



"WALKING A LIFE OF PASSION AND PURPOSE FOR JESUS CHRIST"

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Friends and **F**amily of **C**ross**W**alk,

We read in Hebrews 10:24-25 *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*

Following summer there is a sort of "new year" beginning as we resume a more structured routine. With the arrival of September, we will begin new small groups and I want to encourage you to participate as there will be various options for meeting times. The writer of Hebrews reminds us of the importance of meeting together for the purpose of encouraging one another and spurring one another on toward love and good deeds.

Also, notice that it is a matter of forming a habit. A habit once formed becomes a pattern for life. It is a part of your everyday life. It is very easy to "get out of the habit," just quit doing what you were doing. Here we are advised not to quit meeting together. Our mutual growth is dependent on our continuing to meet together and all the more as we see the Day approaching. The "Day" is referring to the Day when Christ will return to establish His kingdom forever. At that time opportunities to grow together and mature in the Body of Christ will be gone. We cannot read this admonishment from Hebrews

without examining how we are using the time we have remaining on this earth.

May we use wisely each day that He gives — particularly as we "see the Day approaching."

Your fellow pilgrim and brother in
Christ,

-Kirk



Messages for the Month

SEPTEMBER 03, 2017 – *Colossians 3:22* –
4:1 - “Holy Work” – Communion

SEPTEMBER 10, 2017 – *Ezekiel 33:7 - 11* –
“Usher Begins With Us” – 14th Sunday after
Pentecost

SEPTEMBER 17, 2017 – *Acts 17, 2017* - “Basic
Bible” – 15th Sunday after Pentecost

SEPTEMBER 24, 2017 – *Matthew 13:44 - 46* -
“Cost Commitment” – 16th Sunday after Pentecost

Our Staff

Pastor: Kirk Werner

Child Care Director: Linda Odle

Music Director: Joshua Jordan

Director of Children’s Ministries:
Anna Baker

Class of 2017:

Maurice Briere, Greg Davis &
Lindsay Rosa.

Class of 2018:

Donna Carter, Matt Peterson &
Greg Waldrop

Class of 2019:

John Carson, Dale Lutton &
Courtney Scollard



BIRTHDAYS



Jeanne Cecil – 1st
Katie Fletcher – 3rd
Susan Fletcher - 5th
Abby Johnson - 8th
Matt Peterson - 10th
Mike Hammond - 14th
Christian Rosa - 14th
Elizabeth Kyser – 14th
Clara Scollard – 15th
Clark Werner – 16th
Ryan Spargo – 21st
Carol Jordan - 24th
Barry Burnette - 25th
Chelsea Peterson - 25th
Carolyn Carson - 28th



ANNIVERSARIES



Stan & Susan Fletcher - 12th
Matt & Courtney Scollard - 12th
Bill & Diana Hawk - 28th



NURSERY SCHEDULE



Kids Crossing with Jim Odle

September 03: Gwen Davis
September 10: Susan Fletcher
September 17: Chelsea Peterson
September 24: Sue Werner



Preschool Room with Linda Odle:

September 03: Brenda Clabo
September 10: Mike Walkup
September 17: Dawn Briere
September 24: Irving Rosa

If you **cannot** work your scheduled time, please swap with someone and if you *cannot find a substitute*, call Linda Odle at 690-9358 or 207-2623. **When you know you can't work in the nursery, please e-mail the date(s) to jlodle@comcast.net** or put them in writing and give them to Linda Odle in the nursery. Thanks!

BABIES/TODDLERS/PRESCHOOL & KIDS CROSSING CHILDREN

Our children are the next generation of our church. When you help in the children's departments you

won't miss anything, because you can pick-up a complete **FREE CD** of the service right after church. You will have no preparation or teaching. Just come help. You can choose to help with the babies/toddler/preschool room or with Kids Crossing. You can pick-up a **FREE CD** of the complete service before you leave. To help please contact Ms. Linda in the nursery or call 690-9358 for more information.



Your Prayers are Needed for The Good News Club at New Hopewell Elementary

It's TIME! Good News Club starts **September 6**. Please pray that God will send the children to the club who He desires to be there. **Also, pray for the Helpers. We really need more helpers.** *If you think, maybe you are interested please talk to Linda Odle, Carolyn Carson, Laine Donnell, or Pastor Kirk or come visit the GNC.* We meet on **Wednesdays, 2:00pm until 4:30pm.** We need to have more helpers. Please contact Linda Odle at 690-9358. We can use your help.

