fill our minds with truth.

(James 1:8) "being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

(James 4:8) "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

In our Life Groups, we are going through the twelve-week series called the truth project. The purpose of it is to help us develop a Biblical worldview. It is designed to help us be single-minded, rather than being double-minded.

Next, Paul tells slaves to do the will of God from the heart and not with eyeservice or men-pleasers. This means that we appear to be working when the boss comes around, instead of working when he is not around.

(Ephesians 6:6) "not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart."

I like to play hearts and spider. Occasionally at work I will play a game. It is a good break at times. However, I am not being paid to played cards at work. I am paid to work. I am paid to manage our company. I am paid to oversee the work of our staff. I am paid to market our company and to grow the business. Whether my parents, who are owners of the business, are there or not, I need to be a faithful worker. If I do it unto God, knowing that He will render to me according to my work, then I will not be a man-pleaser.

I told Lee Griego last week that I could spend a month talking about this passage. God has given me much about the workplace. In regard to not being a men-pleaser, who does things to be noticed by the boss, or only when the boss is around, there is a great passage in Proverbs. Solomon tells us that we need to observe the ant and learn from the ant. He says that we should not need a chief, officer, or ruler. This is an outstanding passage about our work habits. I believe that employers should be knocking down the doors to get Christians to work for them. Our work needs to be of such high quality that people want to hire us. Listen to what Solomon is saying about our work.

(Proverbs 6:6-8) "Go to the ant, O sluggard, Observe her ways and be wise, {7} Which, having no chief, Officer or ruler, {8} Prepares her food in the summer, And gathers her provision in the harvest."

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The first thing that we should not need is a chief. The Hebrew word for chief is qatsiyn. The word qatsiyn is a military word. It is used twelve times and signifies the one at the head, the captain or chief. It is the one who is directing the affairs of the army. He is the one making the key decisions.

H7101. qatsiyn, kaw-tseen'; from H7096 in the sense of determining; a magistrate (as deciding) or other leader:--captain, guide, prince, ruler. Comp. H6278.

The King James translates this as guide, which is an excellent translation. A qatsiyn is one who determines or decides what needs to be done. A chief appraises a situation and makes a determination of the things that need to be done. A chief looks at a business and sees what things are lacking in the business and creates a plan of action to improve those areas. A chief looks at the church and sees what is lacking, and creates a plan of action to shore up those gaps. A chief looks at opportunities and makes a plan to make the most of those opportunities. A chief is a visionary worker. A chief does not need others to tell him what to do. A chief can work independently. He is not independent and a one-man show, but he can work without the boss micro-managing him.

I find myself praying about work and the church. I ask God to show me and reveal to me the things that I need to give my attention to. I ask Him for vision and direction. I want to be a qatsin leader, a visionary leader that makes the right determinations and decisions.

This week I was talking with another pastor about his burnout. I asked him what the Lord had shown him about his burnout, so that all of us could profit from his experiences. One of the things that he told me was that his church expected him to do everything. He was working 70 hours a week doing everything while his church watched from the sidelines. What we need is a church full of ants who see what needs to be done and does it. They don't have to wait for the pastor to tell them what to do.

We need the worship leader to see what needs to be done and to do it. We need the sound technician to see what needs to be done and to do it. I called James this week as I started home for work. Where was he? He was at the Guitar Center doing research. He and Betty are working to get better feedback for her while she leads. I am not involved in the process. They see a problem and they are working to make a determination of what can be done. They are working as chiefs, who don't need Pastor Bill to get involved. I greatly appreciate what they are doing. They are helping to prevent me from burnout. Thank you church for being good chiefs.

The second thing that Solomon says is that we do not need an officer. The Hebrew word is shoter, which means to write. It is also someone who is overseeing our work. The King James translates this as an overseer. Again, this is an excellent rendering of shoter. A shoter writes things down. A shoter sees what needs to be done and then writes down a plan to accomplish the work. A shoter journals what he has done so that he can give account to others. His check book register is in good shape. He keeps meeting notes so that he can quickly refer back to them. He keeps a spiritual journal of what God has spoken to him. One of the reasons that I write out my messages is that I can be a good steward of the things that God shares with me. I can go back to my previous work and use it or pieces of it at any time. He is a faithful steward.

