

Colossians – Chapter 3
“Putting on Christ in the Workplace”
Colossians 3:22-25

Verses 22-23

1. When we “*put on*” Christ in our daily lives, Paul shows us what it looks like in our family relationships. Paul now addresses “*servants.*”
2. When our heart is established with the graces we discussed in verses 12-14, how does this impact our daily work life? Paul again will get real practical and show us.
3. Servanthood was embedded in the culture of Bible times. It was extremely common. In fact, in Paul’s day, at least half of the people were servants working under the authority of another person.
 - It was not a racial issue, but an issue of a person's social and financial status. It wasn't uncommon for even doctors, lawyers, or politicians to be operating under the servanthood of another person.
 - There was a caste system embedded in the culture. Many servants were brilliant people that were educators.
 - Many were servants because they sold themselves to be servants, or they stole from another person, or they couldn't pay their debts, or they simply chose that way of life in order to provide for themselves or their families.
4. Paul taught that there are **no** social distinctions in the body of Christ. There is no caste system. The ground is level at Calvary. 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11
 - Paul also taught that God is no respecter of persons, and eternal rewards are given on an absolutely equal basis. Ephesians 6:8-9
5. But, the reality is that we live in a fallen creation in which physical and social distinctions are still a part of our lives, and we have to be able to function in a Christ-like way in whatever social or cultural situation we may find ourselves.
6. With this in mind, Paul’s advice was not for servants to rebel, but rather to be respectful and obedient. They were to serve and work as if Jesus was their boss. Whatever kind of work they did, they were to do it heartily as to the Lord.
7. They were to work with the right spirit and attitude. They weren't to do their jobs with eyeservice, as menpleasers, simply looking for human approval and commendation. Rather, their work was to be done with their hearts singularly focused on God. cf. Ephesians 6:5-7
8. Paul taught believers to glorify Christ and reflect His grace, no matter your social status. 1 Corinthians 7:20-22
 - Every believer is **free** in Christ, and every believer should be a **servant** of Christ. So no matter your outward social status, reflect the grace and life of who you belong to - Jesus Christ!
 - What is the application of this? You may be a CEO with 100 people working and serving under you, or you may be flipping burgers for minimum wage, but regardless of your outward position, you can reflect

the same Jesus to those around you. Do you show forth Christ in the manner in which you work?

- We are all saved under different situations and with different backgrounds. Some believers are called upon to serve the Lord in tough circumstances. Paul taught that your social status is not the issue. Christ in you is the issue. Put on Christ and reflect the One you ultimately belong to!

Verse 24

1. Do you remember what Paul admonished these believers in verse 2? “*Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*” Why should we do this? Because our inheritance is not earthly, it’s heavenly!
2. Do you remember when we studied about this inheritance in 1:12?
 - We, who were pagan, heathen, Gentile sinners will share in the eternal, heavenly inheritance of Jesus Christ!
 - God has made us meet (qualified) to be partakers (to share) of the inheritance of the saints in light (as opposed to eternal darkness in the lake of fire).
 - It is actually **Christ's** rightful inheritance, but because we are **in Christ** (of his body, flesh, and bones), we have been made partakers of this inheritance through Him (Ephesians 1:11, 18). We share in it.
3. What is the application of this in the context of our work life? When we work our earthly jobs to provide for our needs, we must keep in mind that ultimately we are working for Jesus Christ, because it’s **His** inheritance that we will share in eternally.
4. As you work your earthly job, you are serving the Lord Christ! Our earthly work is but preparation for our ultimate work that we will fulfill in the heavenlies.
5. Isn’t this awesome, how Paul draws a correlation between our earthly work and the heavenly work we will ultimately do when we receive the reward of the inheritance?
6. Do you know what an encouragement this would be to servants that work hard with little or no appreciation or thanks? Christ is watching. Christ is taking note. Christ will reward you accordingly.
7. Your hard, diligent work and your godly attitude may go unnoticed by your earthly boss, but it does not go unnoticed by Christ. As you work with a diligent and godly spirit, you are serving the Lord Christ.

Verse 25

1. This verse can be a bit puzzling because it can be taken two different ways:
 - Is Paul warning believing servants that if they do wrong towards their masters (slothfulness, neglect of their work, embezzling money and goods), they can expect some type of retribution? Is this retribution earthly or heavenly? It doesn’t say.
 - Or is Paul providing further encouragement to these believing servants that if they receive wrong from unjust masters, they can know that God

will take care of it in due time, and bring retribution to these masters, because with God there is no respect of persons.

2. There could definitely be application to both scenarios, but I lean towards the second explanation and here is why:

1st Reason When Paul is writing to believers in the local assembly, he uses the personal pronoun “ye” (example: vs. 1-4, 15, 17, 23-24). All of a sudden, in verse 25, it changes to “he.” Paul said, “...for ye serve the Lord Christ. But **he** that doeth...” If he was addressing the same group (believing servants in the local assembly) you would think that he would have said in verse 25, “But if ye do wrong, ye shall receive for the wrong...”

2nd Reason Paul ends this verse by reminding them that with God there is no respect of persons. So, if a person is a master on earth, the master carries no more weight with God than the servant. God is not impressed with earthly position. This would be a great encouragement to believing servants who were suffering when doing right.

3rd Reason This verse seems to provide segue into the next verse (remember, when the Bible was written there were no chapter divisions), in which Paul is admonishing believing masters. So the idea seems to be, “If you are a believing servant working for an unsaved master, take hope in knowing that God will make all things right one day. If you are a believing master, you shouldn’t function like a lost, unjust master.”

3. So Paul seems to be encouraging believing servants in this verse. “If you are receiving wrong from unjust masters, God will take care of it.” There is a day of accountability in which God “*will render to every man according to his deeds... For there is no respect of persons with God.*” Romans 2:6, 11

4. What is the practical application for us today?

- God is not impressed by earthly position. Whether you are a blue collar laborer or a corporate executive, God expects you to put on Christ, and treat others with love and all the other fruits in vs. 12-13.
- If another person has taken advantage of you, or treated you wrongly in your work environment, don’t get bitter. Leave it with the Lord, and keep working as unto Him! Remember, ultimately you are serving Christ!