

## “Glory in the Grind” (Ephesians 6:5-9)

I want to ask you to consider a paradigm shift. A paradigm shift is a new way of looking at old things. When our paradigms shift, our attitudes and the way we act also shift. Stephen Covey, in *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, described a mini-paradigm shift he experienced one Sunday morning on a subway in New York City: “People were sitting quietly—some reading newspapers, some lost in thought, some resting with their eyes closed. It was a calm, peaceful scene. Then suddenly a man and his children entered the subway car. The children were so loud and rambunctious that instantly the whole climate changed. The man sat down next to Covey and closed his eyes, apparently oblivious to the situation. The children were yelling back and forth, throwing things, and even grabbing people’s papers. It was very disturbing. Yet the man sitting next to Stephen Covey did nothing. It was difficult not to feel irritated. Mr. Covey could not believe that the man could be so insensitive to other passengers that he would let his children run wild and do nothing about it. Everyone else in the subway car felt irritated. Finally, Covey turned to the man and said, ‘Sir, your children are really disturbing a lot of people. I wonder if you could control them a little more.’ The man lifted his gaze as if to be aware of the situation for the first time. Then he said softly, ‘Oh, you’re right. I guess I should do something about it. We just came from the hospital where their mother died about an hour ago. I don’t know what to think, and I guess they don’t know how to handle it either.’”<sup>1</sup>

What was the paradigm shift for Stephen Covey? What did it change? How might it have influenced the way he would have acted toward that man? Did the children change? Absolutely nothing changed except a paradigm shift in Stephen Covey.

Many of us need a paradigm shift in our work. A few years ago *Time* magazine did a cover story on work and estimated that almost 90 percent of us do not like our jobs or actually hate our work. That is tragic! What can you do if you dislike your job? Change it, if you can.<sup>2</sup> However, recognize that changing jobs will not necessarily make you enjoy your work. The problem is likely with your attitude. As Mr. T used to say on the television show, *The A-Team*, “You need an attitude adjustment!” You need a paradigm shift. If you can’t change your job, change your attitude.

In Ephesians 6:5-9, Paul gives Christians a new way to look at their jobs. The umbrella principle for this section is found in 5:18 where Paul writes, “be filled with the Spirit.”<sup>3</sup> An outworking of this filling is found in 5:21 where we are commanded to be “subject to one another in the fear of Christ.” In 5:22-6:9, Paul then goes on to cite specific types of relationships this encompasses: husband/wife, parent/child, and master/slave. For our purposes, we will be looking at the master/slave relationship in 6:5-9. In these verses we find three principles that will turn Monday moaning into glorious Monday morning.

**1. Work to fulfill your calling (6:5-6).** In 6:5, Paul writes, “**Slaves,<sup>4</sup> be obedient to those who are your masters<sup>5</sup> according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ.**” Before we break down this verse, we must direct our attention to Paul’s first word: “**slaves.**”<sup>6</sup> In the first century, there were about 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire. Roman citizens felt that work was beneath their dignity so they turned most work over to slaves. Slaves served as teachers, scribes, physicians, manual laborers, and farmers. The Greek philosopher, Aristotle, referred to slaves as “living tools.” He argued that a free man would not have a slave as a friend any more than he would make a friend out of a hammer or a saw.<sup>7</sup> Slaves were regarded more as “things” as if they were some kind of inanimate object. They were sometimes whipped, mutilated, and imprisoned in chains. They had their teeth knocked out, their eyes gouged out, and some were even thrown to the wild beasts or crucified...And all of this for the most trivial and petty of offenses. The fact that some slaves ran away, risking if caught, branding, flogging, and even execution, while others committed suicide, is sufficient evidence that cruelty towards them was widespread.<sup>8</sup>

Obviously, these slaves make an interesting case study. They didn't have excellent working conditions. They didn't have rights. They worked long hours for very small paychecks. And on top of all of this, they were physically and verbally abused. This all makes for a very difficult life. Yet, Paul wrote to these slaves and said, **"be obedient."**<sup>9</sup> This phrase is a present tense active imperative (cf. Col 3:22). Paul is saying, "I command you to obey and keep on obeying!" By the way, this same word is used in 6:1 where Paul pens one of my favorite verses, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." In both verses, obedience is demonstrated in submission to Christ (cf. 5:21).

