

As To The Lord

Colossians 3:22-25

Rock Hill Baptist Church
605 Rock Hill Road
Lexington, Tennessee 38351

Pastor David Buffaloe
731-845-6104
online at bibleteacher.org



FOCAL Read Responsively Colossians 3:22-25

Servants¹, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: {23} **And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; {24} Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ. {25}** But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons.

The first word in our text is “servants”, but this word literally means “slaves”. Slavery is a terrible practice in which a person – created in the image of God – is treated as a thing, no more than property. In ancient Rome non-citizens could find themselves placed under *temporary, bond, or enforced* slavery. For instance, a passing soldier could *temporarily bind you* to carry his gear for the distance of about a mile. If you refused you could be killed on the spot. The *bond slave* was a person who was in financial debt, and who sold himself to pay off that debt. This was a type of temporary slavery for, once the debt was settled, the bond slave was freed. Both Roman as well as Jewish law protected temporary slaves from harm (see **Deuteronomy 15:12-18**). However the citizens of Roman conquered nations could find themselves *forced into slavery*. These slaves had no rights, no privileges other than those granted by the mercies of their owners.

By 1 A.D. slavery entrapped an estimated 1 out of every 3 inhabitants of Rome. As the Apostles went preaching

¹ δουλος, *doulos*, (pronounced *doos'-los*), a *slave* (literally or figuratively, involuntarily or voluntarily; frequently therefore in a qualified sense of *subjection* or *subserviency*)

the Gospel of salvation:

Romans 10:9-11 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. {10} For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. {11} For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

not only did the citizens of Rome and Israel hear about Jesus, those who were enslaved also heard that “**whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life**” (John 3:15). Slaves began to surrender to the Gospel, believing that Jesus Christ is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Revelation 19:16). Did their conversion out of death and into life release them from slavery? Sometimes, especially if the slave owner was converted to Christ.

The Biblical **Book of Philemon** tells us the story of one slave called **Onesimus** who ran away from his owner. While yet a fugitive Onesimus came across the **Apostle Paul**, and, upon hearing the Gospel of salvation, Onesimus gave his life to the Lord Jesus. Paul gave Onesimus a letter “**unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow laborer ... for my son Onesimus**”. Paul told Philemon that he should treat Onesimus “**not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved**”. Though Paul did not demand that Philemon free Onesimus, tradition has it that Onesimus was freed to serve the Lord as a pastor in Berea where he was

eventually martyred for his faith².

Yet not all slaves were freed once they met Jesus as Savior. Dear friends, though faith in Christ will free you from slavery to sin (John 8:34-36), salvation may not free you from all things.

People come to Christ believing that, once saved, their job situation will change, that their boss will become less overbearing or the job less tedious. Others coming to the Lord expect that the incurable disease that ravaged their body will somehow miraculously disappear. Others who are poor come to Christ for salvation, thinking that they will now have overflowing bank accounts.

What does the Scripture say? Will people – like your boss – treat you better for coming to Christ? Jesus said:

John 15:18-20 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. {19} If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. {20} Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

² *Fausset* states “The Apostolic Canons (73) make him to have been emancipated by Philemon. The Apostolic Constitutions (7:46) make him to have been consecrated bishop of Berea by Paul, and martyred at Rome. Ignatius (Ep. ad Ephes. i.) makes an Onesimus the Bishop of the Ephesians. Instead of violently convulsing society by stirring up slaves against their masters, Christianity introduces love.”

The early Churches of **Macedonia and Achaia** (**Romans 15:26**) took up collections for “**the poor saints at Jerusalem**”. After coming to Christ you may still be poor – though you will have the loving family of God to help you out. After coming to Christ the Lord may heal the disease that ravages you – or He might not! And the ancient Roman slave? Many were not freed following their conversion to Christ, but were commanded to “**obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men**”. Do what you do for the Lord – and you will be blessed.