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H7860. shoter, sho-tare'; act. part. of an otherwise unused root prob. mean. to write; prop. a scribe, i.e. (by anal. or impl.) an official superintendent or magistrate:--officer, overseer, ruler.

A shoter is not the chief. He is the one working under the chief. A shoter gets direction and writes it down and makes sure that it gets implemented. In many ways a shoter is an administrator. One of the keys to being effective as an administrator is being organized. An administrator has to be a detail person. He has to keep up with a lot of details and these will all get lost in the shuffle if he is not well organized.

Organization does not happen automatically. Getting and staying organized requires a regular allotment of time to think and ponder. It requires writing down your insights. It requires making and carrying out a plan to accomplish things. Let me give you some examples.

At Murchison Drilling Schools I handle all the contracts for in-house training for companies. There are lots of letters and emails from various contacts and also lots of proposals and contracts. In setting up a training agreement with Saudi Aramco there are 210 emails. All these emails contain pertinent information about our contract. In order to stay organized, I have to set up various folders and subfolders. There is a folder for Murchison customers. Inside that folder are folders for each company that we do training. I have the 210 emails from Saudi Aramco in their folder and they are organized by date. If I need to find one of the emails that I have sent or received, I look in that folder. It took time and thought to initially get organized and to set up the folders. It takes time to continually manage my files.

On Friday of this week, I got an email from Staatssolie, the state oil company in Surinam. They want some well control training in the last week of July. I was able to quickly look at our enrollments for July, at our other training commitments, our vacation schedules, and determine that we could put on the class for them. I was able to quickly bring up the contract that I wrote for them in 2009 and make some modifications to it. Within ten minutes from receiving their email, I had a new contract to them for their review and signature. This speed and efficiency is because of good organization. It is part of being a shoter.

I also handle the graphics for our company. We have thousands of illustrations that have been created for our PowerPoint presentations. It would be very difficult to find an illustration unless the files were well organized. All of the illustrations are divided up and kept in folders for the day of the school that they are used. All the illustrations used in the Day 5 PowerPoint are kept in a folder called Day 5, which is a subfolder of MDS Graphics. Organization takes time, but it also saves time.

Leaders need to learn to be well organized. It will not only help them in leading, but it will help other people to follow. It is nearly impossible to follow someone who is disorganized and scatter-brained. It is difficult to mobilize people to carry out a plan when no one knows where they are supposed to be, when they are supposed to be there, what they are supposed to do, etc. An administrator has to take time to think about all the details and get organized.

The third type of supervision that an ant does not require is a ruler. The Hebrew word used here is mashal, which means to have rule or dominion, to reign or have power. This word carries a

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connotation of power and authority. This would be someone who bears down and forces you to work. He enforces the authority. In a home, a mother would make sure that the children made their beds and carried out their chores. It requires checking up on them and being there with them. You cannot be an absentee ruler. You must be there with them making sure that do the work or face the consequences.

H4910. mashal, maw-shal'; a prim. root; to rule:--(have, make to have) dominion, governor, X indeed, reign, (bear, cause to, have) rule (-ing, -r), have power.

TWOT: This word emphasizes the importance of authority, the absolute moral necessity of respect for proper authority, the value of it for orderly society and happy living and the origin of all authority in God, Himself.

In business we do not want to have to force people to work. We do not want to continually remind people to do their job. We do not want to stand over them. We do not want to have to write up an individual who does not do their work. This will wear out a supervisor and is costly to the company. We want people who can work without this kind of supervision.

That is what Solomon is saying. Sluggards need to learn from the ant who do not need someone telling them what to do, how to do it, or enforcing them to do it. God wants people to be excellent workers who can work with minimal supervision.