A big **THANK YOU** to everyone who helped with the school supplies. The school also needs breakfast bars, pop tarts and other quickie breakfast foods to give to the children who are late and haven't had anything to eat. School supplies are always needed anytime during the school year.



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:



CrossWalk Café

Its football time in Tennessee! In preparation for the big game with Georgia Tech, we're having a 'tailgating Cafe' at CrossWalk on **September 3!** Break out those tailgating favorites and join us for a great time together on Labor Day weekend as we enjoy good food and conversation around the table!



Ice Cream Social *Ice Cream @ the Walkups*

Mark your calendars for Sunday evening **September 10th at 6 p.m.** as we gather at the Walkups (*1705 Hopewell Dr.*) for some delicious churn creations. What's your favorite flavor? There are sure to be some creative concoctions to delight your pallet. You don't want to miss this fun time in a wonderful setting. *Thank you Mike and Karen* for hosting our gathering!



THANK YOU...KUDOS...APPLAUSE!!!

The session would like to say THANK YOU to all families for your service on the *Refreshment Ministry Team*. When you join the church, you are assigned to this team, as we feel it is a ministry that all can participate in. You are paired with another family and given one month (every 1 1/2 – 2 years) to provide Sunday morning refreshments. Most teams take two weeks each; others share in the entire month. *It is up to you. Please remember that you are NOT responsible for providing breakfast for everyone.* This is just a light refreshment to have with coffee or juice. (Coffee is provided by the church.) *What the teams provide is their gift to the church in service to our Lord.* Be sure and show your gratitude... We are certainly grateful to each of you!!!

**The teams are posted on the bulletin board for the year and printed 3 months ahead in the newsletter, so that you can plan ahead.*



Good Morning



Sunday Morning Refreshment Schedule

September 2017

Susan & Stan Fletcher 577-6099
Chelsea & Matt Peterson 356-2113

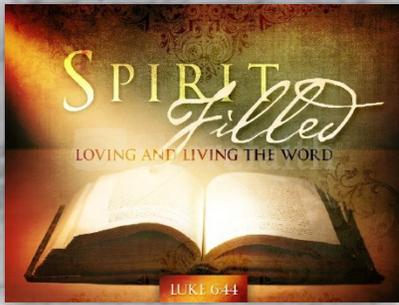
October 2017

Diana & Bill Hawk 577-5392
Laura & Rusty Spargo 850-2827

November 2017

Carol Jordan 573-8679
Laine Donnell 681-7117
Cathy Tolbert 274-0889
Viv Hammond 470-8599





Bible Study

Bible study each Sunday at 6 PM @ CrossWalk Community Church.



CrossWalk family, if you see a need to replenish *coffee supplies* - coffee, hot/cold cups, coffee stirrers, *kitchen supplies* - paper towels, kitchen dish soap or *men's/women's room supplies*, please let us know by; (1) **noting what is needed on the bulletin board located in the kitchen** so that supplies can be replenished **before they are completely out**. If you have questions, please contact *Judy Campbell* or *Sue Werner*. Thank you!



Check out our website!

Have you checked out our website lately? It's a great way to introduce people to our church. Navigate through the site and see pictures of various activities. There are photos of JAM (Jesus And Me children's ministry), church events, a calendar of events, and the weekly messages are catalogued in the media section. This is a helpful tool in keeping informed and a good resource to refer to your friends. The web address is www.crosswalkepc.org.





Church Cleaning Committee

Aug 30 - Sept 02 – Stan & Susan Fletcher
Sept 06 – Sept 09 – Fred & Sandy May
Sept 13 – Sept 16 – Fred & Sandy May
Sept 20 – Sept 23 – Matt & Chelsea Peterson
Sept 27 – Sept 30 – Matt & Chelsea Peterson

PLEASE!!

If you use the church during the week, please, be sure to take your trash with you when you leave – especially food waste.



FALL FESTIVAL

CrossWalk's annual Fall Festival will be
October 7 from 9AM – 2PM

Fall Festival Volunteers Needed!

