

WHO WE WORK FOR

COLOSSIANS 3:22-4:1

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – APRIL 6, 2025

SCRIPTURE READING

Colossians 3:22-4:1

Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality. Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

If you could rename your current job or role with a title that actually describes what you do day-to-day, what would your new job title be? (Example: Professional Email Responder or Meeting Survivor)

SERMON RECAP

This passage addresses workplace relationships in a historical context of Roman slavery, but the principles also apply to modern work settings. The historical context is important for understanding these verses properly, as Paul was addressing a widespread Roman institution rather than race-based chattel slavery.

Who We Work For: Paul emphasizes Jesus's lordship throughout the passage. As Christians, we don't just work for a paycheck—we ultimately work for Jesus. Through the concept of "common grace," God works through our work to provide for others. This means that our jobs are ways we participate in God's work in the world.

How We Work: Our faith transforms our work ethic in several ways:

- Work with humility - respect authority while maintaining ethical boundaries
- Work with integrity - maintain consistent standards regardless of who's watching
- Work with excellence - do your best as an offering to God
- Work with justice - treat others fairly in the workplace

What We Expect from Work: Our ultimate hope isn't in career success but in our inheritance in Jesus. This frees us from making work our identity and instead allows work to become worship.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does the passage say?

1. How many times does Paul reference Jesus's lordship in this passage? What specific phrases does he use to emphasize that Christians ultimately work for the Lord?
2. What specific instructions does Paul give to both employees (bondservants) and employers (masters) in this passage? How are these instructions balanced?
3. According to verse 22, what does Paul mean by "eye-service" and how does it contrast with the attitude he encourages?

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

1. How does this passage address the tension between respecting workplace authority and maintaining our ultimate allegiance to Christ? How might these loyalties come into conflict?
2. Pastor Mike's sermon distinguishes between "workaholicism" and "work as worship." What's the difference between these approaches?
3. What does Paul mean when he refers to receiving "the inheritance as your reward" (v.24)? How does this eternal perspective change how we might view our daily work?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. In what specific ways can your current work (whether paid employment, volunteer service, parenting, studies, etc.) serve as a means of participating in God's work in the world? How might seeing your work this way change your attitude?

toward it?

2. Pastor Mike identified four Christ-centered work principles: humility, integrity, excellence, and justice. Which of these do you find most challenging to implement in your current work context, and what specific step could you take this week to grow in that area?
3. Consider the reflection question: "How do you need to change your approach to work?" What one change would most help align your work life with the principles in this passage?

LEADER NOTES

EASTER SUNDAY | Join us on Easter Sunday, April 20! For service times, volunteer needs, and more information visit mcleanbible.org/easter. On Good Friday, April 18, all locations are invited to join us at 7 pm at MBC Tysons.

VOLUNTEER AT KINDGOM ADVENTURE WEEK | Kid's Quest and Access are hosting a Bible day camp for children of all abilities and they need your help to bring the fun this summer! Volunteer needs include serving as room leaders or inclusion buddies for students with special needs. Day camp will run June 24-28 from 10 am-3 pm at MBC Tysons. Sign up to serve [HERE](#) or contact [Caleb Barnhart](#) for more information.