In our text today, we are not to give eyeservice or be men-pleasers, we are to be good workers. We are not those who work only when the boss is around. We are those who are faithful that the boss leaves in charge of things. The boss knows that we will see what needs to be done and will come up with a plan of action and will faithfully get the work done without him riding shotgun over us.

Next, Paul tells us that we are to act as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. We are not merely serving the people that we work for, we are servants or slaves of Christ. When we do obey as to Christ, we are doing our work unto Him. All the work that is assigned to us is God's work. It is His will for us to accomplish the things that our employers give us to do.

(Ephesians 6:6) "... but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart."

We have this misconception about secular work and church work. We see that church work is more significant than secular work. That is wrong. What Lee does for Bernalillo County Health Department is just as important as me teaching on Sunday morning. What Jeff does for Vermeer Equipment is just as significant as Billy Graham preaching. Karen's homeschooling Chad is just as significant as Betty leading worship on Sunday. Our service is to Christ. Our work and responsibilities is not just our work, it is His will for our lives.

When I faithfully serve Murchison Drilling Schools, I am faithfully serving God, and am doing His will for my life. And the way that I do all my work should glorify and honor the Lord. At the end of the day, my Master, who sees my heart and all my work, should be pleased with what I have done. He should be able to say to me, "Well done, my good and faithful servant."

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(Luke 19:17) ""And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, be in authority over ten cities.'"

Paul says that we need to do this from the heart. Our work should be done with our heart. Our heart is the seed of our intellect. It is our minds. We need to work with our minds. I tell my employees that I want them to use their minds at work. I want them to think about the best way to get things done. I want them to be creative. I also want them to make good decisions. We had a problem with materials being delivered to a class in Amsterdam last week because someone did something without using careful thought. The problem could have easily been prevented if the person had given thought about a UPS delivery option on the wayfinding bill. We have to put our heart into what we do.

There are two parallel verses to this verse. The first parallel passage is in Colossians. Paul tells us that we should do our work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men. Heartedly means doing our work with our heart in it. Doing it from the heart means that we are sincere. Doing it from the heart means that we are giving it all that we have. Doing it from the heart means that we are engaged and focused on what we are doing. Doing it from our heart means that it will be done with quality and our best efforts.

(Colossians 3:23-25) "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; {24} knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. {25} For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality."

One other thought about doing our work with our hearts has to do with attitude. Our heart is also the seat of our emotions. We need to be excited about our work. I see people get up early to go fishing or hunting. That's easy because they are excited about that. Well, we need to be excited about our work. We need to be passionate about the things that we do. We need to find the things in life that excite us and that we are passionate about. It is no problem to motivate workers who are passionate about what they are doing. It is a terrible problem to have people doing things that they are not excited and passionate about. An excited, motivated, and passionate worker is a very valuable person in any organization.

Notice in this parallel passage that Paul says that our work is for the Lord, rather than for men. Ultimately, it is the Lord who will reward us for our work. We may have some earthly rewards, but we will also have rewards in heaven. I also believe that one of the rewards that God gives us is promotions. Notice how the Lord commended the good worker: "well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, be in authority over ten cities." There was a promotion for faithfully carrying out the current job. God rewards us for our hard work.

Paul repeats this in Ephesians 6:8, saying "that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord. God is a rewarder of our work. That should be further motivation for us to do quality work. That should be motivation for us to work faithfully and diligently. That should be motivation to do work that honors and pleases God.

(Ephesians 6:8) "knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free."

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In Ecclesiastes 9:10, Solomon tells us to do whatever our hand finds to do with all our might. He is telling us the same thing as Paul, that we need to do our work with all our heart, with all that is within us. It does not matter whether we are making \$7.25 an hour or \$200.00 an hour, our work needs to be done with all our might. Solomon says whatever your hand finds to do. If we are going to do something, it needs to be done with our hearts and with all our might. We must give it our best effort. If we work like this, people will want us to work for them.

