

“Christians in the Workplace” - Ephesians 6:5-9 – August 5th, 2018

- The title of today's teaching is “Christians in the Workplace.”

- In order to better understand the text that's before us today, we must see it in the context of what Paul writes prior in the letter.
- Namely, that of being filled with the Holy Spirit and the results of what our lives will be and look like as Christians in this world.

- I suppose you could say that this is what a Spirit filled marriage, a Spirit filled family, and now a Spirit filled employee looks like.
- It's important to understand that when the Apostle Paul wrote this letter there were over 6-million slaves in the Roman Empire.
- Sadly, these slaves were seen as being less than human in many cases, which makes what Paul writes seem to be unrealistic.

- It's for this reason it's of paramount importance that we're filled with the Holy Spirit in order to be able to work as unto the Lord.
- Certainly, this was the only way for slaves to serve wholeheartedly in that day, and so too is this true more so for us in our day.
- In other words, if they were to serve in this way as slaves, it should be much easier for us to do so in our day as an employee.

- If you were to ask me what I thought was the best indicator of spiritual maturity in a Christian, it would be how hard they work.
- The reason being is that they never see themselves as working for man; rather, they know they're working as unto the Lord.
- While I realize that hearing this from a pastor may not be as well received given that I'm in the ministry and serving the Lord.

- You'll forgive the bluntness with which I say this, but we do err greatly when we separate the sacred from the secular as it were.
- Let me explain, whatever your occupation is, you're serving the Lord in that environment whether you realize it or like it or not.
- This goes for employees as well as employers in the sense that your business and your job is your ministry that's unto the Lord.

- Enter the text before us where the Apostle Paul provides us with the characteristics of the Christian employees and employers.
- Please know that Paul isn't saying we need to be this way, rather, what he is saying is if we're Spirit filled this is how we will be.
- What follows are four such characteristics of what Spirit filled employee are and one characteristic of the Spirit filled employer.

- A Spirit filled employee will obey their employer
- A Spirit filled employee will respect their employer
- A Spirit filled employee will be sincere with their employer
- A Spirit filled employee will work with their whole heart for their employer
- A Spirit filled employer will not threaten their employee

- That's what Spirit filled employees and employers will be like, but more importantly we're told why Christians are to be like this.
- First, it's a good witness for the Lord when Christians are the hardest workers, especially when their employer is not watching.
- Second, when a Christian works wholeheartedly not as unto men, but so as to please the Lord, there is a reward from the Lord.

- That's for the Christian employee, but there's also one for the Christian employer, which is that we all have the same Master.
- In other words, God makes no distinction between the employee and employer such that He shows no favoritism or partiality.
- While the employer may be in a position of authority over the employee, it doesn't make the employer better than the employee.

- Simply put, the Christian employee will be the hardest and most reliable worker in the workplace regardless of the environment.
- So too will the Christian employer be the best employer in how they treat their employees regardless of if their Christians or not.
- I would suggest when a Christian employee or employer does so; they are more likely to win others in the workplace to Christ.

- Conversely, when a Christian employee or employer does not act in this way, they can turn the workplace away from Christ.
- It's my belief, and it's also been my own personal experience, that professing Christians have done more harm than good.
- This because, the professing Christian is often times the laziest, and most unreliable, even the most dishonest one on the job.

Proverbs 10:26 - As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, So is the lazy man to those who send him.

Proverbs 25:19 - Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble Is like a bad tooth and a foot out of joint.

- Lest one think that this is only within the corporate environment let me hasten to say that it can be common in the church today.

Hebrews 13:17-18 - Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you. 18 Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way.

- To me one of the best examples of serving faithfully and honorably regardless of the environment is Joseph as a slave in Egypt.
- Joseph is a man that could have used every excuse in the book to complain about how he was treated, betrayed and enslaved.
- Instead God enabled him and empowered him to prosper, so much so he was promoted to the most powerful position in Egypt.

Charles Spurgeon - “Grace makes us the servants of God while still we are the servants of men: it enables us to do the business of heaven while we are attending to the business of earth: it sanctifies the common duties of life by showing us how to perform them in the light of heaven.”