But you may say, "You don't know my boss!" He is a miserable man or woman. The Bible addresses this issue (1 Pet 2:18). God's Word to you and me is to obey in spite of who our earthly employer is. Of course, if our employer asks us to do something that is unethical, we must refuse him or her (cf. Acts 5:29).<sup>10</sup> But in so doing we must be prepared to suffer the consequences, which could mean we could lose our jobs.<sup>11</sup> Fortunately, Paul includes the phrase **"according to the flesh."** This means that slavery to an unreasonable and harsh master is only for this life.<sup>12</sup>

Paul now begins to flesh out what this obedience looks like. Slaves are to obey their masters **"with fear and trembling."** This expression may refer to a respect for one's master, but as it is used elsewhere by Paul, it speaks of a deep sense of humility, and of dependence on God (cf. 1 Cor 2:3; 2 Cor 7:15; Phil 2:12-13). When you work do you have a desperate dependence upon God? Or deep down do you sense that you could leave God at church on Sunday and work Monday-Saturday on your own? God wants us to be reminded of Jesus' words in John 15:5: "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

The final phrase in 6:5, **"in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ"** makes it clear that when a slave obeys his master, he is to do so from his heart. The word translated **"sincerity"**<sup>13</sup> means with singleness<sup>14</sup> or generosity of heart. It means giving full attention to the work, giving generously of one's time and efforts. It means not allowing one's mind to be preoccupied with self-oriented tasks, causing one to neglect his primary responsibility.<sup>15</sup> This type of sacrificial service is to be done **"as to Christ."** Interestingly, in each of the five verses in this passage, Jesus Christ is referred to. Paul makes it crystal clear that He is to be our focus. Is Jesus the focus of your work?

Have you ever watched a movie in which a trained animal performed? In nearly every case, the animal does not belong to the actor, who appears to be giving the animal his cues. The animal is looking beyond the actor to its owner, who stands nearby, off-camera, giving it every command. The animal is not obeying the actor, but its owner. So it is for the slave. The master gives him orders and he obeys, but in so doing he is obeying his Master, Jesus Christ. The non-Christian slave does not see the Master behind his master, and thus he does only what his earthly master demands, and only when he is standing over him, threatening to punish him if he fails to produce to his master's expectations.<sup>16</sup>

Paul further expounds on how slaves are to obey Christ in 6:6: **"not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but<sup>17</sup> as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (lit., "soul").** The word **"eyeservice"** (lit., "eye-slavery") is a word that Paul made up to get his point across.<sup>18</sup> The word refers to service that is performed only to make an impression in the owner's presence. However, Paul wants slaves to obey their masters beyond the surface level of mere appearances. His point is: We should not have one eye on the clock and the other eye on the boss; we should have both eyes on the job at hand (Eccl 9:10; Col 3:22-23).<sup>19</sup>

I have a confession to make: Whenever I see a police officer, I hit the brakes. While I seek to be obedient to the governing authorities (Rom 13:1-7), in my younger years, I had a "lead foot." So my guilty conscience causes me to instinctually hit the brakes. Do you immediately pick up the pace when your boss enters to the room? If so, you are functioning as a **"man-pleaser"**<sup>20</sup> instead of a **"slave of Christ."**

Paul concludes this section by informing slaves that their job is **“the will of God.”**<sup>21</sup> There is dignity to labor when we understand that our jobs are the will of God for us—to realize that secular work is as significant to God as religious work. Have you ever heard of the “bull’s-eye” theory of the will of God? Basic to that whole concept is that we think of some occupations as being more central to God’s purposes than others. The idea that only religious workers are in the center of God’s will was a heresy in the early church. It was called docetism. The heresy maintained that there was a distinct difference between the body and the spirit. They maintained that Christ was not a real human being who actually suffered and died on a cross, but who only seemed to do so. They could not believe that God would have anything to do with what is human. In wider terms, that led people to believe that God was concerned about the sacred, but not at all concerned about the secular. Fortunately, the church condemned the heresy. The early church affirmed the incarnation of Jesus—that He really became a human being. In affirming the incarnation of Jesus, they were saying that He is both human and divine. In the wider realm, they were saying that there is not a difference between the sacred and the secular. There is not one realm in which we are more pleasing to God than in another realm. That is why Paul could say to slaves that their jobs were “the will of God” for them.

Currently, John Mason and a number of men in our church have been remodeling one of the houses on our church property. From God’s perspective, it is just as sacred to work on the Phoenix house, as it is to preach a sermon.