We need 10-15 volunteers to help with the kids' activities, bake sale, food, and craft fair. Sign up at church (table by the bulletin board) or email Courtney Scollard at graciousdoll@gmail.com

CrossWalk T-Shirts

We are going to be ordering t-shirts to wear at the Fall Festival and any other church events. Watch for more information coming soon!



The Christian Worker (Colossians 3:22-4:1)

“Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism. Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven” (Col. 3:22–4:1).

What should a Christian worker look like? As we consider this, we also must ask, “Does the way I work represent my Christian faith?”

Each person is called to work. Some work as students, some work as teachers, some work as mothers, some as businessmen, etc. Everybody works for a living. The only difference is the pay. Some don't get paid at all, some get paid a little, and some get paid a lot. What should the Christian's work life look like?

Often, people think of work as a bad thing. Some may even think it is a result of the fall (Gen. 3:17–18). However, work was given before the fall. It was Adam's responsibility to till the ground and take care of the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15).

In fact, Scripture teaches that we will work in heaven. In Luke 19:17, those who are faithful with their gifts and talents on earth will be rewarded with overseeing cities in the coming kingdom.

Also, in Revelation 21:2, we see the holy city of Jerusalem coming out of heaven to the earth. Just the fact that heaven is called a city implies many characteristics about eternity. A city has commerce, business, education, and government. Heaven will not be sitting on a cloud doing nothing. It will be worshiping and serving the Lord together in the heavenly city and on the earth forever. It has always been God's will for man to work.

Moreover, our God is a worker too! He creates and sustains the world by the power of his Word (Heb. 1:3). He is not idle! He prays for his saints in order to save them to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25). We serve a God who neither sleeps nor slumbers (Ps. 121:4). He is always active in his creation.

Work is something we do here on earth and something we will also do in heaven. It is a way that we imitate God and bring honor to him. If work is something we will do throughout eternity, we must ask ourselves, "How can we work in such a way that God is glorified?"

Paul says in Colossians 3 that our relationship to work should be radically different from the world because of Christ. In Colossians 3:1, he starts off with, "Since you have been raised with Christ." The Christian has a new heavenly position in Christ that should affect everything he does. In Chapter 3 he says it should affect how he thinks and the type of "clothes" he wears, in reference to one's actions, attitudes, and priorities (vv. 8–17). It should affect his relationship with his family (vv. 18–21) and even his work. Our relationship to Christ encompasses everything in our lives, including the workplace (vv. 22–25).

It should be noted that for many Christians God has called for the workplace to be their primary mission field. It is where they will spend the most time and often where they will be around the most people. For the teacher, her mission field is her co-workers and students. For the businessman, his mission field is both his clients and co-workers. For the housewife, her mission is her husband and children. It is in the workplace that many of us have the

opportunity to spread the salt and light of Christ to the most people in an intimate way (cf. Matt. 5:13–14). For this reason, this text is very important for us.

The Christian Employee

"Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism" (Col. 3:22–25). It should be noted that in this passage Paul is specifically speaking to slaves serving their masters. In our contemporary context, this may not directly apply to us. However, we can still learn many lessons from this that apply directly to the employee and employer relationship. Before that, let's talk about the institution of slavery and Scripture's teaching on it. Why does Paul address the slave-to-master scenario, and what is Scripture's view on the institution of slavery?

Again, Paul starts off describing the relationship of a slave to his master. In the epistles, we commonly see words given to slaves (cf. Eph. 6:5–8; Titus 2:9–10; 1 Peter 2:18). This is probably because a large number of the early Christian believers were slaves. Christianity tended to draw the poor, the slaves, and the women—those commonly mistreated. In a world of tremendous partiality and prejudice, Christianity was particularly attractive since in Christ all people had equal standing (cf. Gal. 3:28). Christ himself even taught, **"Blessed are the poor"** and **"Woe to the rich"** (Luke 6:20, 24). The poor have always been drawn to the beauty of Christ.

Slavery in the Roman Empire was a common institution. It has been estimated that there were some sixty million slaves and that covered about half the Roman Empire. Slaves held every type of position; they were teachers, doctors, artists, musicians, and almost anything else you can think of. Some were born into slavery, some sold themselves into slavery to pay off debts, and some were taken forcibly into slavery.

It should be noted that Scripture clearly teaches that the slave trade was sinful and contrary to the Word of God. We see this in 1 Timothy 1:9–10: We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine.

