

3:22 - Slaves, 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.

- “slaves” is *douloi* and also means “servants”
- They could be in total bondage as a result of being captive of war or as a result of debt, economics or politics.
- Paul looks beyond their situation and urges slaves to live Christlike.
- The largest section of verses are dedicated to slaves (3:22-25) possibly because:
 - o Large number of believing slaves at Colosse
 - o Onesimus (in the letter to Philemon) may have been one of many revolting/fleeing slaves or Onesimus’ escape may have encouraged others to behave the same
- “obey” is *hypakouo* not “submit” *hypotasso*.

3:23 - Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,

- The Lord is the ultimate master of all
- Work was not done for men, but in obedience and worship of the Lord
- “work” is in the imperative or the mood of command
- Here the word for “heart” or “heartily” is *ek psuche* which means “out of soul” and most likely refers to the physical effort that is manifested from the soul working through the body. This is in contrast to the inner attitude of 3:22 “sincerity of heart.”

3:24 - knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

3:25 - For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

- Three types of motivation are given in 3:24-35
 - o Reward – an inheritance from the Lord. Here the doctrine of eternal rewards gets some life application.
 - o The Lord – the slave’s service on earth was service to the Lord Christ.
 - o Retribution – there will be vindication for anything the slaves do wrong or in rebellion.

4:1 – Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

4:2 – Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

- Paul began the letter with prayer
- “watchful” refers to mental alertness. This same Greek word translated “watchful” here is also found in 1 Thessalonians 5:6-9 translated the same as “watchful.” In 1 Thessalonians 5:6-9 this word “watchful” (which refers to mental alertness) is used alongside the Greek word *nepho* which is translated “alert” and refers to staying moral and living righteous in a dark and decaying culture. Together “watchful” and “alert” refer to being mentally alert concerning your circumstances and praying about specific situations while *nepho*, or “alert”, refers to being morally upright in the midst of those circumstances and situations.

4:3 – And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.

- Verses 4:3-4 is Paul referring to his ministry. But, verse 4:5 is Paul referring to each of the believing Colossians’ ministries
- These verses are paralleled in Ephesians 5:16

4:4 – Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

- Greek “as is my duty” is translated “as I should.”

4:5 – Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.

4:6 – Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”