1. I Should "Do All Things Heartily, as To The Lord", Because His Love Compels Me

FOCAL Colossians 3:22-23 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: {23} And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

The Lord says that “**whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord**”. Another way of saying that is “**do ALL THINGS heartily, as unto the Lord**”. Why? Why does God levy this directive on us? The Bible tells us that by **Jesus Christ**

Colossians 1:16-17 ... **were all things created**, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or

principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: {17} And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Jesus Christ as Preexistent God **made all things**. By Him **all things consist**, that is, **all things are held together**. Jesus made us and, when we fell from God, He was not content to leave us in this state. The Bible says that Jesus gave up **all things** so that He could make it right between us and God. We are told that

Colossians 1:20-22 And, **having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. {21} And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled {22} In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight:**

What a glorious salvation we have. The Apostle John wrote:

1 John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the {covering} for our sins.

We did not first love God, but **God first loved us**. We did not first seek God but, **just as did Adam, hid from God many years before we ever came out into the light of day**. God came from Heaven, *forsaking all things*, came down to earth and, clothed in humanity, He gave Himself for you and for me. **His love compels us to**

do all things heartily, as unto the Lord.

Dr. Adrian Rogers once said:

“Real salvation is not about getting man out of earth into Heaven, but getting God out of Heaven into man”.³

If you have been *born again* by faith in Christ – if you have called on Jesus Christ by faith for salvation – then you have been radically changed *because Christ gave Himself radically for you and for me*. If you have believed on Him then you are

1 Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

"Born again". In your first birth you came from the environment of your mother to this world. In your second birth you came from this world and became a child of the Kingdom of God.

You who are Christians have been through a very *real but radical state of change*. You are no longer **dead in your trespasses and in your sins**.

If you are a Christian the Scripture says – in the *past tense* – that

Ephesians 2:1 And you **hath he {made alive}, who**

³ In his book *The Power of His Presence*, preface, ix.

were dead in trespasses and sins

You *were* dead vessel, you *were* once **the servant of sin**. Yet now **the Son hath made you free, and you are free indeed (John 8:34-36)**. Now that you are a living vessel of God the Bible tells us that **God indwells you**. The Apostle said:

1 Corinthians 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

This does not speak of the building, but of the body of every believer. This is why the Apostle says:

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? {20} For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

You belong to God. If you are saved, **God lives in you**, and wants to live *through* you.

ILLUSTRATE Ornithologists in Berlin, Germany have discovered that many of the black birds and mocking birds have learned to imitate *ringing cell phones*. In fact, one family in England that they have been wakened every morning *by a black bird that thinks it's an ambulance*.⁴ These are birds – not ambulances or phones – but they can sound like the real thing for a short period of time. In a similar way, a person can mimic a Christian

⁴ <http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/article1406586.ece>

for a time, but in time *they will be unable to follow* the commands set before them. The Bible says to the slave:

FOCAL Colossians 3:23 ... **whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;**

WHATSOEVER ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord. This is something that the non-Christian cannot attain nor sustain.

If God is not in you and living through you you cannot possibly do this. There is only One Person Who has ever lived the Christian life perfectly, and that Person is Christ. **He must be in you before He can live through you.** Look at the words of the Apostle:

Galatians 2:20 **I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.**

Christ liveth in me. I do not live by *law*, but by *God*. I do not live by *mimicry*, but by the *Almighty*. I do not live by *ritual*, but by a living *relationship* with God. I do not live in the power of *self*, but in the life *surrendered* to Him Who loved me and gave Himself for me. Only by surrender to the indwelling Christ can I do what the Scripture command I do.

I surrendered to the **whosoever** of Scripture at the

point of salvation. If I want to be blessed *now that I am saved* I must surrender to the **whatsoever** of Scripture. **“Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord”**. THIS IS THE ONLY WAY MY FAITH WILL GROW!

