

引言 INTRODUCTION

Do you enjoy your job? Will you get up tomorrow morning grumbling or rumbling? According to several studies, average Americans work 39 hours per week. If you think that is too much, you may consider moving to Europe. Some countries have a 4-day work-week and people labor no more than 30 hours total. People who really love their jobs should live in Asia. Many people work as many as 50 hours a week. Some companies in China has a 996 schedule. Employees are expected to work from 9 am to 9 pm for six days a week. That is a whopping 72 hours! Some workers feel that they are held in bondage by their bosses. Compared to that, slavery was a fact in the New Testament world. About one-third of the population in the Roman Empire were slaves. People became slaves for a few reasons. They could be captives in wars. Others who could not repay their debts sold themselves as slaves. Also, children born of slave parents had to serve the same masters. Those slaves were quite different from the African slaves in the U.S. history. Many slaves in the Roman world could be highly educated people. Some were home-tutors, accountants and even business owners. After saving enough money from their income, slaves could redeem themselves and regain freedom. As we expect, many slaves were mistreated by their masters. Remember Paul wrote this letter to a church. It is quite likely that some slaves and their masters were in the same congregation. Those slaves might wonder if being Christians would change the relationship with their masters. Paul had no intention to start a social reform and abolish slavery. Rather, he advocated for a spiritual reform when slaves and masters became believers. Paul's teaching is still relevant today. You either work under someone or you manage a team of workers. Some of you are even owners of your business. Regardless of your role, the general principle of submission applies. People should submit to leaders at work if they submit to Jesus. Ultimately, both employees and employers serve the same Lord.

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 以殷勤服事主管 Serve Your Supervisor with Diligence

First of all, Paul tells subordinates to serve their supervisors with diligence. Key words such as obey, Christ (or related titles) and heart are repeated in verses 5 to 8. We can deduce a general principle when we weave those concepts together. Employees must obey Jesus from their hearts by obeying their employers. The same Greek word for master can refer to both an owner or Lord Jesus. We see the same idea of submission carried over from the previous context. Wives should submit to their husbands as to the Lord. Children should submit to their parents as to the Lord. Likewise, workers should submit to their bosses as to the Lord.

A. 態度上殷勤 Diligent in Attitudes

Submission is marked by diligence. It begins from the heart. Therefore, Paul encourages the slaves to be diligent in their attitudes. He says in verse 5: **Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ.** By saying “fear and trembling” it does not mean you should be afraid of your boss. Paul tells us to treat our employer

with respect just like we treat Jesus. Our Lord loves us by dying for us. There should be no fear whenever we think of Him. It is true that your boss may penalize you if you make mistakes. Jesus will discipline us when we go astray too. Regardless, your supervisor and our Lord deserve honor because of their positions. In addition, Paul reminds us to obey them with a sincere heart. Bondservants should obey their masters with an undivided attention as if they were serving the Lord. Paul reiterates a similar idea in verse 7: **Rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man.** Bondservants will serve their masters with full attention if they treat their bosses like Jesus. They should do their best job eagerly. Similarly, there will be a difference whether you only want to earn a salary or to win God's favor. No one can achieve perfection. But you should always aim for excellence. I appreciate employees who truly love their jobs. One tire company deserves a lot of praise. The workers do things quickly and they are courteous. Once I went to a store for regular tire maintenance. An employee walked to my car, said my name and shook my hand. I have never received such a treatment anywhere! Every customer will love those positive attitudes. What applies to the work-place is true for church ministries. Do you do an okay job because there is no pay? Do you handle tasks with joy or grudge? Do you look for ways to improve your skills? Bear a teachable heart instead of the "don't tell me what to do" attitude. Remember that you serve the Lord by serving people. Jesus deserves the best of you.

B. 行動上殷勤 Diligent in Actions

Besides being diligent in their attitudes, bondservants must also be diligent in their actions. Positive mentality will play out in positive behaviors. In verse 6, Paul tells slaves to: **(Obey their masters) not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.** We jokingly say that some people work hard when their bosses are around, and they are hardly working when the bosses are gone. The goal of slaves should not be impressing their masters when they are watching. Lord Jesus has full knowledge of their performance at any moment. Eventually, He will compensate them. Go down to verse 8: **Knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.** Everyone who works will receive a pay, first from the earthly master, then from the Heavenly Master. The fact that God will reward us has a few implications. First, God knows it when someone steals your credit. For example, you use the results from your experiments to publish a paper. But your boss puts his name as the first author. Naturally, you get mad. God will make things right eventually. Second, God also knows it when you slack off. It is especially a strong temptation for those who work from home. Third, God understands your intent. What motivates you to work hard? Is it just about salary, your ambition to climb higher, your desire to make the world a better place or people's recognition? Ultimately, what truly matters are the comments from God. Fourth, God's job performance evaluation is always accurate. You may not help your company earn millions of dollars or come up with a revolutionary invention. The world measures you by results. But God looks for faithfulness. Fifth, God will reward you something better than a raise, a bonus or an award. What you will receive in heaven is eternal. If you set your mind right, then you will work wholeheartedly.

