

I Timothy 6:1,2

In Chapter 5 the Apostle Paul has been giving Timothy some guidelines concerning his behavior and ministry to others in the church. He has dealt with the treatment of widows and the treatment of Christian workers.

Now he takes up the subject of slaves and their service. In verse 1 he deals with believing slaves who have unsaved masters. In verse 2 he deals with believing slaves who have believing masters.

V. 1 - Those believing slaves in the early church who were under the yoke of bondage were to count their own masters worthy of all honor. The reason for this is stated - so that God's name and the teachings of christianity might not be blasphemed or cursed.

This means if Christian slaves were to act rebellious or remiss with their responsibilities it would lead to their unsaved masters speaking badly about God and His children.

It is interesting to note in the history of the early church that Christian slaves commanded a higher price on the slave market than unbelieving slaves. If a master knew that a slave was a Christian he was usually willing to pay more for him.

This is a good testimony for a Christian to have. This reminds me of the Bible College students employed on the docks at McCleans Trucking Company. It was reported that they liked to get Piedmont students because they had a good testimony as workers with good attitudes.

All too often Christians have a poor testimony as workers. When this is the case it causes unsaved employers to speak derogatorily of the things of Christ.

As we would apply this passage to the employer-employee relationship I am reminded of three young boys who were all applying for the same summer job. The first one interviewed was asked "what can you do? He was a rather stout young man and said I can lift about as much as any man. When the second was asked what can you do? He replied that he too was strong and agile. Finally the third young fellow was interviewed. He was not much size but when the employer asked him, "what can you do?" He replied, "I can do what I am told to do." This young man was given the job!

Attitude is important to an employer. So also is faithfulness on the job. It's a fact even unsaved employers know the right questions to ask of prospective workers. Over the years I have been listed as a reference by several persons seeking employment. And almost all the time I am asked, "how faithful are they in church attendance?" One employer asked me about one young man and asked, "how would you rate him on a scale of 1 - 10?"

V. 2 - Here Paul is addressing the conduct for believing slaves who have believing masters. These slaves are not to despise their masters who believe.

The fact that their master is a Christian and a partaker of the blessing of salvation should lead these slaves to serve them more faithfully.

When we apply this in principle to the employer-employee relationship today, it is often hard not to harbor bad feelings toward supervisors as well as co-workers. Oftentimes, some workers play up to their

supervisors to gain favor and promotions. Some of these will party and drink with the "boss" or whatever to fit in and get ahead. On the other hand, Christians are oftentimes passed over and/or given lesser jobs when they themselves are more qualified. When this is the case, it is oftentimes tempting for Christian to compromise his standard to go under-ground as a believer.

This reminds me of a story of a man who got saved and when he came to church services he found one of his co-workers was there. So he walked over and said I didn't know you were a Christian and a member of this church. To which the man replied - "I've been sort of working under-cover for Christ."

The Scriptures makes it very clear that there is no division between secular work and spiritual work for the Christian (Col. 3:22-25). Everything that a Christian does is done unto the Lord and for the Lord. It's a shame the kind of testimonies that some Christians have on the job. What about yours?

What kind of testimony do you have as a worker?

Some have a testimony...

I. OF ALWAYS BEING LATE ON THE JOB

In Bible College -
3 tardies = 1 absence
Build Christian character

II. OF LAYING OUT ON THE JOB AND BEING UNDEPENDABLE

I've often said there are some folks who wouldn't work for me if I were paying them.

III. OF BEING LAZY AND BEING A FREELOADER ON THE JOB

I had a few of these in service and at DuPont.

IV. OF STEALING MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT FROM THEIR EMPLOYERS

Occasionally at DuPont workers would get fired - be caught coming through gate with tools or materials.

V. OF DISPLAYING A BAD ATTITUDE TOWARD THEIR EMPLOYERS

Scriptures tell us Daniel had an excellent spirit about him - in other words he displayed a good attitude.