(Ecclesiastes 9:10) "Whatever your hand finds to do, verily, do it with all your might; for there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol where you are going."

2. The actions and attitudes of the master or employer.

Now Paul turns his attention to the master. He gives balanced teachings. He addresses the wives and then he addresses husbands. He addresses children and he addresses fathers or parents. He addresses slaves and he addresses masters. In any relationship, there are two sides and both parties must be making their best efforts. It is difficult for an employee to continue working at a job where he is unappreciated, or treated poorly.

(Ephesians 6:9) "And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him."

I told the owner at one company that I managed that if I was yelled at one more time, I would resign. I had faithfully run his business and it prospered under my leadership. However, this owner did the three "B's" to his employees, including me. He belittled, badgered and berated them. I told him that I could work anywhere that I wanted to work and that if I was going to work there, he would have to treat me with respect and honor. I was not going to tolerate his behavior any more. And, the next time I was yelled out, I picked up my belongings, turned in my company phone and keys, and went home. It was very easy for me to do.

Some work situations are not healthy. Some marriage situations are not healthy. Where there is physical abuse or emotional abuse, leaving is a viable option. God does not want you in positions where you are being abused. It is His will for us to obey our authorities, but I do not believe it is His will that we place ourselves under those kinds of authorities.

My point with this is that in relationships where both parties are working on their attitudes and actions, it is far more successful. Paul now addresses masters or employers.

He begins by saying, "masters, do the same things to them." He is not telling masters to obey their servants. He is saying that in the same way that the servants are serving the Lord in what they do, the masters should be doing their work as unto the Lord. A supervisor of employees should do his work unto the Lord.

When a supervisor gives an order to an employee, it is as if he is giving it to the Lord. How would he give that command or order to the Lord? Would he do it in a condescending way? Would he do it in a belittling way? Would he be unreasonable in his expectations? Would he do it in a threatening way? No, he would politely and respectfully tell an employee what should be done. If there is a deadline or time line, he should clearly communicate that to the employee.

How Should Our Work Be Done? Ephesians 6:5-9

I have found that one of the best ways to help people is to give examples to them. It is easy for an employee to follow and learn from what I am doing. Jesus said this to his disciples, “follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”

(Matthew 4:19) "And He said[^] to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.""

Paul tells elders this in 1 Peter 5, to prove to be examples to the flock. I will preach on this passage some day. I did a whole elders retreat on this passage for a church.

(1 Peter 5:1-3) "Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, {2} shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; {3} nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock."

Solomon addresses this in Proverbs 29. He says that a slave will not be instructed by words alone. Though he understands, there will be no response. People need to be shown. They need examples. In my teachings, I try to give practical illustrations and examples. I try to be transparent and vulnerable with you so that you can learn from my mistakes and my successes.

(Proverbs 29:19) "A slave will not be instructed by words alone; For though he understands, there will be no response."

Paul verifies his point about how we tell those under us to do things by specifying that they give up threatening. Threatening people may get something done right now, but it is not a good long-term management style. We don't tell our children to mind or we will spank them. We simply tell them to do something. There are times that discipline is needed, but that is not the best way to motivate people.

(Ephesians 6:9) “And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.”

People need to be rewarded for their efforts. God gave “attaboys” in Scripture. Notice what He said to the good steward, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” Expressing appreciation to people for their hard work goes a long way. Giving bonuses and rewards for good work is also motivating. People like to be appreciated for what they do.

Becky Fox sent me an email a while back and said that this was the first church that she has felt appreciated in. I take that as a compliment. I want everyone here to feel appreciated. I want Joanna to know how much we appreciate her finding backgrounds for our worship songs. She does a great service to all of us. One of the things that Lee does to show appreciation for me is to let me know when I have done a good job with the message. As a church, we should strive to honor one another and to show appreciation for one another. An excited and motivated church is very attractive. An excited and motivated church will run efficiently and advance the kingdom of God. In Isaiah 9, there is a prophecy about the coming of the Messiah. He speaks about the never ending increase to the government of peace. Then, he says that it is the zeal of the Lord of hosts that will accomplish this. An excited and zealous people move forward the government of God.

