

Sermon or Lesson: 1 Timothy 6:1 (NIV based)
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Full Respect for Your Employer, Supervisors, And Other Authority Persons Over You

INTRO:

Probably most of you adults here have been employed during your life. What do you think about these job-related statements?

-- "It is O.K. to criticize, badmouth, and complain about the boss when he is not around."

-- "It is O.K. to harbor disrespect for the supervisor, as long as you do not let it show."

-- "Respect has to be earned. I will respect my boss when he respects me."

What does God say about how we are to treat our employers?

READ: 1 Timothy 6:1-2, with vv.5:22,24-25 for context

BACKGROUND:

-- In the previous section of verses 5:17-25, the discussion revolved around the topic pertaining to ministry leaders who direct the affairs of the church. (v.17)

-- In these next verses 6:1-2, the discussion branches from the principles described in verses 5:24-25, pertaining to the sins and the good deeds of men being obvious or hidden.

v.1 - READ

[Lesson Question: Explore and analyze any corresponding of characteristics and of relating biblical principles between being an actual slave and being an employee.]

SECTION POINT: The same biblical principles that govern how slaves are to respond to their masters are appropriate for and thereby applicable to how employees are to respond to the authority persons at their employment.

"All who are under the yoke of slavery"

-- In this verse 1, the discussion specifically addresses the life situation of being "under the yoke of slavery".

-- Even though most people in the world are technically not actual human slaves like in biblical times, in a slightly broader sense, all employees are under a similar obligation or subjection to serve their employers like a slave would his master because the employees are being paid to perform work functions as the employer orders or demands them to.

-- So, in effect, the principles designated by God here in these verses are very much applicable to modern-day employees in relation to their employers and work supervisors.

[Lesson Question: Explore and analyze characteristics that involve "full respect", and correlate any relating biblical principles to being an employee.]

SECTION POINT: By extension, God obligates us employees to have and extend full respect and honor to our employers and work supervisors, just like slaves are to do to their master (v.6:1) and church congregants are to do to their ruling elders (v.5:17).

"should consider their masters worthy of full respect"

- - "Respect" is an inner heart attitude of someone or something that is formed from thinking about one's relating circumstances, which then exerts influence on the person's speaking and actions.
 - - The Greek word used here for "respect" has the meaning of possessing and extending "honor, value, esteem, and dignity", and it is the same word that is used in verse 5:17 for how elders of the church are to be regarded and treated by the congregants, or those persons under the authority of the elders. (Strong's #5092)
 - - Essentially, God is saying that in the same way that elders who exert authority over other people in their directing the affairs of the church are worthy of honor, so too are employers who exert authority over other people in their directing the affairs of employment.
 - - And, employers are "worthy" and "deserving" of "full", "all, every, and whole" respect. (Strong's #0514, #3956)
 - - So, "all" of us employees are obligated by God to possess "full respect" for our employers, which is prevalent comprehensively in all of our thinking, speaking, and actions - all the time.
 - - We employees are to "consider", and "deem", and "esteem" them as being worthy of our full respect comprehensively. (Strong's #2233)
-

[Lesson Question: Explore and analyze characteristics and corresponding ramifications that are produced when full respect is not extended by believers to their employer and work supervisors.]

SECTION POINT: Believers witness to their faith through how they respond to the authority of their employer, work supervisors, and other authority persons who are over them.

"so that God's name and our teaching may not be slandered."

- - Even though we may have numerous credible reasons to consider our employer as not being worthy of any respect let alone full respect, God nevertheless instructs us to have full respect of our employer because God's program is directly affected by our response to our employer.
- - The reality being stated here is that we believers witness to our faith through how we behave when we are at our place of employment, particularly in regard to how we respond to the exerting of authority over us.
- - And this witnessing to our faith through our behavior at our place of employment is in addition to our behavior witnessing to our faith when we are in church. (v.5:17)

- - Specifically cited here, our behaviors at our place of employment have a direct effect upon and contribution to how other people around us develop an opinion of the God we serve.

- - Also specifically cited here, our behaviors at our place of employment have a direct effect upon and contribution to how other people around us develop an opinion of the contents of the teaching we receive and adhere to in our faith, which typically originates from the church we attend.

- - Therefore, when our behaviors contain disrespect for our employer or work supervisors, people around us are incited and provoked to "slander", or "speak impiously about, blaspheme, defame, and assail with abusive language" our God, our faith, and by extension our church. (Strong's #0987)

- - Not only are our disrespectful behaviors about our employer harmful to various aspects of our faith, but they are also counterproductive to our mission to reach people around us for Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; 5:16), thus in effect making us inadvertent agents of Satan rather than ambassadors of Christ (1 Timothy 5:14-15; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

- - At the core of our problem being highlighted here is disrespect - specifically, disrespect for those people exerting authority over us, which ultimately stems from rebellion, or being oppositional to people exerting influence and control over what we do. (Romans 13:1-7)

- - We want to be our own god over our life, self-determining what we are going to do, self-determining what is fair and right for our own self, and opposing anyone else being our master.