2. 以尊嚴對待下屬 Treat Your Subordinates with Dignity

After telling the bondservants how to deal with their masters, Paul gives his instructions to the bosses. They must treat their subordinates with dignity. Paul presents his teaching in one verse:

Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him. When Paul says “do the same” to the bondservants he is not asking the masters to serve their slaves the way they serve them. We can interpret that in light of the so-called Golden Rule Jesus taught us. The masters should treat the bondservants the way they want to be treated. Slaves are humans too. Slaves report to their masters. But both groups are ultimately accountable to God.

A. 顯出恩慈 Show Kindness

There are two principles we can derive from this verse. First, masters should treat bondservants with dignity by showing kindness to them. Paul reminds them not to threaten their slaves. Unlike today, bondservants in the first century did not enjoy any workmen’s right or even human right. The great philosopher Aristotle once described that “a slave is a living tool.” Masters could freely vent their frustration onto their slaves if they did not perform to their satisfaction. They might punish their slaves physically or withheld their food or pay. They could even get rid of the slaves as they pleased. Again, Paul was writing to members of the Ephesus church. The masters who read this letter were Christians. They should not follow the social norm and abuse their slaves. Those workers had dignity as God’s creation just like the masters did. They both share the same needs too. Bondservants could get hungry, tired and sick. They have family members to care for. Masters should reflect God’s kindness at the work-place. That reminds me of a story about a professional football player. His team holds an annual workers appreciation day. Executives give away prizes to the employees who have outstanding performance. The athletes do not have to attend the event. One player showed up at the ceremony a particular year. He even gave a speech to thank the 200 employees from ground crew to janitors. He spoke on behalf of his teammates: “We couldn’t do what we do if it weren’t for you.” I am sure it was a huge encouragement to the workers. Do not underestimate the contribution of your subordinates. Your team has success because everyone works hard. Find opportunities to thank them. Celebrate together with a lunch. Buy dinner for them if they have to work over-time. Where possible, let them take off earlier so that they can watch their kids play sport or perform in a concert. They will appreciate your kindness. More than likely, they will work harder for you.

B. 保持公平 Show Fairness

Besides showing kindness to the bondservants, masters should also show them fairness. They must do so because “there is no partiality with” the Lord. The word “partially” literally means “lifting up the face.” The same word is used in the book of James. The author warns members of the church not to show favoritism. They offered front row seats to the wealthy people. But they asked poor fellows to sit on the floor. I am sure you will receive different treatments whether you walk into a jewelry store in pajama or in formal clothes. God does not show bias because He knows our hearts. His assessment is always fair. In the Old Testament, God convicts judges in court for their partiality. Lowly and innocent people suffered when some rich guys bribed the judges. That affects the outcomes in court proceedings. Judges are supposed to be neutral. Suspects remain innocent until they are proven guilty. That is why there is a statue holding a balance and whose eyes are blindfolded outside most court-houses. Every person is handled the same way regardless of their social status. Similarly, masters should treat bondservants with fairness. They should not be nicer to those slaves who are smarter or more capable, but are harsh

toward older and weaker workers. In your work place, there are employees holding different positions. Highly-educated and experienced coworkers can be team leaders. Other colleagues do simpler tasks. By fairness, it does not mean everyone should get the same wage. That actually is not fair! Rather, it means they should receive the right compensation that matches their work. There should not be any discrimination toward people of different races or genders. Also, all employees should be recognized for their effort. A company I worked at before gives awards to people who are with the firm for multiples of five years. For example, whether a manager or a janitor who is hired for ten years will get the same gift. That is fairness.