At the carpenter shop of Joseph and Son in Nazareth, you can be sure that there was plenty of religious activity.<sup>22</sup> But you can also be sure that they produced good furniture. If you are a carpenter, do all the things that a believer is called to do, but for heaven’s sake, produce good merchandise. If you are a salesman, go to church regularly, but put your faith to work by turning in truthful reports. If you are a contractor, do all the “spiritual” things that believers are supposed to do, and provide the service you agreed to provide, in a quality manner (Col 3:23).<sup>23</sup>

One of the world’s best-known paintings is *The Angelus* by Millet. The word *angelus* means prayer. It is the picture of two peasants praying in their field. On the horizon is a church steeple and we presume the church bell is ringing to summon the people to afternoon prayer. To understand the significance of the picture, however, you must study where the rays of the afternoon sun fall: They do not fall on the church steeple; they do not fall directly on the bowed heads of the man and woman; the rays of the sun fall on the wheelbarrow and the common tools at the couple’s feet. Millet understood the significance of what Paul wrote to workers. Those peasants in their field not only honored God with their prayers, but also with their ordinary work.

I will tell you a little secret. I frequently ask people, “How is work going for you?” This is not merely a conversation starter. Rather, it is a way of discerning where someone is spiritually. If a person does nothing but moan and groan about work, he or she is probably not in a good place spiritually. Or the person has lost his way or not been educated on the spiritual nature and calling of work. If I may be so bold, your view of work reflects your intimacy with God. If the slaves of Ephesus could view their work as a calling, so can we.

But I know what you may be thinking. My job is pointless and boring. Stop right there and remember that your job is “the will of God.”<sup>24</sup> Also remind yourself who you are working for. It is possible for the housewife to cook a meal as if Jesus Christ were going to eat it, or to clean the house as if Jesus Christ were to be the honored guest. It is possible for the teacher to teach students as if Jesus Christ were in the classroom. It is possible for the state employee to work as if Jesus Christ was in the next cubicle. In each case, we are to fulfill our work responsibilities as if we are serving Jesus Christ...because we are!

[As a slave of Christ you are commanded to work to fulfill your calling. You are also urged to...]

**2. Work for eternal gain, not temporal reward (6:7-8).** Paul writes, “**With good will render service** [lit. “slaving”], **as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.**” While the verb “obey” is not mentioned again in 6:7, it is implied. Paul wants slaves to obey with “**good will.**” This word can be translated “zeal, eagerness, enthusiasm.”<sup>25</sup> What does this look like? I visualize an employee that is eager to take initiative (Col 3:23-25) and does all things without grumbling or disputing (Phil 2:14-15). This kind of service is to be done “**as to the Lord,**” not as *if* to the Lord. The Lord is the One whom the slave really serves as well as the earthly master.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, when it comes to work, we do it not out of a sense of discipline (“I have to”), we do it not out of a sense of duty (“I ought to”); we do it out of a sense of devotion (“I want to”).<sup>27</sup> The motivation for this work ethic is found in the phrase “**knowing that...**” (cf. 6:9). Paul exhorts us to serve our heavenly Master for the reward that He offers (Col 3:25; Rev 22:12). He informs us that “**whatever good thing each one does, this<sup>28</sup> he will receive back<sup>29</sup> from the Lord, whether slave or free.**” Here Paul focuses on the “**good**” things we will do because he wants to encourage his readers. However, elsewhere, he includes a recompense that comes from bad deeds (2 Cor 5:10; Col 3:24-25). This means that how we work in this life matters in the life to come.

At an all-girls school, one of the students was talking to a friend about the Home Ec class she attended. “Do they let you eat the things you cook?” asked the friend. “Let us?” asked the budding chef—“They *make* us.”<sup>30</sup>

As you work for the Lord, what kind of dishes are you serving up? Are they tasty? Or are they rancid? Are they carefully created? Or are they thrown together? I must tell you, whatever you cook up in this life, you’re going to eat in the next. Therefore, it is important that you and I cook dishes that are good and pleasant. I think of Paul’s words in 2 Cor 2:14-16, that we would be the “sweet aroma” of Christ to all those that we come in contact with.

