

“Work Life in the Name of Christ”
Colossians 3:22-4:1

I. Slavery – Ancient and Modern

- A. Slavery was very common in the ancient world.
- B. Ancient slavery was in many ways different from more recent forms:
 - 1. It was rarely race-based.
 - 2. Slaves were usually acquired as a result of conquest or because of large financial debts.
 - 3. Treatment of slaves varied widely by household.

II. Slavery and the Bible

- A. The slavery forms mentioned above were not strictly forbidden in scripture.
- B. Though in Israel and in the New Testament, slavery is largely regulated (Lev. 25:35ff, Col. 3:22-4:1, etc):

Ephesians 6:9 - *And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.*

- C. Christian masters were encouraged to “grow out” of slavery:

Philemon 15–16 - ¹⁵ *For perhaps he was for this reason separated from you for a while, that you would have him back forever,* ¹⁶ *no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.*

III. Slavery and the Modern Workplace

- A. The fact that we voluntarily agree to sell our labors to employers does not mean we shouldn't sincerely obey and honor them, quite the opposite!
- B. The fact that those we're in charge of at work voluntarily work for us and could leave anytime does not mean we shouldn't be humble and gentle.