

OUR ATTITUDE IN THE WORKPLACE

Ephesians 6:5-9

When our staff realized I'm speaking on submission in the workplace, some considered not showing up!

Someone sent me e-mail about **why I get so tired**:

I've been blaming it on lack of sleep & job pressure; I dis-covered real reason: **I'm tired because I'm overworked.**

Population of this country = 237 million. (Data dated!)

104 million retired. That leaves 133M to do the work.

85 million in school; leaves 48M to do the work.

29 million employed by federal government, leaving 19 million to do the work.

2.8 million are in Armed Forces, which leaves 16.2 million to do the work.

14.8 million work for state & city govt. that leaves 1.4 million to do the work.

At any given time there are 188,000 people in hospitals, leaving 1,212,000 to do the work.

1,211,998 people in prison.

That leaves just **two people to do the work.**

You & me—**you're sitting at computer reading jokes.**

People's concern about our "rights" in the workplace.

What's happened to our view of business & work ethic?

We've been considering Paul's letter to Eph.

1-3: *great job* God has done in our lives, blessings received through faith in Christ.

God's given *every* spiritual blessing in Christ.

4-6: how we ought to walk because of what God has done for us in Christ.

#5: Don't walk as foolish but as wise 5:15-6:9

Wise people are **controlled by H.S.** rather than wine

=> Submitting to one another

We submit our rights for one another as Christ did.

Biblical submission seen in 3 areas:

1. between wives and husbands (5:22-33),
2. between children and parents (6:1-4),
3. **between slaves and masters (6:5-9).**

Submission in employer-employee relationships 6:5-9 5-8

What submission looks like for employee

1. 6:5 Summary: *“Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear & trembling, with a sincere heart, **as you would Christ**”*

Speaks to **slaves**—Why apply that to employees?

About 60,000,000 people in Roman empire were slaves.

1/3 of population in large cities were household slaves.

Professionals, e.g., doctors & teachers were slaves—served another person.

Race wasn't involved.

People who weren't self-employed were “slaves.”

Slave system was more just than ours was—though cruel & unjust treatment were common.

Principles applied to those who worked for others, as slaves, apply to us as we work for other people today.

Key word: ***“obey”***—do what you're told!

We should be cooperative, submissive employees

We demonstrate that by putting in an honest day's work, showing appropriate respect for the boss.

2. Attitude is as important as action 6:5 *“Obey your earthly masters with fear & trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ”*

It isn't enough *just* to obey—our attitude is important.

We should demonstrate appropriate respect, reverence, and sincerity of heart.

We should obey our boss, as we would obey Christ Himself

That's true whether our employer is fair, or not.

whether believers or not (reverse negative effect)

People want to be *treated* as a brother, but don't want to *treat* the other person as a brother!

3. Trustworthiness 6 *“[Obey them] not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart”*

Godly obedience doesn't end when the boss stops watching or turns his back.

2 key words: ***“Eye-serving”*** ***“People-pleasing”***

Contrast to that: *“As servants of Christ”*

“Doing God's will” Doing it *“from the heart”*

Be faithful when people are watching

Be faithful... when people are not watching

Whatever we're doing, it isn't to impress the boss!

We don't just do it when they're watching

(Reliance)

Can people trust us to be as faithful when they aren't watching as when they are?

Biblical orientation to work:

"Do more than they expect when they're watching.

Do more than that when they aren't watching!"

4. Submission requires that we serve our boss "wholeheartedly"

[6-17] *"[...doing the will of God **from the heart**] rendering service **with a good will** as to the Lord and not to man"*

Serve "wholeheartedly," "with good will" since in reality it's God, not people, we're working for!

Sometimes we think: *"How can I soar with the eagles when I have to work with turkeys like this?"*

Concept: pleasant disposition–willingness to serve.

Our service is service to **God**, not to men.

Work is about: Doing the will of God!

–from heart –wholeheartedly –serving Lord, not men.

Should be our motto in everything we do: **"serving with good will as to the Lord; not to man"**

In **everything** we do, at work or elsewhere,

everything is done as serving the Lord.

It's not whether people are impressed that matters;

it's what GOD thinks that matters!

We can stop living to please other people!

5 Same policy applies when boss is unrea-sonable; ultimately GOD repays justly 8

"knowing whatever good anyone does, this he'll receive back from the Lord, whether he's a bondservant or free."

<= 1 Pet 2:18-20 *"Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good & gentle but also to the unjust. ¹⁹For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. ²⁰For what credit is it if, when you sin & are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good & suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God."*

Enduring affliction when suffering unjustly, while being faithful & doing good => this is God's **grace** at work!

In summary: **Christian employees should look different than non-Christian employees**

As H.S. controls our life, we model what God's grace looks like to an unbelieving world by our attitude in the workplace! ***This is GOD's GRACE!***

What submission looks like in employer 9

"Masters, do the same to them; stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, & there's no partiality with him."

=>Christian bosses should treat employees differently than non-Christian bosses

We're ALL under authority of divine BOSS who pays us by how we treat employees

Summary statement:

"Treat your slaves *the same way!*"—attitude again!

We represent Christ. We should act like it!

Specific principles emerge:

Don't threaten Don't show favoritism

Treat employees as you want God to treat you

How we work ought to convince people that Christ can change their life.

Submission to employer is not conditional!

Our example: Jesus who took *form of servant* & became submissive to death on cross—killed by unjust leaders.

1 Pet 2:21: *"To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps."*

That's what God has called US to: to be like Him

—to follow in His steps —to be a servant

—submissive to one another, even to boss at work

—in every sphere of life

—whether employer or employee,

we're to submit to one another.

Fruit H.S. produces when He controls our life:

Submissive husbands ***love wife*** as Christ loved church

Submissive wives allow husband to function as ***head***

Submissive parents ***encourage*** children to live godly

Submissive children ***honor and obey*** parents

Submissive employers ***treat employees fairly***; pay justly

Submissive employees serve boss ***faithfully***, whether he or she is watching them or not.

ALL of us submitting to one another (being careful to do what God asks US to do!), serving one another in love!

When we work under control of Spirit, our work is more than just a job—WE SERVE CHRIST! People matter.

We do *all* for *HIS* glory—as His servants—imitating *HIM*.

We become servants to one another—whether we're boss or worker!

We ALL serve Christ!

Flows out of 5:18—when we're controlled by H.S.