**A Workplace That Honors the Lord**

Colossians 3:22-4:1

**Introduction**

Paul made it clear that when the Lordship of Christ is applied, there will be new life in the home. Many homes in Paul’s day would have included servants; they lived in the home and assisted the family with household duties, including educating the children. There were 60 million slaves during the time of Paul; in fact, the one who delivered the letter to the Colossians, Onesimus, was a slave returning to his master, Philemon. By addressing servants and masters Paul does not condone slavery. He is simply dealing with the situation as it was. Application would eventually bring abolition. Yet, Paul did not lead slaves to revolt. It is significant that he addressed servants and put them on equal footing with all other believers. This fact, however, did not change their current role as a servant in the home. He demonstrated that there was no area of life that was exempt from being under Christ’s authority. The fact that they had accepted Christ as Lord should have a bearing on the master/servant relationship. While their situation is not identical to ours today, Paul’s admonition is applicable to our situation in the workplace. As believers, we should be concerned about honoring the Lord in the workplace—a place where we spend much of our time. What type of workplace honors the Lord? Are you honoring the Lord in the workplace?

1. **A workplace that honors the Lord has employees who cheerfully work under the authority of their employer.**
   1. There are several problems in today’s workplace. The workplace is troubled by greediness, laziness, an entitlement mentality, dishonesty, and ungodly speech such as foul language, gossip, complaining, and arguing.
   2. There is a solution for all the problems that plague today’s workplace: Christ.
   3. You honor the Lord when you work under the authority of your earthly boss. (v. 22a)
2. The workplace is designed to be a place of work (“servants”).
3. God placed man in the workplace prior to the fall.
4. The workplace is a place where orders will be given by earthly supervisors (“according to the flesh”).
5. Thus, workers must listen with the intent to comply.
   1. You honor the Lord when you work with the right motive. (v. 22b)
      1. You are not to work with “eye service”—service rendered without dedication or a sense of inner obligation, but mainly to attract attention, impress others, or to be seen of men. Eye service could also mean to work only when others are watching. This would be hypocritical and superficial.
      2. You are not to work as “men pleasers”—desiring to please people rather than God; sacrificing principle to please someone of superior authority.
      3. Instead you are to serve with “singleness of heart”—with simplicity, purity, and integrity.
      4. You are to work “fearing God”—with reverence, and out of respect for the Lord.
   2. You honor the Lord when you work cheerfully from the heart. (v. 23)
      1. “Whatsoever ye do.” The present progressive *do/are doing* was used to bring out the idea that Paul is probably referring to what they already do for work. You don’t have to get a new job to practice what is taught here.
      2. Menial tasks take on great significance when they are done for the Lord.
      3. Do what you do “heartily”—out of your soul; from within; with genuineness, not pretense; with all your being; putting your heart into it; with enthusiasm! “As to the Lord.”
   3. You honor the Lord when you focus more on how the Lord will reward you than the way man may or may not reward you. (v. 24)
      1. A slave in Paul’s day did not receive an inheritance. He or she may not have an inheritance on this earth, but they have one in heaven. (1 Peter 1:4)
      2. It is wonderful if your workplace acknowledges your work. It is more important to remember that the Lord takes knowledge of your work.
   4. You honor the Lord when you avoid wrongdoing because you reverence the Lord. (v. 25)
      1. The Lord will punish wrongdoing in the workplace.
      2. He will do so without exception or partiality.
   5. Application: Are you the type of a worker that honors the Lord?
6. **A workplace that honors the Lord has employers who care about their employees. (4:1)**
   1. Our church is blessed with believers who run their own businesses, lead corporations, and serve in other leadership positions.
   2. You honor the Lord when you treat people with justice; that which is right.
   3. You honor the Lord when you treat people fairly; with equality.
   4. You should treat people right because you serve a Master in heaven.
   5. Application: Are you the type of leader who honors the Lord in the work place?
      1. Do you give people that which is right? Do you consider their situation?
      2. Do you treat your employees with kindness and without harshness or criticism?
      3. Do you reward their work by paying employees in a timely fashion, being considerate and generous with salaries and benefits, considering the cost of living? Or are you only focused on your own profits?
      4. Do you work to make sure they are taken care of while they take care of your work? Do you care about their families, their health, and their futures?
      5. Do you treat each employee fairly? Do you show favoritism?
      6. Do you pray for your employees?
      7. Do you communicate with your employees?
      8. Do you value your employees? Do you take all the credit?
      9. Do you listen to your employees? Do you value their input and ideas? Are you considerate of their concerns?
      10. Do you recognize them for a job well done?
7. **The workplace under this design is a wonderful place.**
   1. Where the lordship of Christ is applied, it creates an energizing cycle.
      1. Fair employers encourage cheerful employees to serve from the heart.
      2. Cheerful employees encourage fair employers to be caring and respectful.
      3. As a result, work gets accomplished.
      4. Most importantly, God is pleased and glorified.
   2. Where the lordship of Christ is not applied, it creates a crazy cycle.
      1. Without fairness, employees respond with complaint and noncompliance.
      2. Without obedience, employers respond with cruelty and without fairness.
   3. Both are responsible, regardless of the ways of the other.
      1. Employees are to render cheerful service regardless of the fairness of their employer. (1 Peter 2:18). It may mean changing jobs, but it should be done in a godly fashion.
      2. Employers are to render fair leadership, regardless of the compliance of the employee. It may mean a dismissal if the employee is defiant, but it should be done in a godly fashion.

**Conclusion**

A workplace that honors the Lord is one in which the employees cheerfully work under the authority of a caring employer. As an employee, you can’t honor the Lord without being obedient from the heart. As an employer, you can’t honor the Lord without being caring. Make up your mind to honor the Lord in your work!