

Freed to be a Slave (Ephesians 6:5-9)

- I. **Introduction: Slavery**
 - A. Slaves in the First Century Roman Empire and Today
 - B. Slavery and Christianity
 - C. Review of the context – Paul’s concern that the church be different
Ephesians 4:17, 5:1, 5:15, 5:22-6:9
 - D. Reading the text
 - E. Outline of sermon: The text through *three lenses*

- II. **The First Century Lens**
 - A. **Slaves** ... an integral part of the church of Jesus Christ
 - B. **Be obedient to you masters** – a surprising command
 - 1. Who would think it would be any trouble getting a slave to obey?
 - 2. Shouldn’t we rather stand up and fight against slavery?
 - a. It helps to understand what a First Century slave looks like
 - C. The *manner* of the slave’s obedience (Eph 6:5-7)
 - 1. *with fear and trembling*
 - 2. *in sincerity of heart*
 - 3. *not with eyeservice as men-pleasers*
 - 4. *with good will*
 - D. The *incentive* for the slave’s obedience (Eph 6:8)
 - E. **Masters** ...
 - 1. prohibition – *stop threatening*
 - 2. promise – *knowing your Master is in heaven*
 - 3. principle – *there is no partiality with Him*

- III. **The 21st Century Lens**
 - A. Can we really say that this applies to our employment?
 - 1. If this is true of slavery how much more must it be true of work?
 - 2. The master/slave relations of the First Century resembles our work
 - 3. 1 Peter 2:13-19 – the principles apply to all in authority
 - B. Application for employees
 - 1. do your work *as unto the Lord*
 - 2. respect and obey your employer (Pr 21:1)
 - 3. your boss is Christ so there is dignity in your vocation
 - 4. you will be rewarded
 - 5. your vocation is holy no matter what it is (1 Co 10:31, Col 3:17)
 - C. Applications for employers

- IV. **The Eternal Lens – reveals many paradoxes**
 - A. The paradox of *willing slaves*
 - B. The paradox of the freedom of slaves of Christ (Ro 6:22, 2 Co 5:15)
 - C. The paradox that Christ’s becoming a slave bought our freedom
 - D. Freedom is not doing what you like, but liking what you ought
(1 Pe 2:16)
 - E. Slavery is the central message of salvation –
If Christ is Lord, we are His *slaves*.