

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY, ~ WRAP UP OUR STUDY ~ OF THE PRECEPTS FOR RELATIONSHIPS ~ that Paul lays out for us ~ in Col. 3:18 - 4:1. ⇨⇨ Precepts for relationships.

▶▶ TPID, ~ general rules ~ governing Christian relationships ~ in various settings.

▶▶ And as everyone, ~ I think, ~ is aware ~ that we've been jumping back and forth with Ephesians.

▷▷ Also and more in depth.

IN ~ COL. 3:22-4:1 ~ AND EPH. 6:5-9, ~ PAUL ADDRESSES ~ CHRISTIAN SLAVES AND Christian masters.

▶▶ Obviously, ~ there is no slavery today, ~ but Paul's instructions ~ can easily be applied ~ to the workplace.

▶▶ So, ~ by way of application, ~ Paul has instructions, ~ for Christian employees and Christian employers.

▷▷ Focus today. ⇨⇨ On this application.

FOR EMPLOYEE, ~ CONCENTRATE MAINLY ON EPH. ⇨⇨ FOR EMPLOYER, ~ COL.

IN EPH. 6:5a, ~ PAUL EXHORTS CHRISTIAN EMPLOYEES ~ TO OBEY THEIR EMPLOYERS.

SIMPLY PUT, ~ PAUL IS SAYING, ~ "CHRISTIAN EMPLOYEES, ~ CARRY OUT THE JOB ~ that your employer ~ has hired you to do." ⇩⇩ 1/11

▶▶ The Christian employee ~ should be the model employee ~ when it comes to working.

▷▷ We should never ~ be guilty of ~ slacking off, ~ being lazy, ~ wasting time, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ or ~ taking extra time for lunch or breaks.

▷▷ And except for lunch and breaks, ~ we should work from ~ the minute our shift begins ~ to when it ends.

▷▷ Prov. 18:9 says ~ "Whoever is slack in his work ~ is a brother ~ to him who destroys."

↳↳ The phrase ~ "is a brother" ~ means ~ that ~ the lazy person and the destroyer ~ are of the same nature, ~ ¶¶

→→ the same kind of people.

↳↳ I.e., ~ one ~ who through laziness ~ fails to carry out his work promptly or efficiently ~ ¶¶

→→ is as bad ~ as someone who destroys things.

IN EPH. ~ 6: ~ 5b-7, ~ PAUL EXPLAINS ~ HOW WE ARE TO ACT ON THE JOB.

IN VS. 5b, ~ PAUL SAYS ~ BELIEVERS ARE TO DO THEIR JOB ~ "WITH FEAR AND trembling."

▶▶ Now, ~ the phrase ~ "fear and trembling" ~ has actually ~ little to do ~ with terror and panic.

▷▷ Simply put, ~ it is a matter ~ of reverence and respect, ~ not ~ of being afraid or terrified. ¶¶ 2/11

▶▶ Most likely ~ what Paul has in mind here ~ is a call for Christian employees ~ 77

▷▷ to have ~ a proper respect ~ for their bosses. ⇨⇨ Trans. ~~ deep/great/proper respect.

▶▶ Again, ~ not a respect that's earned

IN EPH. 6:5c, ~ WE SEE PAUL'S NEXT POINT ~ ON HOW WE ARE TO ACT ON THE JOB.

▶▶ Paul tells believers ~ to carry out our work ~ "with a sincere heart, ~ as you would Christ."

▶▶ The phrase ~ "with a sincere heart" ~ means ~ that we are to carry out our work ~ sincerely, ~ honestly, ~ 77

▷▷ and ~ with ~ no ulterior motive or hidden intention.

▷▷ We are to have ~ purity in our intentions ~ and not to succumb to ~ scheming, ~ deceit, ~ or ~ any other kind of improper motive.

▶▶ And notice in [verse 5c](#), ~ Paul doesn't stop ~ after the words "with a sincere heart."

▷▷ He adds the words "as you would Christ."

▷▷ It is a given, ~ a no-brainer, ~ that the genuine believer ~ serves Jesus ~ 77

↪↪ sincerely, ~ honestly, ~ with pure intentions, ~ and ~ with no ulterior motive or hidden intention.

↪↪ And we ~ are to reproduce that kind of service ~ in our workplace. 11 3/11

PAUL'S NEXT POINT ON HOW WE ARE TO ACT ON THE JOB ~ IS IN EPH. ~ 6:~ 6a (CSB).

▶▶ Paul says ~ we are not ~ to work ~ only ~ while being watched, ~ as people-pleasers.

▶▶ Paul is referring here ~ to work ~ that is done only ~ to make an impression in the boss' presence ~ and ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to call attention to oneself.