However, Scripture never sought the abolishment of slavery as an institution in the ancient world. Many poor people sold themselves into slavery to pay off debt or to find a job to support their families. In fact, Scripture permitted the institution of slavery and gave regulations for it. After seven years, a slave was supposed to be set free, and if he wanted to serve his master forever he could put an earring in his ear to commit to this service (Ex. 21:2–6). Similarly, Paul gave regulations for slavery as an institution throughout his writing (cf. Col. 3:22–4:1; Eph. 6:5–9).

It should be noted that even though Scripture never called for the abolishment of slavery, it certainly has led to abolishment of it throughout history. Christians in England were leaders in the abolishment of the slave trade in that nation. Similarly, Christians in America led the way to the abolishment of slavery.

Throughout Scripture, God's plan to change the world was never by revolution. The Jews were looking for a messianic king that would abolish the powers of the Roman Empire. No doubt, some slaves were also hoping for Christian leaders, like Paul, to provoke rebellion against their masters. However, Christ came primarily to abolish slavery in the heart of man. He came to make man a new creation.

Slavery has been abolished by Christianity in many places around the world through changing the character of man and not the institution. Scripture teaches the equality of all people, the equality of men and women. It teaches proper respect in the workplace between masters and slaves. Scripture's plan to change the world has always been by changing the inner man and how a person thinks (Rom. 12:2).

Because of the teachings of Scripture, Christian

slaves in the ancient world went for double the price of a regular slave. This is because they worked hard and were honest and respectful as they were serving Christ and not man (Eph. 6:5–8). This should be true of Christian employees as well.

As we look at the regulations for slavery in this text, they may not directly apply to us, but there are many applications to us as employees and employers. What can we learn about the Christian employee from this text?

What are a Christian employee's responsibilities to his employer as seen in Colossians 3:22–25?

“Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism” (Col. 3:22–25).

The first priority of a slave was to obey his master in everything. As mentioned before, no doubt many slaves were probably angry with this. They were looking for Paul to tell the masters to let them go or to call for the slaves to rebel. However, Paul didn't do this. Why not? Why was obedience so important?

Romans teaches that no authority exists except that given by God. Romans 13:1 says, **“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.”** Therefore, when we disobey or dishonor our employers, we are rebelling against God (cf. Rom. 13:2). Employers must see submission to the authority of God reflected in how their Christian employees submit to and obey them.

What about ungodly employers? How should Christians respond to them?

Certainly, we saw ungodly leadership in the story of David and King Saul. Though Saul was mistreating David and trying to kill him, David

continually said, **“I will not touch God’s anointed.”** David saw God’s authority on Saul’s life even though he was an ungodly ruler.

We saw this with Christ and the Pharisees as well. Listen to Christ’s commands concerning the Pharisees: Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: **“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach”** (Matt. 23:1–3).

Christ said the same thing as Paul. Obey them and do everything they tell you to do. They were God’s authority over the Jews and the apostles were called to obey them in everything. The only time they were to disobey is when they were commanded to disobey God. Listen to Peter’s response to the Pharisees who told them to stop preaching in Christ’s name: **“We must obey God rather than men!”** (Acts 5:29b).

Obedience in everything was important to draw their masters to Christ. Look at what Paul said to Titus: **Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive** (Titus 2:9–10).

In the same way, when Christians obey their employers in the workplace, they make the teaching about God attractive to those they serve. When employees are slothful and argumentative, they actually demean the teachings of Christ. We should always be aware of this in our service. Our obedience or lack of it will affect how people judge Christ.

How should Christians practice obedience in everything?

Christian employees practice obedience in everything by working hard all the time. **“Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor”** (Col. 3:22).

Paul commands them to obey even when the master’s eyes were not on them. As with many companies, people often only work hard when the

boss is around. However, when the boss is gone, they tend to work less. Paul said this shouldn’t be true of Christians. They should work hard all the time, even when nobody is watching.

Christian employees practice obedience in everything by not delaying. Delayed obedience is not “obedience in everything.” When my mother used to ask me to clean my room and I didn’t do it for a week, it wasn’t proper obedience. Delayed obedience is a form of disobedience. Christian employees practice obedience in everything by not complaining. One of the ways we practice obedience in everything is by not complaining. Again, Titus 2:9 says, **“Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them.”** We live in a world where everybody complains in the workplace. They complain about their bosses, they complain about pay, they complain about their co-workers, they complain about vacation, etc.

