

*1All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against. 2Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these principles.*

We are finishing Paul's first letter to Timothy and last week Paul instructed Timothy to teach slaves to show respect to master, especially if they are believers. As Christians in this country we have the general principle of respect. We must respect non-Christians but we must make a special effort to respect those in authority who are Christians. This doesn't mean better, smarter or more qualified, it just means for whatever reason, God in His wisdom has chosen to put someone in authority over us. This might be a boss or or someone you are working with in the church. Romans 12:10 states, *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another. Rom 12:10* This needs to be done in the Spirit's power because in the flesh we want everyone to prefer us. This is pragmatic Christianity in Romans continues,

*10Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; 11not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, 13contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. Rom 12:10-13*

We so many times want God to use us in some mighty way but many time He comes to us as He did to Simon Peter, "*Simon, son of John, do you love Me?*" . . . "*Tend My sheep. John 21:17* Can we be faithful in the little acts of everyday life? In Matthew's gospel Jesus says, *Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.* We so many times want to do big things, things that people will notice and give us praise for when Jesus wants us to excel in good works. Paul follows the scriptural order where God places men in authority in the home. Wives have an amazing opportunity to let their *light shine before men* but it is impossible without the Spirit of God. Paul in Ephesians five states.

*22Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.*

This sounds so easy but we all know that doing the right thing is difficult, may I say impossible in our flesh. I don't mean to just pick on the women for all of us fleshly creatures find ourselves in this grand battle against authority; children rising up against parents, wives striking out at their husbands and all of us rebelling against all laws and rules. Paul states this fact in Romans seven,

*14For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. 15For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. Rom 7:14*

It just proves the truth of God that proclaims, *all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Rom 3:23* This is such a fine bit of scripture, so we must look at this whole passage in context. God knows we could never keep the Law so He Himself provided righteousness for us, *even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe*

*21But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; 23for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; 25whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; 26for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Rom 3:21-26*

*For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. Gal 5:17*

Even when we are saved, we still have to battle our flesh. God has us still live as fleshly beings. How many have noticed, God doesn't take all of our weaknesses away when we get saved? He expects us, through the power of His Spirit working in us, put to death the works of our carnal selves, *if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. Rom 8:13* God promises us life if we will learn to walk in the Spirit. So back to our passage, Paul was dealing with slaves and servants that were part of the church and I can imagine this would have been a sizable portion of the body. You can count on the fact that many of them have issues with those in authority over them.

Paul finishes this passage on the behavior of slaves and servants with the statement, *Teach and preach these principles*. The right attitude toward authority is something we all have to deal with, in my experience forever. The reality is that the reason we all buck authority is that we are in truth, in our flesh, enemies of God. We like to see ourselves as good people but we can never measure up to the righteousness of God without coming under God's provision of righteousness. A couple of scriptures to prove my point. One in James, *You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. James 4:4* And the other is in Romans, *the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom 8:7,8* Paul write to Timothy *teach and preach these principles*.

*These things teach and exhort; and he willeth Timothy to teach the Christians at Ephesus, that this was the will of God, and accordingly to call upon them for an obedience to it. Matthew Poole's Commentary*

Don't waver, *(be undecided between two opinions or courses of action; be irresolute)* when it comes to what we believe. These two words, *teach and preach*, are in what is called in Greek the present imperative, this is an authoritative command, *Do it! Why?* Because salvation is found in no one else. Peter states in Acts 4:12, *there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved*. Paul has no kind words for those who deviate from the truth found in Christ.

*3If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, 4he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in contro-*

*versial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, 5and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. 1 Tim 6:3-5*

Timothy is to avoid the love of money which seems to be one many problems associated with false teachers. In contrast, *godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. 1 Tim 6:6* This fits with what Paul writes in Romans *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Rom 12:18* 9 Godly living.

A common question every Christian has is, How do I live a godly life, and what really is God's will? In 1 Thessalonians Paul gives us almost bullet points of how to live.

*16Rejoice always; 17pray without ceasing; 18in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 19Do not quench the Spirit; 20do not despise prophetic utterances. 21But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; 22abstain from every form of evil. 1 Thess 5:16-18*

Contrast with that this statement, *But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. 1 Tim 6:9* The man of God needs to not let the center of his or her attention be the love of money.

*For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 1 Tim 6:10*

Paul gives Timothy some more imperatives, flee (*from the love of money*), pursue (*righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness*), fight (*the good fight of faith*), and take hold (*of the eternal life*).

*11But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. 12Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, 14that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen. 1 Tim 6:11-16*

*17Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.*

*He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.*