



## **Ephesians 6:1-9 – As Unto The Lord**

### **Ephesians 5:22-6:9**

- A kind of “household codes” that were common among cultures of the day.
- These passages show a favourable and dignified response to three groups of people that in both Jewish and Gentile cultures were often treated as second-class and no better than property – women, children and slaves.

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*“It is Jesus Christ who treated women with courtesy and honour in an age in which they were despised. It is Jesus Christ who said ‘Let the little children come to me’ in a period of history in which unwanted babies were consigned to the local rubbish dump (as they are today to the hospital incinerator), or abandoned for anybody to pick up and rear for slavery or prostitution. And it is Jesus Christ who taught the dignity of manual labour by working himself as a carpenter, washing his disciples’ feet and saying, ‘I am among you as one who serves.’”*

John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, Leicester: Inter-varsity Press, 1979. page 90.

### **Ephesians 6:1-4**

- Children are to obey their parents (vs 1b) because:
- It is naturally right (Gk. *dikaiois* lit. just and righteous).
- It is written in the Law (vs 2 – see Ex 20:12, Deut. 5:16).
- We are ‘in the Lord’ (vs 1a) – because of Christ.
- Question – Are children *always* to obey their parents?
- John Stott advises that “obedience to parents should be the norm, and disobedience the rare exception.”
- But we must obey Jesus is forced to choose. Jesus himself told us that parents and children would be in conflict over him (Matthew 10:21, Luke 12:53).

### **Ephesians 6:5-9**

- There were perhaps over 60 million slaves in the Roman empire at the time of Paul. That is an estimated one-third of the entire population!
- Many of Jesus’ parables contain references to slaves (Mark 12:1-12; Matt 13:24-30; 18:23-35; Luke 12:42-48; Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 12:35-38; 15:11-32; 16:1-8; 17:7-10, etc.)
- Slaves and their masters were part of the church and so instructions for living were given to them (see Col 3:22-24; Eph 6:5-9; 1 Tim 6:1-2; Titus 2:9-10).

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*“The Christian slave has one goal before him: to obey his human master as an expression of his commitment to the divine Lord.”*

A. Skevington Wood, *Ephesians – The Zondervan NIV Bible Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994, page 781.

**Does The Bible Condone Slavery?**

### Slavery In the Bible

- 1) Slavery in the Roman times was not race based.
- 2) It was possible for freedom to be bought.

### Why did Paul not oppose slavery?

1. Christianity was in its infancy - minority, persecuted, little or no political influence.
2. The priority was personal and communal transformation through the proclamation and demonstration of the Gospel. It was the seed from true societal and systemic transformation.