

Notes on Ephesians 6:5-9

Raj Balasubramanian, iyer@brahminbeliever.com

2018-06-12 10:20

if you are reading this on web, download the pdf

In the previous post , we saw the commands to fathers and children. Now we look at the instruction to employees, servants and contractors

The NT Greek word used here is that of *doulos* for slave, servant, attendant and for master it is *kyrios* which is the same word used as title for our Lord Jesus.

The perspective of the slave/*doulos* is used in [Mat10:24] where a disciple is not above his teacher nor a slave above his master reference is made. Similarly, the command/obey nature of the relation used in [Luk7:2] when the Roman centurion asks Jesus to free his slave of the ailment by commanding it, just like the Centurion commands his slave. This means that all the things a slave does is subject to the master.

Beyond the nature of being a slave to a master in person, there is also the use of the word as a slave to various things like impurity and lawlessness [Rom6:19,20] or to the world and men [1Co7:23]. But since we are called by the Lord, we are Lord's freedman [1Co7:22] and His slave. Moreover, our bondage of this world is gone as we are adopted as sons and if a son, then an heir [Gal4:7]. Truly then we are slaves to Christ and as we have a perfect Master in Christ, we have nothing to worry, but to trust in Him.

The concept of slave, master, eyeservice, people pleasers all go hand in hand. In addition since we spend majority of our time as employees or managers or business owners in the world, we are apt to fall into the traps of working to please other men or being afraid of what people might think etc. Hence the secular nature of our life must be brought together with our sacred nature in Christ to apply these principles due to the following:

- [Gal1:10] if you are seeking to please men you cant be servant to Christ
- [Col3:23] whatever you do work heartily as for the Lord and not for the man
- [Rom12:2] dont be conformed to the world but be transformed by renewal of mind with what is good and acceptable to God

- [Mat6:1-34] talks about the pharisees who were people pleasers and hence becoming hypocrites
- [Jam4:4] friend of the world is enemy of God
- [Pro29:25] fearing people is a dangerous trap but trusting the Lord is safety
- [1Th2:4] our purpose is to please God and not people
- [Psa118:8] better to take refuge in the Lord than trust in man
- [Ep5:10] try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord
- [Jn12:43] they love glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God

Concretely, then this translates to

- working as if only God is looking at us and ensuring we are doing things to please Him through our focus, efforts, diligence, timeliness, presence and giving our potential to our employer
- treating employees with respect, while still holding them to the standard of what they should be delivering/producing in their capacity and ensuring they are being cared for - especially if they are not a believer, as we can become the light to them
- living and working like we are slave to the perfect Master where we dont have to worry about if we will be cared for or taken care of or paid well or worrying about promotion and other job challenges
- being good stewards of our Master's properties and resources so when he asks for our accounting of His blessings, wealth, provisions and properties we can give an honest tally of our use and management of it all
- whether an employee or manager or servant, I need to guard against becoming a hypocrite or people pleaser or worrying about what people think or say about me or my actions. This is the biggest sin our Lord Jesus warned us against, where the pharisees were a personification of hypocrisy. This comes subtly also in maintaining an image or having a PR persona which might indirectly make us sycophants.