Anybody who has worked in the workplace knows that it is full of complaining, even in Christian organizations. However, an employee who “obeys in everything” is an employee who works without complaining. Look at what Paul taught in Philippians: **Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe** (Phil. 2:14–15).

When Christians do this in the workplace, they shine like a star in the dark night. It marks a Christian in a dark world, and it also demonstrates that they are children of God. This is how Christian employees should obey in everything.

Christian employees practice obedience in everything by developing wisdom and discernment. Though not directly mentioned in our text, it certainly is implied. Obedience in everything is not an absolute command. Christians must become wise because there are some commands we shouldn’t obey. Scripture says the disciples were sent out as sheep among wolves (Matt. 10:16). We need tremendous wisdom and discernment while serving among those who might be antagonistic to the faith.

Christians must know the Word of God and start to

develop wisdom based on Scripture so they can interpret what commands from leadership would conflict with the Word of God. They must be able to properly evaluate things like going to bars and getting drunk. They must be able to properly evaluate relational boundaries between the sexes. They must be able to evaluate what is unethical in the workplace and what would conflict with their conscience. Scripture calls us to keep a clear conscience (1 Peter 3:16). In order to practice “obedience in everything,” it calls for God-given wisdom and discernment.

Have you found it true that the workplace is often marked by a culture of complaining? Why is this so common? In what ways is God calling you to practice obedience in everything?

Christian Employees Must Obey Their Employers With Sincerity Of Heart

“Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord” (Col. 3:22).

The Christian employee must work with sincerity. The English word for “sincere” comes from the Latin word “sincera,” meaning “without wax.” In ancient Rome, often in the trade market, people would sell pottery that had cracks in it, and to still make a profit, they would cover the crack with wax and paint. However, if you held the pottery to the sun you could see the cracks; you could see if they were “sincera”—“without wax.” Paul is calling Christian employees to be honest instead of dishonest.

In today’s workforce, it is common for employees to be dishonest with their employers. They do this by wasting the employer’s time. They are paid to work a certain number of hours a day, but instead of working they play on the Internet or waste time in other ways.

Also, it is increasingly common for employees to steal from the workplace. They steal paper, pens, and anything else they can get. They say to themselves, “I’ve earned it.” In general, there is a tremendous lack of integrity in the workplace. Often, workers will “flat-out” lie to get what they want or to make up for their mistakes. There is very little sincerity.

Sadly, Christians often aren’t much different. I heard a story about an employer who had a bad experience in hiring two seminary students. Every time he saw them, they were having conversations about the Bible or theology during work time. In fact, the employer once walked by and heard one of the students remarking about how he had just had a wonderful devotion while using the bathroom. The man said, “I just had the most wonderful time. I read three chapters of John in the john!” Christians should be sincere in their work, without pretense or sham. We must be models of integrity while working. We should be “without wax.”

What does Paul mean by working with “reverence for the Lord”?

Working with reverence for the Lord means that anything an employee does, whether it be sweeping, mopping, cleaning bathrooms, etc., should be viewed as holy work offered to God. I heard a story about a workplace with a sign above the kitchen sink that said, “Divine service held here three times daily.” The person who oversaw the dishes understood that even the mundane things at work could be worship to the Lord. Studying for a test, preparing a presentation, grading papers, construction work, and anything else we can think of can be something we offer as worship to God. Paul told the slaves to work for their masters with a reverence for the Lord. We should ask ourselves, “Is my workplace holy ground, a place where God is daily honored and daily exalted?”

Reverence is a form of worship and thanksgiving to God. First Thessalonians 5:18 says, **“Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”** First Thessalonians teaches that we should give thanks in everything. Instead of arguing, complaining, and the bitterness that is normal in the workplace, one should choose to be thankful.

Thank God that he is in control of everything. Thank him for using everything for the good. Thank him even for the new difficulty, for it is part of God’s sovereign will in making you holy. Thank him for your boss and your co-workers. Thank him for daily mercies. People should be able to tell you are radically different because of your reverence for God.

Christian Employees Reverence The Lord By Submitting Everything To God In Prayer.