How Should Our Work Be Done? Ephesians 6:5-9

(Isaiah 9:7) "There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this."

Paul finishes up his thought to masters by saying that their Master and the slave's Master is one and the same. God is not going to show partiality in His judgment. He will judge every action of the slave and every action of the master.

There are some people who get very arrogant and difficult when they come into a position of authority. They are overbearing and insensitive to those under their authority. They want to rule with an iron clad fist. Jesus tells us that the rulers of the Gentiles lord over them, but that is not how we are to be. He tells us to learn to serve those under our authority. He tells us to follow His example, and He did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many.

(Matthew 20:25-28) "But Jesus called them to Himself, and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. {26} "It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, {27} and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; {28} just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.""

What did He tell husbands to do? They are to love their wives as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself up for her. Husbands are to lay down their lives for their wives. They are to serve them, love them, cherish them, nurture and care for them. A position of authority is for proper order. A position of authority is to serve and care for people. A position of authority is to lead, give vision, and manage affairs of the owner, or in the case of the church, the affairs of God's household.

Conclusion

When employees and employers have as their ambition and goal to both do their work as unto the Lord, the workplace will be a very productive one. When employees and employers treat one another with love and respect, as unto the Lord, the morale in the workplace will be excellent. When the church wraps itself around the truth about work, the eyes of the world will see Christ like never before. They will see Christians as diligent workers. They will see Christians as faithful workers. They will see Christians as people who work hard and do their work with passion. They will see Christians as energetic and motivated people. They will see that Christians are great to be around, because they are easy to work with and they honor one another. Much of our lives are spent in the workplace. God wants for us to make the most of the opportunities that we have. He wants us to be a light.

This morning, if you need to repent of work habits, work attitudes, or anything else, let me encourage you to do business with God this morning. If you want someone to pray with you or for you about work or anything else, we would welcome the opportunity to pray with you. If you would like to make this your church home, a place for you to grow, be cared for, and to serve, you can use this opportunity to join our church. Let's pray.

Introduction (John 13:34-35, Eph 6:5-9, Eph 5:22, 1 Pet 3:6, (Matt 25:31-46)

1. The Actions and Attitudes of Slaves and Employees (Eph 6:5-8)

- Paul tells the slaves to be _____ to their masters. (Eph 6:5)
- Hupakouo means to hear under, listen attentively, heed, or be _____. (Matt 8:27, Mark 1:27, Rom 6:16)
- In the flesh we may have slaves and free men, but in Christ Jesus we are all _____. (Gal 3:28, 5:1)
- We should do our work with _____ and _____, because it is done as to Christ or as to the Lord.
- God will _____ our work. (Eph 6:7-8, Heb 13:17)
- We are to do our work with _____ or with _____ of heart. (Ja 1:8, 4:8)
- Our work should not be to _____ men, but to _____ God. (Eph 6:6, Pr 6:6-8)
- Chief (qatsiyn, H7101) is one who is _____ Pro 6:6-8)
- Officer (shoter, H7860) is one who _____ or administrates. It is important for officers to be _____.
- Ruler (mashal, H4910) is one that _____ or forces people to work.
- Doing our work is the _____ of God. (Eph 6:6, Luke 19:17)
- We should do our work with all our _____. (Col 3:23-25, Eccl 9:10)
- God will _____ our work. (Eph 6:8)

2. The actions and attitudes of the master or employer.(Eph 6:9)

- God's word is _____. He addresses both slaves and masters, husbands and wives, children and parents.
- Employers should treat their employees as unto the _____.
- Employers should lead by _____. (Matt 4:19, 1 Pet 5:1-3, Pr 29:19)
- Employers should _____, not threaten. (Eph 6:9)
Employees who are appreciated will be _____ workers. (Is 9:7)
- Employers will also have to give _____ to God. God will not show _____ to them. (Matt 20:25-28)

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