In the fairytale *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the seven little fellows go marching off to work each morning singing, “Hi ho, hi ho, it’s off to work we go,” with a spring in their step and a lilt in their voice. You’d have a spring in your step too if you were going to the same job they were going to: They owned a diamond mine.<sup>31</sup>

But tomorrow morning you may not be going off to a diamond mine. You may feel underpaid and unappreciated. You may not feel adequately rewarded in this life. Paul tells you to just wait for the life to come! If you have been a faithful slave, you will receive a reward from Jesus Christ. And this is what really counts. Despite the challenges of your job, the exciting prospect at the end of the day is that God’s payday is coming! While earthly masters see very little of what their slaves do, our heavenly Master sees all that we do, and He also sees our hearts. And so the Christian slave looks to his inner attitudes and to his outward actions, knowing that God will judge him according to both. And in spite of the treatment, which he receives from his earthly master, the treatment he will receive from God will be just. God is no man’s debtor; rather He is generous to those He loves.

[We have been commanded to work to fulfill our calling and realize eternal gain. In our final verse, Paul speaks to earthly masters and says...]

**3. Work to serve your employees (6:9).** Paul concludes by commanding bosses not to be bossy. He writes, “**And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality<sup>32</sup> with Him**” (cf. Col 4:1). At first glance, one might think that Paul has much more to say to slaves than he does to masters. After all, four verses are addressed to slaves and only one addressed to masters. But Paul’s words in 6:9 indicate that what he has said previously to slaves applies equally to masters.<sup>33</sup> All that Paul adds in 6:9 are a few additional words that more precisely apply the principle of submission to the circumstances of a slave owner.

The phrase **“do the same things to them”** means masters are to obey God in the way they relate to their slaves. All those engaged in any kind of management role have a mutual responsibility. If the employer expects his workers to do their best for him, he must do his best for them. If we hope to receive respect, show it. If we hope to receive service, give it. It is the golden rule in action that is summed up well in an African proverb that says, “The chief is servant of all.”<sup>34</sup> This means that managers and bosses recognize that employees are precious in God’s sight and more is expected from those who are entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing employees (Luke 12:48; 16:10).

Masters are also called to **“give up threatening.”**<sup>35</sup> This means masters must refrain from browbeating their slaves for unsatisfactory work. They should not threaten because our heavenly Master does not threaten us. Instead, masters are to provide gracious, just, and fair treatment (cf. Col 4:1; Jas 5:4).

The reason for this treatment is: **“knowing that…”** (cf. 6:8). Masters must recognize that one’s status in society does not affect his standing before God. In Christ there are no second-class citizens (1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:28). Therefore, masters should intentionally remember that their Master in heaven will not show favoritism to them because of their social or economic status. Rather, He will evaluate them by the same standard that they have used to judge others (Matt 7:1-5).

The master’s care for his slaves is the outgrowth of the master’s relationship to *the Master*. The master is just as much a “slave” of Christ as his slave is. And just as the Christian slave obeys his earthly master, looking to God for his reward, so the slave master fulfills his obligation to his slaves, knowing that he will give answer to his Master in heaven. And he knows as well that his Master will judge with justice, and not with partiality.<sup>36</sup>

You’ve probably never heard of Wilbert Williams. He’s not famous or rich. Still, Williams received an honor normally reserved for the connected, powerful, and wealthy. On December 2, 2004, the city of Chicago designated a street as Wilbert Williams Way. The honor is in celebration of his upcoming retirement.

What did someone as unknown as Williams do to deserve such a tribute? The question becomes even more compelling when you realize that for nearly 40 years, Wilbert Williams has worked at the Woman’s Athletic Club as a doorman. Normally, an honorary street sign goes to people who get the door held open for them—not to the one holding the door.

What set Williams apart? He has carried out his duties in an exemplary fashion. Police Officer Paul O’Donnell said, “In all these years, I’ve never heard him speak a harsh word about anyone. He’s a gentleman.” Through his kindness and service to others, Williams made an impact on those who he met at the corner of Michigan and Ontario.<sup>37</sup> As a result, the city of Chicago has recognized him as a man whose life has counted.

Having a street named after you is impressive. How much greater the honor God promises to give to those who serve Him well in this life. God has called you to work to fulfill your calling, to earn eternal rewards, and to serve others. As you do so your life will count for all eternity.

“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men” (Col 3:23).