First Thessalonians 5:17 says, **“Pray continually.”** Let everything that we do be bathed in prayer. Pray over every meeting. Pray over every counseling session. Pray for his daily strength, wisdom, and perseverance. Pray that everything would please him. Pray that God would bring glory to himself through your endeavors.

Christian Employees Reverence God By Fearing His Discipline.

“Reverence” can be translated “fear” or “fearing” as seen in the NLT and ESV versions. The non-Christian slave served his master out of fear, but the Christian slave served his master heartily out of reverence and fear for God. It was very common for slaves to steal from their masters or run away from them, but Christian slaves should have had a healthy fear of the discipline of God that kept them from doing wrong.

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves (Rom. 13:1–2).

There is a divine discipline for rebellion against our authorities. Every Christian should be aware of this and should have a healthy fear of God because of it. It was reverence for God’s authority that kept David from killing Saul. Again, he said, “I will not touch God’s anointed.” It was a fear—a reverence for God—that made him honor a cruel employer.

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men” (Col. 3:23) Paul says to work **“with all your heart.”** It can also be translated, “Putting their whole inner man into the effort” or “do it enthusiastically.” Christian employees should never be known for being lazy. They should work with all their heart because they are seeking to please the Lord.

Often, it is difficult to find motivation to work hard for an employer who is unfair or doesn’t treat people rightly. Sometimes, we may even lack

motivation because we don’t like our job. However, we must still hear Paul’s words, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart.”

As you can imagine, this type of work ethic among slaves would have probably brought a lot of persecution. If everybody else was slacking off and one slave was working hard, they would have called him the “master’s pet” or a “sell-out.” They would have mocked him and hated him. This sometimes happens to Christians in the workplace as well. They have been excluded and shunned because of their hard work. Certainly, Daniel was hated for his work ethic and the favor it brought. His co-workers hatched a plot to get him thrown into the lion’s den (Dan. 6). Christians should be aware of the possibility of persecution for their labor. No matter the situation, Christians should work heartily for the Lord to honor his name.

Christian Employees Must Work For The Lord With A View Toward God’s Judgment

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism” (Col. 3:23–25). When Paul said that these slaves were to work for their masters, recognizing that they would receive an “inheritance from the Lord” (v. 24), this would have been really radical to a slave. Slaves could not own anything and received no inheritance throughout their lives. Therefore, this would have given great hope and motivation to the slaves, especially those working under a hard master. It was really God they were serving, and he would one day reward them.

In addition, Paul’s words were a form of accountability since God would also repay sin. He said, “Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.” As Christian employees, we must work with a view toward

What type of judgment—reward and discipline—is Paul talking about?

Now, clearly this judgment is heavenly, but it certainly was earthly, including both discipline and reward. Look again at what Paul said: **“Anyone**

who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism” (Col. 3:25). The slave who was lazy, who cheated and lied to his master, would be judged by God on earth. Scripture teaches that God disciplines every believer for sin. Hebrews 12:6 says, **“Because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.”** This discipline comes in various ways. For those in the church of Corinth, it came in the form of sickness, depression, and even death. Look at what Paul says to them about their abuse of the Lord’s Supper: **“That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment”** (1 Cor. 11:30–31). God was disciplining this congregation for their sins in the church. In the same way, God is the ultimate judge of our labor at work, school, or wherever God has called us to serve. Those who dishonor him will be disciplined.

However, this earthly judgment included the prospect of reward. Most slaves had no prospect of reward. God wanted them to realize even their masters had a Heavenly Master and that God was ultimately in control.

We see this throughout the Scripture. Jacob worked for his dishonest uncle Laban. While Laban was trying to cheat him, God prospered everything that Jacob did and actually made him wealthy. We saw this with Joseph. He was a slave in the house of Potiphar, but while serving there God promoted him to the head steward of the whole household. It also happened with Daniel. Daniel served in Babylon among a bunch of pagans. His co-workers hated him and tried to get him killed, but because Daniel had integrity and was working for God, God continued to protect him and promote him.

Paul wanted these slaves to know that promotion and discipline really come from the Lord. Christian workers must understand this concept. When they do, they will ultimately seek to serve God and not fear their employer or their co-workers. Promotion and favor come from God. Look at what the Psalmist said: **“No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt a man. But it is God who judges: He brings one down, he exalts another”** (Ps. 75:6–7). The Christian employee must realize this lest they compromise with the world because they are seeking promotion from it,

or compromising because of fear. Let the Christian seek God. He exalts and he brings one down.

