

Hierarchical Relationships
Go Better with Christ
Colossians 3:22—4:1



IS JESUS ENOUGH

Theme: Depending upon the sufficiency of Jesus is the only way to work toward ideal hierarchical relationships.

I. In order to work toward ideal hierarchical relationships subordinates should willingly obey their superiors. (3:22)

Read: vs. 22

Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.

Question: So, okay the command is simple enough, "slaves obey your earthly masters." However, the Holy Spirit rarely commands without qualification. What three items in this verse inform us a little bit more about what this obedience should look like?

A.

B.

C.

Question: If you or someone you know struggles with obedience, do you think truth like this will change anything?

How so?

Can you imagine a little what doing this might do to how you think about certain situations?

Can you describe it?

Question: How can this help you with evangelism opportunities?

II. In order to work toward ideal hierarchical relationships subordinates should see every step as service to God.

Read: vss. 23-25

Question: Did you notice the careful wording of verse 23? Read it again...

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men

Question: When a Christian works, for whom does he or she really work?

The instruction of verse 23 is also qualified. Here's what a principle based on verse 24 might look like. Read the verse again.

A. Subordinates should see every step as service to God since their ultimate reward comes from him.

Question: What are some of the greatest rewards you have received?

Now let's see how they compare to heavenly rewards. As if just going to heaven is not enough (of course it is), check out the following...

Read: 2 Timothy 4:8

Question: What reward is described and who receives it?

Read: James 1:12

Question: What reward is described and who receives it?

Read: 1 Peter 5:1-4

Question: What reward is described and who receives it?

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Read: 1 Corinthians 3:8

Question: Who is rewarded? How are they rewarded?

Read: 1 Corinthians 9:17

Question: What contrast is made and what outcome applies to both?

Application: How can we apply all of this in our daily lives? Come on now. Talk about it. Who wants to get specific?

Okay, here comes the flip side. Here's what a principle based on verse 25 might look like. Read the verse again.

B. Subordinates should see every step as service to God since their chastening also comes from him.

That's simple enough. Let's move on...unless you feel otherwise.

III. In order to work toward ideal hierarchical relationships superiors should grant subordinates the very best of justice and equity.

Read: 4:1

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

Look again at the second half of that sentence.

because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

Question: What did the slave owner just learn?

Question: However, how does God treat this person?

This understanding greatly informs the first part of the sentence...

Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair

Question: Okay then, in this context, to whom does the slave owner look to find out how to treat a slave?

Question: So then the phrase *right and fair* can be understood in light of God's righteousness and fairness. What do these look like?

Question: What would this ultimately lead to in the slave and slave-master relationship?

Hint: Read Philemon 1-16.

Question: What will this look like in a contemporary hierarchical relationship?

Question: Finally, once again, how can this help us in our evangelism efforts?