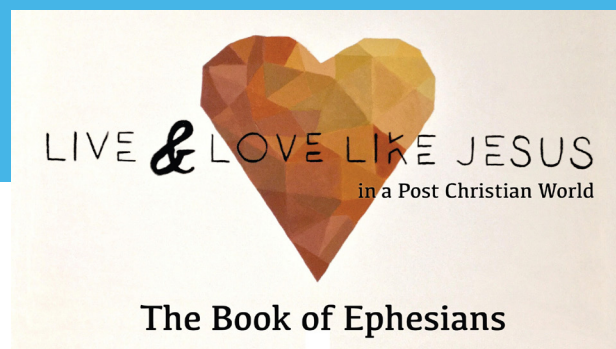


Discussion Questions

May 7, 2023

Ephesians 6:5-9 **Slaves and Masters:** **The Radical Calling of Christ**



1. What are some of the differences between slavery in Paul's context and American Slavery?
2. Read Ephesians 6:5-9
Summarize Paul's teaching on slavery in your own words.
3. Read Philemon 12 and 15-18 speaking of Philemon's Runaway slave Onesimus.
While Paul does not outright condemn slavery, how does Paul completely undermine/redefine slavery in Ephesians and Philemon?
4. Discuss the significance of Paul's command to masters in Ephesians 6:9
5. Discuss what does it mean to be a Slave of Christ today?
6. What are the implications for us today in the workplace and home from this message of Paul?

Discuss what areas is it most difficult to live this out.

7. Share with the group, as appropriate, areas where you are struggling to live out this dynamic of working for the Lord in your workplace or at home. Then pray for one another.

Ephesians 6:5-9 (NLT)

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ. Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free. Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Don't threaten them; remember, you both have the same Master in heaven, and he has no favorites.

Exodus 21:16 (ESV)

Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death.

NT Wright

Paul could no more envisage a world without slavery than we can envisage a world without electricity. Most of what the modern world takes for granted - television, computers and a million lesser inventions - are impossible without electricity. And yet for most of human history it was unknown. In the same way, the way Paul's world worked was through slaves taking a vital place in most households...

Major Distinctives of 1st Century Roman Slavery

1. NOT based upon ethnicity or race
2. At least half were granted freedom
4. Education
5. Earning Potential

Galatians 3:28 (NLT)

There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.

SLAVES of Christ

Romans 1:1 - Paul, a **SLAVE** of Christ

Romans 6:22 - You have been set free from sin and have become **SLAVES** of God

Colossians 1:7 - Epaphras, our beloved fellow **SLAVE**

Philippians 1:1 - Paul & Timothy, **SLAVES** of Christ Jesus

Titus 1:1 - Paul, a **SLAVE** of God

2 Corinthians 4:5 - we are your **SLAVES** for Jesus' sake

2 Peter 1:1 - Simon Peter, a **SLAVE** and apostle of Jesus Christ

Jude 1:1 - Jude, a **SLAVE** of Christ

Ephesians 6:5-9 (NLT)

Slaves, obey your earthly masters **[kurios]** with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ. Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord **[kurios]** rather than for people. Remember that the Lord **[kurios]** will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free. Masters **[kurios]**, treat your slaves in the same way. Don't threaten them; remember, you both have the same Master **[kurios]** in heaven, and he has no favorites.

Vs 5 - Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ.

Vs 6 - as slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart

Vs 7 - Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people

Vs 8 - Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us

Vs 9 - you both have the same Master in heaven

Colossians 3:17 (NIV)

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus...

Ephesians 6:6 (NIV)

Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart.

Titus 2:9-10 (NLT)

Slaves must always obey their masters and do their best to please them. They must not talk back or steal, but must show themselves to be entirely trustworthy and good. Then they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive in every way.

Galatians 5:13

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

1 Corinthians 7:21-22

Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you - although if you can gain your freedom, do so. For the one who was a slave when called to faith in the Lord is the Lord's freed person; similarly, the one who was free when called is Christ's slave.

Philemon 17

So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me.

Matthew 11:28-30 (NIV)

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.