As mentioned, this judgment was earthly, but it is probably primarily referring to being rewarded, or having a loss of reward, in heaven. We see the prospect of judgment and heavenly reward in many passages. Second Corinthians 5:10 says, **“For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”**

The word judgment in this passage is the word “bema.” It was not used of judgment in a court case, but at athletic games. After the Olympics, the judge would bestow rewards from a platform on those who won certain events. In the same way, one day God will judge our works, not to condemn us for sin, but for reward. Our sins were judged on the cross.

One day at the resurrection (cf. Luke 14:14), each of these slave’s works would be evaluated at the judgment seat of Christ. God would look at their attitudes and their works and consider them in light of reward. As mentioned before, even mundane tasks can be divine worship. One day, these slaves would receive an inheritance from God. First Corinthians 3:12 describes this further: If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames (1 Cor. 3:12–15).

Some will be rewarded because their works were precious stones and metals, and others will lose reward because of the cheap quality of their works. Some will go through the judgment seat of Christ as though escaping the fire. They will receive no reward for their service. It was all self-centered and man-centered instead of God-centered. Paul was calling these slaves to live in view of this judgment. We should live in view of this judgment, not only while working, but also throughout life in general. In fact, Scripture gives heavenly reward as a motivation that each Christian should desire.

Listen to Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:24–25: Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

In talking about soul-winning in the previous passage (1 Cor. 9:22–23), Paul says to pursue this endeavor and one's Christian life in view of being rewarded by God. He talks about the prospect of being given a heavenly crown (cf. Rev. 4:4).

Many Christians think they should throw out their ambitions when they get saved. They should not seek secular achievement, and to some there is no heavenly achievement as well—there are no rewards in heaven. I don't think this is true. Scripture says run to win the crown. Paul tells these slaves to serve in such a way that they would be rewarded with an inheritance from God.

It should be noted that even when the disciples wanted to be the greatest in the kingdom of God that Christ didn't rebuke them (Mark 9:33–35). He just says, **“He who will be greatest must be last and servant of all.”** He doesn't rebuke their ambition; he just tells them the right way to do it: by being a servant. To live a life seeking to be rewarded in the kingdom of God is a life of faith, and faith is pleasing to God and will be rewarded by him (cf. Heb. 11:6).

This was great news to these slaves who had no prospect of reward. Paul tells them to have a proper view of God as judge—to seek his reward and fear his judgment. Christian employees must have a view of God's judgment as well. This should be our primary motivation while working.

As we've looked at Paul's exhortations to Christian slaves, it should be remembered that during those days Christian slaves were sold for double the price of a regular slave on the market. This was because they worked with a right attitude—they worked hard and were honest. This should be true of Christian employees as well. They work hard and have a tremendous integrity, no matter whom they are working for or how unjust the situation is. The Christian employee, the Christian student, and the Christian parent will ultimately receive their reward from God.

The Christian Employer

“Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven” (Col. 4:1). Understanding the role of a Christian employer is also important. Every person who serves in the workplace for an extended amount of time will typically at some point be promoted to a position of authority. Therefore, it is important for us to learn how to lead in such a way that honors God as a Christian employer.

Paul's teachings were radical in the ancient culture. William Barclay said this about slavery in the Roman Empire: The slave was a thing in the eyes of the law. There was no such thing as a code of working conditions. When slaves were too old to work, they could be thrown out to die. Slaves did not even have the right to marry; and, if they cohabited and children were born, the children belonged to the master, just as the lambs of the flock belonged to the shepherd. Once again, all the rights belonged to the master and all the duties to the slaves.

Because the slave had no rights in that culture, this often led to the abuse of slaves. However, Paul calls masters to do what is right and moral. The master was to treat them righteously and to treat them fairly. Again, this was radical in a society where many masters commonly mistreated their slaves; to treat them righteously and fairly would have brought discord among other slave-owners. It may even have been more difficult to be a godly slave-owner than to be a godly slave.

We saw a picture of this when Paul sent Onesimus, a runaway slave, back to his Christian master, Philemon. Philemon 1:15–16 says, Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for good—no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord.

Philemon was not only to treat Onesimus as a servant, but as a dear brother in the Lord. This is how Paul called for masters to treat their servants. He said to treat them righteously and fairly, even as one would treat a family member.

