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## A Master in Heaven

Reading Colossians 3:22-4:1

Being a Christian isn't just about being forgiven and going to heaven (though both are critical). Living as a Christian forms the basis of all your life. You are a Christian every day, wherever you are and in every relationship.

For instance, in New Testament times, there were Christians who were domestic servants or bondservants, making their living in a form of servitude. {This is not a good place to go into detail, but the servitude in places like Colossae was not like pre-civil war slavery.}

Paul tells Christians who were bondservants to obey their earthly masters. Disobedience would (1) go against the general principle of cooperative agreement, submission and work ethic, (2) could easily put the rebellious servant in danger, and (3) would not serve as good testimony for evangelism. {The stipulation given elsewhere in Scripture applies here. In any relationship of submission to another human being, if the superior requires



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Colossians:

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something sinful, Christians must refuse. *See Acts 5:29* }.

As applied today to employee-employer relationships, observe carefully how specific this is: "in everything" the worker is to serve obediently. (Everything except – as noted above – the qualification derived from Acts 5:29).

**"Not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord."**

This addresses a common experience, of workers/employees appearing to be busy and productive *when the supervisor or boss is around*.

Such absence of ethics is not befitting those who have committed to serve the Lord. Our commitment is to "with sincerity" obey our superiors, "fearing the Lord."

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Responsibility is also placed on “masters” or employers. The paragraph continues into the first verse of chapter four: **“Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.”** God never places responsibility just on one side of a relationship. Just as workers are to seriously accept their duty, their superiors are also to be just and fair, knowing they serve a higher Master.

Then, look back into the text and see how Paul takes this outside of the workplace to all of life: **“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.”**

No matter where I am located, what my personal responsibilities are, who I am with and all other such considerations – **I am a servant of the Lord.** All that I do should reflect this. And, if the Lord has promised a reward to me – I should take that awareness with me into every dimension of my existence.

Likewise, **“...the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.”** Desiring the good and

resisting the wrong, may we serve the Lord every day.