The Apostle says to the Christian:

1 Corinthians 10:31 **Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.**

“Whatsoever ye do” let it be unto the Lord and for His glory. If life requires of you that you perform a menial task or a horrible chore then **“do it heartily, as unto the Lord”**. Give God the glory for the valleys as well as the mountain tops. You are commanded, O Christian,

Colossians 3:17 **And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.**

It is a great thing, as a Christian, to discover that **Christ is all and in all (Colossians 3:11)**. The greatest thing in life for the Christian is to let Christ live through him.

ILLUSTRATE The Apostle Paul was a man who spoke from experience. Saved on the Damascus Road, Paul surrendered his all to Jesus Christ. Did he, like some Pope of Rome, get the opportunity to sit on a golden throne while people gathered to kiss his ring? Absolutely not! Was his every word hung on to while he received millions of dollars from his deceived television viewers?

Absolutely not! Paul said of his life:

2 Corinthians 11:24-27 **Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. {25} Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; {26} In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; {27} In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.**

Faith must be stretched, it must be lived if it is to reach maturity. The Apostle said:

Philippians 4:11-13 **... I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. {12} I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. {13} I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**

No matter what state he found himself in **he was content, for Christ lived through him.** It's as if Paul were singing the familiar song:

**I serve a risen Savior, He's in the world today;
I know that He is living whatever men may say;
I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer,
And just the time I need Him, He's always near.**

**He lives, He lives,
Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and talks with me
Along life's narrow way.
He lives, He lives,
Salvation to impart!
You ask me how I know He lives?
He lives within my heart.⁵**

2. I Should "Do All Things Heartily, as To The Lord", Because I Will Be Judged

FOCAL **Colossians 3:23-24** **And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; {24} Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.**

“Why should it matter whether I obey or not – after all, I'm saved and headed to Heaven”. Many people who profess to be saved live their lives loosely because of a poor understanding of the Biblical Doctrine of Eternal Security (what some call “Once Saved, Always Saved”). They think that since they've been saved they're going to Heaven no matter what, so they're *free to do whatever they want*.

Dear friends, that's an absolute lie from the pit of hell!

Though the Scripture does teach **eternal security**:

2 Timothy 1:12 **... for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I**

⁵ Words and Music by Alfred H. Ackley, © 1933 Homer A. Rodeheaver, Renewal 1961 by The Rodeheaver Co. (Word Music, Inc.)

have committed unto him against that day.

and that God is able to keep those whom He has saved, the Bible also teaches that *those whom God has saved obey Him*. The Scripture that states:

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: {9} Not of works, lest any man should boast.

that salvation is **not of ourselves** is the same Scripture that teaches that

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

You who are saved are left on this earth to be a **light of the world, a city set upon a hill (Matthew 5:14)**. When God saved you *He indwelt you and now owns you*. The Lord wants you to live for Him in this present world.

Dear Christians, salvation does not release you from judgment - we shall all be judged! Salvation releases you from eternal condemnation, but not from temporal discipline or future judgment.

The Lord left you here so that you can reach the world for Him. Dear Christian, there *is a judgment day coming for you and I*. The Apostle mentions it in this verse:

FOCAL Colossians 3:23-24 And whatsoever ye do,

do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; {24} Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.

when he states “**of the Lord you shall receive the reward of the inheritance**”. God will reward your earthly obedience to Him when your works are judged by Christ in yonder glory. **Ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance**. God has a place prepared for you – you cannot lose that – but those that are His will receive crowns for the good that they have done for Jesus in this life. The Bible, speaking of that great day that is coming, states:

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. {12} Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; {13} Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. {14} If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. {15} If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

God gave you a wonderful foundation in Christ. From this saving relationship that you have with Him you are called to go forward in this life – regardless of the circumstances you find yourselves in – and serve the Lord. “**Of the Lord you shall receive the inheritance, for you serve the Lord Christ**”. You as believers together with me are called to a life of service. Not just a

life of service in this place – but a life of service where ever you might be. We who belong to Jesus are called to serve Jesus. We are commanded to be ...

