

The Gospel at Work

Titus 2.9-10

Main Idea

In organizing the church in Crete the Apostle Paul commands Slaves to be (a) submissive to their masters in everything by their (b) being well pleasing, not argumentative, not stealing, but showing all good faith for the purposes of (c) adorning the doctrine of God our Savior

Overview

The Slavery question: The Bible agrees that slavery is wrong

- **1 Timothy 1.8-10:** “Enslavers” points to the fact that slave trading is ‘contrary to sound doctrine.’ Meaning...slavery is opposed to what God understands to be healthy
- **1 Corinthians 7.21-22:** Paul encourages slaves to get out (implying it is wrong/bad) if possible, but if its not, then be glad that they are free in Christ who is the true Master.
- **Philemon:** Philemon is a Godly man (vss. 4-5) and the Apostle Paul understands that he could appeal to Philemon to do the right thing (implication free Onesimus his now converted slave) (vs. 8), however Paul appeals to the deeper level of love (vs. 9). He wants Philemon to receive Onesimus (his slave) not just as a slave, but as a brother (vs. 16).
- This illustrates the Bible’s teaching about Slavery in that it goes deeper than calling the eradication of slavery, but instead it calls for treating slaves as family

Embrace Authority (vs. 9)

- Paul’s call for bondservants/slaves to be submissive to their own masters in everything illustrates the call of the Christian to embrace authority and not argue or work against it because of our personal rights:
 - “Everything” here likely means the daily tasks of labor:
 - Paul is calling for the slave to submit or to help the Master as he sees fit
 - “Everything” would not commend unrighteousness since the submission is to (vs. 8) be done in such a way as to not have others say evil about us and that the submission should in some way (vs. 10) adorn the doctrine of God our Savior
- Submission or Authority structures in Gods world are manifestations of His love for us:
 - They are given to us for the purposes of facilitating our joy
 - Since Christ Submitted to the Father (His “Master”) in everything we should do the same and have a redeemed understanding of ‘submission’ and authority as good things, not things to be questioned and worked against

Work in your Worship (Vs. 9-10)

- The way in which we work displays the way that we worship:
 - To be argumentative or pilfering (stealing) is to say something about the God we claim to serve...namely, that He is those things
- We must work so as to please our workers and be faithful in all that we do:
 - Christians may not always be the best workers, but we should be the most loyal, most agreeable kinds of people to work with
 - We ought not be more mindful of what we don’t have or what we don’t like than what we do have:
 - Arguing and stealing then are lies about the character and gifts of God
- Our work is a continuation of our worship to God

Adorn the Doctrine of God our Savior (Vs. 10)

- Slaves/Bondservants and workers should work in a manner that displays or adorns or beautifies the doctrine (teaching) of God our Savior

- We work for Christ (Colossians 3.23, 1 Cor. 10.31) not ultimately our bosses/jobs/industries
- This is the end of our work...it does not define us, Christ defines us, therefore we work to highlight or adorn the one that gave us our identity

Questions

Discussion Starter: *How is it you or those around you would understand your work?*

1. Read Titus 2 (focus on vss. 9-10). Do not remove the sting of these verses being written to slaves. Work through how submission to even ungodly masters (see 1 Peter 2.18-23) serves to honor the Lord. Use Christ in the Gospel to show how He obeyed this passage.
2. How does understanding Paul wrote these verses to slaves/bondservants help our application of these verses to our own lives?
3. How does submission serve to adorn the teaching of God our Savior?
4. What does working “to be well pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering (stealing), but showing all good faith” do to expose who we are and how we worship?
5. When we disobey this passage what are we not being mindful of? Which aspects of this passage are difficult for you and why?
6. What is the goal of our work and how is that different than the non-Christians motives in work?
7. What does it mean to “adorn the doctrine of God our Savior?”
8. What would that look like in your day to day?
9. How does the Gospel motivate you to be faithful in your work?

Accountability Question: *Where are you seeing obedience to this passage? Disobedience?*