↳↳ The implication is ~ that acceptable work ~ ceases ~ when the boss ~ is no longer around.

▶▶ Those who act in such a way ~ are "people-pleasers" ~ who seek to gain favor ~ ¶¶

▷▷ with their employer ~ rather than ~ please God.

▶▶ The Christian worker ~ is told ~ not to do this.

▷▷ We ~ are to do our job ~ whether the boss is present or not.

▷▷ We are to carry out our duties ~ in a way that pleases God, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ and not ~ be motivated by ~ gaining favor with our employer ~ or calling attention to ourselves.

CONTINUING OUR LOOK ~ AT PAUL'S EXPLANATION ~ OF HOW WE ARE TO ACT ~ ON the job, ~ ¶¶

IN EPH. ~ 6: ~ 6b, ~ PAUL PRESENTS A CONTRAST.

▶▶ but as bondservants of Christ, ~ doing the will of God from the heart. ¶¶ 4/11

▶▶ I.e., ~ in contrast to working "by the way of eye-service, ~ as people-pleasers," ~ ¶¶

▷▷ Paul says ~ that ~ since believers ~ are servants of Jesus, ~ we are to do ~ the will of God.

▶▶ And the will of God for us ~ in the context here ~ ¶¶

▷▷ is to follow Paul's instructions for us ~ in the workplace.

▶▶ TPID, ~ doing the will of God in the workplace ~ means ~ being the best possible employee we can be; ~ ~ ¶¶

▷▷ and doing our work ~ with wholeheartedness and devotion, ~ even ~ when the boss is not looking.

EPH. ~ 6: ~ 7, ~ HAS PAUL'S ~ FINAL INSTRUCTION ~ ON HOW WE ARE TO ACT ~ on the job.

▶▶ Paul says, ~ "rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man."

▶▶ The Greek word translated "good will" ~ means ~ a positive attitude ~ exhibited in a relationship.

▷▷ So Paul is calling us ~ to have a positive attitude ~ on the job.

▶▶ But look carefully ~ at what he says.

▷▷ Work with a positive attitude ~ as to the Lord and not to man.

↪↪ I.e., ~ work with a positive attitude ~ as though ~ you were working ~ for the Lord ~ rather than for people. ¶¶ 5/11

▶▶ In fact, ~ in the Colossians passage on this, ~ Paul asserts that ~ the Christian employee ~ is serving Jesus.

▶▶ And that will help us carry out Paul's instruction here.

▷▷ As we work, ~ keep our eyes fixed on Jesus ~~ and have the attitude ~ that He is our boss.

↪↪ Think about it, ~ what genuine believer ~ wouldn't have a positive attitude working for Jesus?

BACK TO COLOSSIANS NOW.

IN THIS PASSAGE ON PRECEPTS, ~ PAUL GIVES TWO MOTIVATIONS TO FOLLOW the guidelines he's laid out.

1st, ~ COL. 3:24a. ⇔⇔ KNOWING ~ THAT FROM THE LORD ~ YOU WILL RECEIVE ~ THE inheritance as your reward.

▶▶ The language indicates that ~ time when we are resurrected and glorified is in view.

▶▶ Paul reminds us here ~ that nothing ~ is unwitnessed by the Lord.

▷▷ Ps. 33:13-15.

↪↪¹³ The Lord looks down from heaven; ~~ he sees all the children of man; ~~¹⁴ from where he sits enthroned ~ he looks out ~ on all the inhabitants of the earth, ~~¹⁵ he who ~ fashions the hearts of them all ~ and observes all their deeds.

▷▷ And Heb. 4:13. ⇔⇔ And no creature ~ is hidden from his sight, ~~ but all ~ are naked and exposed ~ to the eyes of him ~ to whom we must give account. ↴↴ 6/11

▶▶ Fellow believers, ~ nothing well done ~ is ever done in vain.

▷▷ There may be no thanks on earth.

↪↪ A person ~ may reap only ~ criticism and misunderstanding on their job.

→→ But there is ~ an unfailing reward ~ that comes from the Lord ~ for faithful service.

▶▶ And ~ if the boss plays favorites, ~ if you get passed over for promotion, ~ 77

▷▷ and your hard work and loyalty are not valued, ~ then, ~ as a believer, ~ you can take ~ the long view.

▶▶ Our effort ~ will be rewarded.

▷▷ We may have missed out ~ in the here and now.

↪↪ But ~ from the Lord ~ we will receive ~ the inheritance as our reward.

▶▶ 1 Cor. 15:58.