Ephesians 6:5-8 ... in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; {6} Not with eye service, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; {7} With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: {8} Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

God will richly reward your efforts, both now and in eternity.

FOCAL Colossians 3:23-24 And **whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord ...**

Whatsoever ye do, do it to the Lord. Our Lord watches us - are we doing all things unto Him both *inside* as well as *outside* of the Church?

When you assemble in the local Church do you apply this rule? **When you give to the ministry, do you give as unto the Lord? When you serve as pastor, deacon, or as teacher, do you do so as unto the Lord?** What about in your home life? **Parents, do you do to your children as unto the Lord? Spouses, do you do unto your mate as unto the Lord?** God is watching – are you being obedient unto Him? What about in the work place and the market place? **Worker, are you doing your job as if it were unto the Lord?** If so, God will richly bless

you, both now and on that great judgment day. How you live your life for Jesus matters.

How you live your life for Jesus also matters *for the here and now*. The Bible teaches us that God does indeed punish sin – *particularly in His children*.

The Lord told the wayward Corinthian believers for their sinful partaking of the Lord's Table:

1 Corinthians 11:27-30 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. {28} But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. {29} For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh {condemnation} to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. {30} For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep {in death}.

Ananias and Sapphira, two early Christians, **lied to God and lost their lives (Acts 5:1-10)**. What God has said:

Galatians 6:7-8 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. {8} For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Applies to all. If you belong to Jesus, surrender to Jesus.

If you love the Lord then obey **His commandments**.
You were born again to serve Him.

3. I Should "Do All Things Heartily, as To The Lord", Because This Proves My Salvation

FOCAL Colossians 3:25 ...But **he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons.**

How can I *know* that I am saved? There is but one way, and that is by **the fact that God lives and works through me**. Jesus said:

Matthew 7:15-18 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. {16} **Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? {17} Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. {18} A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.**

A tree brings forth its own fruit. Jesus said that **we are His branches, and He is the Vine (John 15:5)**. We bear His fruit. There are many people dwelling in local Churches professing to be children of the Kingdom. The Bible says of these that

Titus 1:16 **They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.**

If my works do not reflect an inward change then I need to give myself to Jesus and be saved! **He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he has done; there is no respect of persons**. Though I believe in the eternal security of the Christian, I also know Jesus expected those whom He saved to do for Him.

Matthew 25:30 **And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

If you are saved then God works in and through you. You will be profitable. You will **do all things as unto the Lord**. But if your salvation is no more than profession - if there is no evidence that **God worketh in you** - then you need to call upon the Name of the Lord and be saved. As the Apostle told the Philippians:

Philippians 2:12-13 ... **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. {13} For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.**

The Apostle did not say **work for** your salvation - Jesus did all the work of salvation for us on the Cross. He did not say **work toward** your salvation. Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe. But the text said **work out** - your salvation, if true, should **be seen outwardly**, for **it is God Who worketh in you**.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

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1. I Should "Do All Things Heartily, as To The Lord", Because His Love Compels Me

Colossians 3:22-23; Colossians 1:16-17; Colossians 1:20-22; 1 John 4:10; 1 Peter 1:23; Ephesians 2:1; John 8:34-36; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Colossians 3:23; Galatians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17; Colossians 3:11; 2 Corinthians 11:24-27; Philippians 4:11-13

⁶ δούλος, doulos, (pronounced *doo'-los*), a *slave* (literally or figuratively, involuntarily or voluntarily; frequently therefore in a qualified sense of *subjection* or *subserviency*)

2. I Should "Do All Things Heartily, as To The Lord", Because I Will Be Judged

Colossians 3:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 3:23-24; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; Ephesians 6:5-8; 1 Corinthians 11:27-30; Acts 5:1-10; Galatians 6:7-8

3. I Should "Do All Things Heartily, as To The Lord", Because This Proves My Salvation

Colossians 3:25; Matthew 7:15-18; Titus 1:16; Matthew 25:30; Philippians 2:12-13

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