- - But God is telling us here to do the opposite - to intentionally allow and willingly submit to the authority and orders of our employer and work supervisors, with the overall goal of excellently modeling our faith in front of other people around us, particularly in difficult circumstances such as a stressful unjust enslavement-like work environment.

- - Logically, this directive from God pertains to other kinds of situations in which we come under someone's authority and orders (Romans 13:1-7), such as: in the school environment under teachers, professors, and school administrators; in the armed forces under commanding officers; in interactions with police and governmental compliance officers; in social organizations; in churches and ministries (1 Timothy 5:17); in one's home (Ephesians 5:22-24; 6:1); and etc.

- - If we, who are true believers, willingly respect and submit to the authority and orders of people who rule over us, we are simultaneously both actively obeying God in this regard and overtly demonstrating the credibility of our faith and by extension our church.

BIG IDEA: God instructs us believers to regard and extend full respect to our employers, supervisors, and other authority persons over us, which will then reflect positively on the credibility of our God and our faith.

APPLICATIONS:

- - Let's take a few minutes right now for you to self-analyze and self-critique your attitude and performance when you are directly under someone's authority.
- - Think about your current or most recent place of employment, or an environment in which you are regularly under someone's authority and orders.
- - Now think specifically about the persons there who exert authority over you, such as your employer, or your supervisors, or your pastor, or your church elders, or a government official.
- - Regardless of how fair or appropriate they treat you, what is the nature of your response to them? Are you or were you as compliant and accommodating as possible, with a pleasant attitude? Or are you or were you in reality somewhat oppositional and marginally compliant? Or even defiant and insubordinate? Or perhaps overtly submissive but covertly complaining, griping, and disrespectful?
- - Even though you may be mistreated or treated unfairly, in this section of verses does God give you any permission to be less than fully respectful to those persons who exert authority over you?

- - Now set aside your emotions for a few minutes and see your situation through the eyes of other people around you where you are regularly under the authoritative orders of another person. What do other people around you see about you? And what corresponding conclusions would you expect them to draw about your religion?
- - Considering that "man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart", what does God see about you when you are in these situations under the orders of authoritative persons? (1 Samuel 16:7)
- - On Judgment Day, will God "commend" you for consistently maintaining and extending full respect to persons exerting authority over you, even when they inflicted "unjust suffering" upon you (v.19 in 1 Peter 2:18-21)? Or will you be shown to have failed substantially in this regard?

- - For those of you who employ people or hold a position from which you exert authority and give orders to people under you, do you always conduct yourself and implement directives in a manner that is fair, just, appropriate, and considerate to those whom you are ordering? Or are you condescending to them? Or arrogant? Or abusive? Or mistreating? Or angry? Or accusatory? Or self-serving?
- - As a person who exerts authority and gives orders to people under you, do you make it easy for your workers to extend you full respect? Or do you in effect cultivate disrespect in them by your inappropriate words, actions, approach, or attitude?
- - What does God see about you in regard to all of the situations in which you exert authority and give orders to people under you?
- - And on Judgment Day, will God show you to be worthy of commendation? Or will you be shown to have failed substantially in this regard?

[Additional Lesson Questions to ponder (optional, if time allows):

- When we are under an authoritative person who behaves extremely sinfully and perhaps even grossly criminally, from this verse are we believers to nevertheless extend full respect to that person? Would this in effect require us to deceive ourselves into thinking that person deserves our full respect?
- - - - And are we in effect deceiving other people around us by projecting an aura of full respect around that authoritative person who clearly is behaving wickedly?

- - - Exactly how are we believers to regard and respond to wicked authoritative persons whom we are directly under?
- - - How did Jesus regard and respond to the wicked Pharisees whom He was under their authority? Is Jesus' reaction to those wicked Pharisees an example that we should follow, for example in public calling them a "brood of vipers" and "whitewashed tombs" (Matthew 3:7ff; v.27 in Matthew 23:23ff)? Or is Jesus' reaction to those wicked Pharisees something only He is allowed to do because He is God, and we are not?
- - - What if the authoritative person over us is the head pastor, behaving extremely sinfully? How are we to regard and respond to him? With full respect, honor, and esteem? Hint: see 1 Timothy 5:19-22; 6:3-5]

Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

Copyrights:

Scriptures taken from Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc®
Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Copyright © 2017 Mel W. Coddington, and permission is hereby granted that this document may be used, copied, and distributed non-commercially to non-profit organizations, individuals, churches, ministries, and schools worldwide, provided the copies are distributed at no charge and retain this sources documentation as supplied herein. This document is not for sale, resale, or for use as a gift or premium to be offered in connection with solicitations or contributions.

File name: 1Timothy6_1-SermonOrLesson.____ (.htm, .doc, .pdf)
Translation used: NIV, quoted or referred to in various places within this document
Source: www.BelieverAssist.com
Updated: December 12, 2017