How should Christian employers take care of their employees?

Christian employers take care of their employees by paying them fair wages. Jesus said, **“A worker is worthy of his wages”** (Luke 10:7). Slaves did not typically receive monetary wages, but caring for them included giving them adequate housing, food, working conditions, and probably even medical support.

Christian employers take care of their employees by encouraging and rewarding them for their labor. Romans 13:3–4 says, For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God’s servant to do you good.

One of God’s purposes for Christian employers is to encourage good deeds. They should reward integrity. They should reward hard work. By doing this, they reflect the character of God, who rewards those who do good (cf. Heb. 11:6; 1 Cor. 3:12–14). In America this is often practiced by the President. He flies in to congratulate Medal of Honor winners or to congratulate athletic teams who won a championship. He commends them to encourage good works. Christian employers should do this as well.

Christian employers take care of their employees by giving them fair discipline. Often, discipline is looked at as a bad thing. It is not. It is part of the way we give what is “right and fair” (Col. 4:1). Even God disciplines those he loves (Heb. 12:6). A Christian employer must, at times, discipline his employees. This means they must give employees constructive criticism or negative reinforcement to turn them from sin and help them do what is right.

Again, listen to Romans 13:4: For he is God’s servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Without proper discipline, employers may actually promote sin and lead their employees down the wrong path.

Christian employers take care of their employees by praying for them. One of the best ways to care for one’s employees is to pray for them daily. Let

this be common for Christian employers.

Christian employers take care of their employees by modeling Christ. Listen to what Paul said: **“For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing”** (2 Cor. 2:15). Can people smell Christ on you? When you spend a lot of time around something, you start to smell like it. If you spend a lot of time around food, smoke, or cologne, the smell starts to saturate your clothing. We should spend so much time with Christ that people can smell him and see him through us. The people we are serving through our leadership should see Christ in how we respond when they fail, when they succeed, and when they are discouraged. Our lives should exude an aroma that directs people to God.

Christian employers must know their heavenly master. **“Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven”** (Col. 4:1). The word “know” (oida) is probably not just referring to intellectual knowledge, but to an experiential knowledge. It is at times used to mean, “to have experienced” or “learned to know.” These Christian employers “know” that they have a master because they have known their Master experientially day by day. The Christian employer should be daily submitting to his Heavenly Master, and this helps make him a good leader.

In the military, they are not just big on the study of leadership, but also on the study of followership. In order to be a good leader, you must be a good follower. The Christian employer should be a good leader because he has learned followership from daily submitting to Christ. He is loving God, obeying him, and serving him. He knows by experience what a good master looks like, and therefore he can demonstrate it.

Christian employers must recognize their accountability to their heavenly master. Christian employers must know God and faithfully submit to God. But they also must recognize that they are accountable to him. Employers are simply stewards of God’s authority and resources. One day they will be judged by God, just as the slaves will be, on the basis of their stewardship. Listen to what the writer of Hebrews says: Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men

who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you (Heb. 13:17).

In Hebrews 13, the writer is probably talking specifically about elders in the church. However, this is true of all leadership. One day we will have to give an account of our leadership before God. We are called to shepherd and love the souls that he has placed under us.

As leaders, we must always be aware of this judgment. In the same way we considered the slave's judgment (Col. 3:23-24), the master's judgment also will have both earthly and heavenly aspects. Those who lead well will be favored and blessed by God, but those who do not will be judged without partiality. Certainly, we must always be aware of our accountability to God in our leadership.

A relationship to Christ should drastically affect every relationship in the believer's life, including those in the workplace. For many Christians, it is the workplace that is the primary mission field God has called them to. It is there that they spend the most hours and are around the most people. They are to serve people in their workplace, pray for them, and walk wisely in their conduct in order to reflect Christ.



CrossWalk Community Church

Fall Festival and Craft Fair

Saturday, October 7, 2017

9:00 am—2:00 pm

Craft Vendors Wanted

\$25 for single booth (8 foot table)

Additional tables \$10 each

Contact to reserve a booth:

Matt Peterson: 865-356-2113 or jackmpeterson@gmail.com

Courtney Scollard: 865-789-1999 or graciousdoll@gmail.com



Crafts

Face Painting

Food

Bake Sale

Games and

Inflatables for the kids