

Study Guide: "Submission through Service"

Carter Sanger, Oct-09

Introduction

Read Ephesians 6:5-8.

I. Working for Man

- Why do you think work is so difficult?
- Do you think people should retire? If so, when and why?
- According to this passage, what should our work not look like?
- What are different ways that people work for "eye-service"?

II. Working for God

- What does Paul say is the right way to work? Discuss the various phrases he uses.
- If you worked as Paul describes, how would your attitude change? Would your work look different?

III. Working as Slaves

Slaves to earthly masters have no rights. In the ancient world, they weren't even viewed as fully human. They were viewed as property, just like an inanimate tool might be viewed.

- In view of this, does it strike you that Paul would address slaves in this list? What has changed in Paul's view?
- Verse 5 and 6 both use the same Greek word for "slave" and "servant." Read Romans 6:6 and 20-22. If a person is a slave to Christ, then what else must be true of him? How does being set free from sin change a person's approach to work?

Wrap-up

Tim Keller, in a sermon on this same passage poses two questions when evaluating what to do about work that leaves you discontent:

- Have you checked your motive? Are you working to "please people" in the sense of gaining their approval or being seen as valuable because of your skill or leadership or insight? Are you working to "please people" in the sense of getting a paycheck and bonus?
- Does your job line up with God's design for work – to exercise stewardship of His earth, working towards its cultivation? Is it contributing in some way to bringing order out of chaos?
- If these two questions are okay, then have you considered your unique gifts, personality, and experiences don't lend themselves to the kind of work that you do?