## Study Questions

1. Do you believe that your work is really doing God's will? Why or why not? Many Christians believe that, "Church is one thing and business is another." How would you respond? Are you ever guilty of this error? When and why?
2. What are some ways in which employees disrespect their employer? What impact does it have on you? Others? Work?
3. How would you describe yourself as an employee on a scale of 1-10? Factors to consider include: honesty, promptness, hard work, loyalty, initiative, supportiveness, pleasantness, etc. If you are an employer, rate yourself as well. Factors to consider include: fairness, addressing employee concerns, honesty, integrity, pleasantness, respect in attitude and actions for your employees, etc.
4. Paul states that the Christian is to do his work as unto the Lord. What impact would it have on your view of work and your work performance if you really believed and lived this?
5. What practical changes will you make this week to respond to Paul's instruction? Ask God to help you become the best employee/employer possible—a true representative of God's body and a faithful, effective witness of Christ to those you work with.
6. America is the land of opportunity and options. A thoughtful person will ask some hard questions about career choices when he/she has the freedom to make a decision. Here are several questions we ought to wrestle with: Is what I am doing the most productive thing I can do with my life in the present circumstances? If we believe that God gives talents and skills, then we're wise to look at the places where those could best be used. Does my work allow me to treat all persons as being important to God? Is my work the kind of occupation that I feel has God's smile upon it? Is this the only position open to me at this time?
7. Do you have people working under you? If one of them were Jesus, would it change the way you treat that person?

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen R. Covey, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (Free Press, 1990), 30-32.

<sup>2</sup> Most people do not have the luxury of changing their jobs when they are dissatisfied.

<sup>3</sup> Gk. *plerousthe* (“be filled”) is a present tense passive imperative. We are to be filled by the fullness of God (cf. Eph 3:19).

<sup>4</sup> Or “bond-servants” (NKJV) or “servants” (KJV).

<sup>5</sup> Gk. *kuriois* (“master” or “lord”). See the play on words in Eph 6:5, 7, 8, and 9 [twice].

<sup>6</sup> Stott identifies and discusses three major reasons he believed the apostles did not urge the abolition of slavery.

First, Christians were an insignificant group in the Roman Empire during the first century and were politically powerless. Second, it was fairly easy to make the transition from slavery to freedom, and there was a growing tendency for Romans to free their slaves and even establish them in a trade or profession. Third, by this time the legal status of slaves was beginning to be eased and showed signs of further improvement. John Stott, *The Message of Ephesians: The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979), 254-59.

<sup>7</sup> William Barclay, *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians* (Philadelphia: Westminster [revised edition], 1976), 179-180.

<sup>8</sup> Sam Gordon, *The Genius of Grace* (Greenville, SC: Ambassador, 2003), 374-375.

<sup>9</sup> Paul uses the root word “obey” (*hupakouo*) in Rom 6:12, 16-17; 10:16; Eph 6:1, 5; Phil 2:12; Col 3:20, 22; 2 Thess 1:8; 3:14.

<sup>10</sup> In these occasions, which are conceived of as rare in the Scriptures, the saint is given the opportunity to demonstrate who is really in charge.

<sup>11</sup> Deffinbaugh explains the relationship of salvation and suffering: “The glory of God and not our happiness is the chief end of our salvation. The gospel is often represented in terms of our happiness or fulfillment or contentment, as though God’s primary purpose for saving us was our own pleasure. God saved us for His own pleasure, and to bring glory to Himself. God’s glory is also our good, and so we do benefit from His grace in salvation. The error is to see man as the chief end of God’s purposes rather than God. God often chooses to glorify Himself through suffering. God was glorified by the innocent suffering of His Son. He is also glorified by the innocent suffering of slaves (see 1 Peter 2:18-25). We will never understand or obey Paul’s instructions to us as slaves of Christ until we grasp the fact that our calling in life is to glorify God, and that suffering for us not only leads to glory, it is glory. It is not that we should live our life without joy, but rather than we should experience joy in suffering for the glory of God” (Heb 12:1-2; Jas 1:2-3; 1 Pet 4:12-14). Robert Deffinbaugh, “Ephesians: The Glory of God in the Church,” *Lesson 25: Submission and Slavery (Ephesians 6:5-9)* (www.bible.org, 1998), 222-223.

<sup>12</sup> Leon Morris, *Expository Reflections on the Letter to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 194.

<sup>13</sup> “Sincerity” (*haplotes*, “singleness”) is the opposite of duplicity in thought or action. The word occurs seven times in the NT, all in the Pauline Epistles (Rom 12:8; 2 Cor 1:12; 8:2; 9:11, 13; 11:3; Col 3:22). It implies openness and concentration of purpose, especially in the context of generosity. The Christian slave has one goal before him. He is determined to obey his human master as an expression of his commitment to the divine Lord.

