

"The Practice of the Believer"

Ephesians 4-6

Part 25

Introduction: Last week in our study of Ephesians we were looking at raising a family. Today as we move on, we are going to look at how the believer is to conduct his or her life where you must do the unpleasant things of life. Have you ever had to do something that was very unpleasant? How do you face those situations? Do you grumble and complain? Do you do the job quickly and without great care because you want to get it done and get away from it? How do you face the unpleasant duties of life?

- Maybe it is on you to take the garbage out and you do not like it.
- Maybe it is on you to empty the cat litter and you do not like it.
- Maybe it is on you to clean the bathrooms in the house, and you do not like it.

The text before us will deal with this very thing. Before we get to our text, I want to show you something that we looked at a while back in our study of 1 Peter.

1 Peter 2:18-21

¹⁸ *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*

¹⁹ *For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.*

²⁰ *For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*

²¹ *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:*

Paul was also concerned about the believer's conduct in the work place when writing to the Colossians.

Colossians 3:22-24

²² *Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God;*

²³ *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;*

²⁴ *Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.*

The believers whom Paul and Peter wrote to would have had many questions after they were saved. Questions like;

- **Do I need to submit to my boss if he is not a believer?**
- **What if my boss is very immoral do, I still need to submit to him?**
- **Do I need to take commands from someone who worships a false god?**

Here in Ephesians 6 Paul answers these questions. Peter also answered these questions.

1 Peter 2:18

¹⁸ *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*

I. Glorifying God in Unpleasant Circumstances

A. The Servants

Paul was writing to many people who were actual slaves and as slaves some had some very unpleasant responsibilities. They could have been in a home when they had to wash the clothing. They may have had to cook the meals. They may have had the responsibility of watching over the children. They could have even been the foot washer. This person's responsibility would have been to wash the dirty feet of everyone who entered into the house. Can you imagine that job? You had to get on your knees in front of all who entered the house, remove their sandals and wash their dirty feet. They wore sandals and they walked on dusty and muddy roads. The dirt would get between the toes and under the toe nails and if you were the foot washer you had to get into the cracks and crevasses and get it out. How would you face that responsibility every day?

Notice Ephesians 6:5

Here we that we are to be obedient to whatever we are given to do, and we are to do it as unto the Lord. Whatever you are responsible for you are not to complain and you are not to murmur but you are to do it just as you would do it for the Lord, because that is exactly what you are doing.

Notice Ephesians 6:5 again.

We are to do it with fear and trembling and with a sincere heart. To do it with fear and trembling does not mean you live in fear of who you work for. It means you do it with the

attitude that you are going to do the very best job you can just like the Lord is coming to inspect your work when it is done.

We are not to face the unpleasant circumstances with the attitude that we are going to do it as quickly as I can just to get it done with. We are not to approach it thinking that it will never get inspected so I can just lightly touch it and it will be ok.

These attitudes are completely unacceptable for the believer. Whatever we are given to do we are to give 110% so that it is done correctly.

Colossians 3:23

²³ *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;*

Let us notice an example of how we are to manage the unpleasant situations.

Genesis 39:1-6

And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither.

² *And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.*

³ *And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand.*

⁴ *And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.*

⁵ *And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.*

⁶ *And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured.*

This was not the place where Joseph desired to be, but he could not change his location. He could however do what was entrusted to him for the glory of the Lord and he did so. Joseph did whatever Potiphar requested. He did not complain, nor did he refuse. He did it as unto the Lord and God honored his actions.

Notice Ephesians 6:6

We are not to fulfill our responsibilities as men pleasers but as God pleasers. Here is one of the keys to fulfilling your responsibilities with the proper attitude. Look at what is entrusted to you as an opportunity to serve the Lord. That is exactly what it is. We are to do the will of God from the heart. God has placed you where you are, and He has given you the job and the strength to do so do it for Him. It is His will that you serve with thanksgiving and not with complaining. Let me share with you why God hates complaining:

- 1. It is the opposite of thanksgiving.**

1 Thessalonians 5:18

¹⁸ In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

- 2. Complaining poisons your attitude.**

It infects your entire being with bitterness.

- 3. Complaining effects the attitude of others.**

Joy is contagious and so is complaining.

- 4. Complaining implies that we do not trust God.**

Exodus 14:10-12

¹⁰ And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD.

¹¹ And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?

¹² Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.

- 5. Complaining ruins your testimony.**

We are to be the model employees not the employees that the boss hates to see approaching him. If you are a mom or dad your complaining teaches your children to do the same.

Whatever job you have accept it as what God has given you to do and do your very best at it. Set your mind to be positive and be the very best at what you do. This will be a great benefit to you. Accept where you are and glorify God with what you do.

If you are a teacher, be the best teacher. If you are a doctor, be the best. If you have the responsibility of cleaning the bathrooms, be the best. If you are a dentist, be the best. If you are a carpenter, be the best.

To do any less than our best is sin!!

Notice Ephesians 6:6-7

Some people only work hard when they are being watched. As believers we are to do our best even if there is not one person watching. We must remember that our God is always watching.

Let us notice what Peter wrote to his readers.

1 Peter 2:13-19

¹³ *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;*

¹⁴ *Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.*

¹⁵ **For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:**

¹⁶ *As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.*

¹⁷ **Honour all men.** *Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.*

¹⁸ *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*

¹⁹ *For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.*

In Greek culture manual work was despised and the goal of being successful was getting to the point where you never had to do any work. This is not how it is in God's kingdom, where hard work and

manual labor are honorable. It should be said of every Christian that he is a diligent worker and gives his employer a full day's work for his pay; to do anything less is to steal from your employer.

Notice Ephesians 6:8

Here in this verse we see that as we fulfill our responsibilities there will be a double pay day. If you get a pay check now there will be another payday when we stand before the Lord.

This is an incentive that Paul gives to his readers. He reminds them that God is fully aware of their good works, and it will not go unnoticed and unrewarded.

Matthew 16:27

²⁷ For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Proverbs 11:18

¹⁸ The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward.

Hebrews 6:10

¹⁰ For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

B. The Masters

Notice Ephesians 6:9

Now Paul addresses those who owned the slaves. We must understand that slaves were viewed as nothing more than property. They were often abused and mistreated in Paul's day, but Christians were to change that.

The masters were to conduct their lives just as the servants did. They too were to do their work as unto the Lord. They were also not to abuse their power over the servants.

Application:

Maybe you have a position where you have authority over others who work for you. If you, do you are not to in any way abuse your power and threaten those who are under your authority. They are to be treated just as you would desire to be treated if you were in their place.

Notice the Words of our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 7:12

¹² Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

This verse contains the GOLDEN RULE for life. We are to treat others as we would want them to treat us even if we knew they would never treat us as we desired to be treated. This is the way the believer is to treat everyone including those who are under your authority.

Notice Ephesians 6:9 again.

There is no respect of persons with God. This means that you may hold a position of authority here but when you stand before the Lord you will be judged just as those who were under your authority.

Romans 14:10-11

¹⁰ But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

¹¹ For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

2 Corinthians 5:9-10

⁹ Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Conclusion:

When you start your day tomorrow let us start with a joyful attitude because now we know that we are serving our Lord while we fulfill our responsibilities of life.