▷▷ Therefore, ~ my beloved brothers, ~ be ~ steadfast, ~ immovable, ~ always abounding in the work of the Lord ~ [and our jobs are the work for the Lord], ~ knowing that ~ in the Lord ~ your labor is not in vain.

▶▶ In the context ~ of serving other believers, ~ but certainly ~ applicable to our jobs as well, ~ note what Heb. 6:10 says.

▷▷ For God is not unjust ~ so as to overlook ~ your work ~ and the love that you have shown for his name ~ in serving the saints, ~ as you still do. 77 7/11

▶▶ There will be ~ recognition, ~ appreciation ~ and greater rewards than these.

▷▷ Our faithful service in this life ~ might never get a pat on the back from our employer.

↪↪ But, ~ we will definitely get a ~ *Well done, ~ good and faithful servant,* ~ when we go home to be with Jesus.

AND NOW THE SECOND MOTIVATION ~ TO FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES ~ Paul's laid out.

▶▶ For the wrongdoer ~ will be paid back ~ for the wrong he has done, ~ and there is no partiality.

▶▶ Here Paul gives ~ a negative motivation.

▶▶ Here and now

▶▶ The warning ~ then ~ is that the Lord ~ will discipline ~ without partiality ~ in cases of disobedience.

▶▶ Paul acknowledged ~ that the Christian slave Onesimus ~ was responsible ~ to repay Philemon.

▷▷ *Philem. 18-19*

▶▶ The Christian employee ~ is not to presume on his Christianity ~ to justify disobedience on the job.

▶▶ Even if we are God's children, ~ we will reap what we sow, ~ because God ~ is impartial.

▷▷ In his message at Cornelius' house, ~ Peter said, ~ *"Truly ~ I understand ~ that God ~ shows ~ no partiality."* ↴↴ 8/11

▶▶ In summary, ~ our heavenly Father ~ will not cover for us ~ when we do wrong.

▷▷ Obviously, ~ we will be forgiven ~ when we repent.

↳↳ But God ~ is not necessarily going to protect us ~ from the consequences ~ of our wrongdoing.

→→ David. ⇔⇔ 2 Sam. 12:9-15

IN COL. ~ 4: ~ 1, ~ PAUL TURNS HIS ATTENTION ~ TO CHRISTIAN EMPLOYERS.

MASTERS, ~ TREAT YOUR BONDSERVANTS JUSTLY AND FAIRLY, ~ knowing that you also ~ have a Master in heaven.

▶▶ Applied to Christian employers, ~ the idea here, ~ I would suggest, ~ is this.

▷▷ And finally, ~ you Christian employers, ~ treat your employees ~ justly and fairly, ~ since you are well aware that you, ~ like your Christian employees, ~ have a heavenly employer ~ to whom ~ you are accountable.

▶▶ The term ~ justly ~ means ~ to provide your employees ~ with that which ~ they rightly deserve.

▷▷ Good or bad

▶▶ The word ~ fairly ~ is pretty self-explanatory.

▶▶ Christian employers, ~ 77

▷▷ in addition ~ to providing their employees ~ with what they deserve, ~ are to provide fair treatment ~ to all of their employees. 11 9/11

▶▶ Notice that ~ the words, ~ **justly and fairly** ~ emphasize ~ the duties ~ of Christian employers, ~ rather than ~ their rights.

▶▶ At the end of the verse, ~ Paul reminds Christian employers ~ that ~ they will be held accountable ~ by God, ~ for the way they use their authority.

▷▷ Don't forget, ~ Paul says, ~ that you have a Master in heaven.

▷▷ Their earthly status ~ does not ~ give them the right ~ to abuse their authority.

▷▷ Required to function within the parameters that God has set up.

CONCLUSION.

AND THAT BRINGS US TO THE END ~ OF THE PRECEPTS FOR RELATIONSHIPS ~ THAT Paul lays out for us in Col. 3:18-4:1.

▶▶ A closing thought.

▶▶ The precepts ~ that Paul lays out for us in this section, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ and all of the precepts for us ~ in God's word ~ cut ~ across the grain ~ of the culture in which we live.

▶▶ But that's the way it's supposed to be.

▷▷ We are not ~ to copy ~ the behavior and customs ~ of this world.

↪↪ God's people ~ are to be ~ countercultural. ¶¶ 10/11

▷▷ We ~ are to be at variance ~ with the social norms ~ of this fallen world.

▷▷ Our way of life and set of attitudes ~ are to be different ~ 77

↪↪ than the prevailing ~ way of life and set of attitudes ~ of this present evil age.

▷▷ We're citizens of heaven ~~ and are to live ~ the way citizens of heaven should.

LET'S PRAY 11/11