<sup>14</sup> See the renderings of the NRSV and KJV.

<sup>15</sup> Gene A. Getz, *Living for Others When You’d Rather Live for Yourself: Studies in Ephesians 4-6* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1985), 155.

<sup>16</sup> Deffinbaugh, *Submission and Slavery*.

<sup>17</sup> Gk. *all* (“but”) is a strong adversative. Far from pleasing men, Christian slaves are to live as slaves to Christ.

<sup>18</sup> Gk. *ophthalmoudoulia* is also used by Paul in Col 3:22. However, other Greek writers do not use the term.

<sup>19</sup> Gordon, *The Genius of Grace*, 378.

<sup>20</sup> Gk. *anthropareskoi* is only used elsewhere in Col 3:22. Like *ophthalmoudoulia* (“eyeservice”), it also appears to be a word coined by Paul.

<sup>21</sup> Submission to those in authority over us is “the will of God.” Before one agonizes about God’s specific will it is imperative that one obey God’s revealed will that has already been revealed in Scripture. Other examples of the will of God include suffering (1 Pet 4:19), sexual purity (1 Thess 4:3; 1 Pet 4:2), submitting to governing authorities (1 Pet 2:15), and obedience (Mark 3:35; Rom 12:2; Heb 10:36; 1 John 2:17).

<sup>22</sup> Deffinbaugh writes, “Our Lord Jesus became a slave in order to bring about our salvation (Mark 10:45), and thus also became an example of submission for slaves (1 Peter 2:18-25). Paul often referred to himself as the Lord’s slave (see Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 9:19). Beyond this, every Christian has been delivered from slavery to sin, and has become a slave of Jesus Christ (Romans 6:16-20; 14:4; 1 Corinthians 7:22). And so the instructions which Paul gives to “slaves” applies to every Christian, as Christ’s slave.” Robert Deffinbaugh, “Ephesians: The Glory of God in the Church,” *Lesson 25: Submission and Slavery (Ephesians 6:5-9)* (www.bible.org, 1998), 222-223.

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<sup>23</sup> Doug McIntosh, *Life's Greatest Journey: How to be Heavenly Minded and of Earthly Good* (Chicago: Moody, 2000), 121.

<sup>24</sup> It is possible to be glad you have a job but not see much significance in it. Whether you are a physician or a burger flipper your work is significant. Remember, Paul made his strongest case for the significance of work when he wrote to slaves.

<sup>25</sup> The NET, NRSV, and NLT render this word "enthusiasm." The NIV opts for "wholeheartedly."

<sup>26</sup> Dr. Thomas L. Constable, *Dr. Constable's Notes on Ephesians*, 2004 ed.

<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/ephesians.pdf> Constable

<sup>27</sup> Gordon, *The Genius of Grace*, 379.

<sup>28</sup> The pronoun "this" (*touto*) stands first in its clause for emphasis, and stresses the fact that God will reward those who in seeking him, do good. The reward will be appropriate for the good work that was done.

<sup>29</sup> See other uses of *komizo* ("give back") in Matt 25:27; Luke 7:37; 2 Cor 5:10; Col 3:25; Heb 10:36; 11:19, 39; 1 Pet 1:9; 5:4.

<sup>30</sup> Morris, *Expository Reflections on the Letter to the Ephesians*, 197.

<sup>31</sup> Max Anders, *The Good Life: Living with Meaning in a 'Never Enough' World* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1993), 209.

<sup>32</sup> The word "partiality" (*prosolempsia*) literally means "lifting up the face" or looking to see who someone is before deciding how to treat him. It is found only in Rom 2:11; Eph. 6:9; Col 3:25; and Jas 2:1.

<sup>33</sup> See also Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians: Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 452.

<sup>34</sup> Gordon, *The Genius of Grace*, 380.

<sup>35</sup> "Threatening" (*apeilen*) means warning that punishment will come immediately (cf. Acts 4:17; 29; 9:1).

<sup>36</sup> Deffinbaugh, *Submission and Slavery*.

<sup>37</sup> Preaching Today Citation: John Beukema, Western Springs, Illinois; source: Shamus Toomey, "Doorman Gets His Way," *Chicago Sun-Times* (12-2-04).