結論 CONCLUSION

Both employees and employers serve the same Lord. He will give us an assessment when we see Him in glory. While we are still working in this world, we should do our best. Workers should serve their bosses like serving Lord Jesus. Supervisors should treat their subordinates the way they want the Lord to deal with them. Most people spend a lot of effort in their jobs. After all, the quality of our life depends on our income. Besides sleeping, we invest a big portion of our lives working. Perhaps that is the reason why a job is also called an occupation. Our work does not only occupy our time, it also occupies our mind. But what actually fills our schedule should not be just duties, projects and reports. God should occupy our hearts every moment. The company you work for hires you. But it is God who puts you there to represent Him. It is interesting that work is also called a profession. Whether you work in a lab, an office or a kitchen, you profess to people that you are a follower of Jesus. You show loyalty to the Lord by showing loyalty to your company. If you only focus on the salary, you will hop to a different position that pays you more. If you only pay attention to the so-called job satisfaction, you may stop working after you have achieved enough. However, if you see your job as a way to witness for Jesus, then you will find joy regardless of your duties. Once a man passed by a construction site. He saw some workers chiseling stones. He asked the first man: "Mister, what are you doing?" The guy replied: "I am cutting rocks for \$15 an hour." He presented the same question to the second workman. He answered: "I work eight hours a day to feed my family." But the third said say: "I help build a beautiful church for the Lord." Your perspective will be very different whether you focus on what you do, why you do it versus for whom you do it. Do not let your job title defines you. Let Jesus defines who you are.

引言 INTRODUCTION

你喜歡你的工作嗎？你明天早上起來時會抱怨或是覺得興奮嗎？根據一些調查，美國人平均每週工作 39 小時。如果你認為這太多了，你可以考慮搬到歐洲。有些國家每週只工作 4 天，人們的總工作時間不超過 30 小時。真正熱愛自己工作的人應該在亞洲生活。許多人每週工作長達 50 小時。有些公司在中國實行 996 工作制。員工每天從上午 9 點至晚上 9 點上班，每週工作六天。總共是 72 小時！有些工人覺得自己受到了老闆的壓迫。相比之下，奴隸制度在新約世界中是一個事實。羅馬帝國約有三分之一的人口是奴隸。人們因為幾個原因成為奴隸。他們可能是戰爭中的俘虜。有些人無力償還債務而賣身為奴隸。此外，奴隸父母所生的孩子必須服事同一個主人。這些奴隸與美國歷史上的黑奴有很大的分別。羅馬世界的許多奴隸可能是受過高等教育的人。他們成為家庭教師、會計師，甚至自己做生意。當奴隸從收入中存了足夠的錢之後，他們便可以贖身並重獲自由。我們可以想像，很多奴隸都受到了主人的虐待。請記住保羅寫這封信給一間教會。一些奴隸和他們的主人可能是同一個教會的成員。那些奴隸可能想成為基督徒之後會否改變與主人的關係。保羅無意改革社會並廢除奴隸制度。他乃是主張奴隸和主人進行屬靈改革。保羅的教導在今天仍然實用。你也許是在主管手下工作，或者是監督一個團隊。我們中間有些人是自己生意的老闆。無論你的角色如何，順服這個基本原則都適用。如果員工順服耶穌，他們也必須順服主管。畢竟雇員和雇主都是事奉同一位主。

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 以殷勤服事主管 Serve Your Supervisor with Diligence

首先，保羅告訴下屬要殷勤地服事主管。聽從、基督（或相關的稱呼）和心這些關鍵詞在第 5 至 8 節中重複出現。雇員必須透過順服雇主來表達他們從心裡順服耶穌。希臘文中「主」這個字可以指老闆，或是指主耶穌。保羅從上文延伸了順服這個概念。妻子應該順服丈夫，如同順服主。兒女應該順服父母，如同順服主。同樣，工人也應該順服老闆，如同順服主一樣。

A. 態度上殷勤 Diligent in Attitudes

順服的一個標記是殷勤。這種態度是從心開始的。因此，保羅鼓勵奴隸在態度上要殷勤。他在第 5 節說：**你們作僕人的，要懼怕戰兢，用誠實的心聽從你們肉身的主人，好像聽從基督一般。**「懼怕戰兢」並不意味著你應該害怕你的老闆。保羅的意思是我們要尊敬雇主，就像我們對待耶穌一樣。主耶穌愛我們，為我們而死。每當我們想到祂時，都不應該感到恐懼。當然，如果你犯錯，你的老闆可能會懲罰你。當我們偏行己路時，耶穌也會管教我們。無論如何，你的主管和主耶穌因著他們的身份值得尊敬。此外，保羅提醒我們要真誠地順服他們。僕人應該全心全意地順服主人，就像事奉主耶穌一樣。保羅在第 7 節重申了類似的提醒：**甘心事奉，好像服事主，不像服事人。**如果僕人看待老闆如同耶穌一樣，他們便會全心全意地服事主人。他們應該積極地盡自己的本份。同樣的，你只是想賺工資還是想得到神的稱讚，兩者肯定會有差別。沒有人能夠達到完美，但你應該追求卓越。我欣賞真正熱愛自己工作的員工。一家輪胎公司值得特別的表揚。它們的員工很有禮貌，而且他們做事超快。有一次我去店子定期保養輪胎。一名員工走到我的車前，叫我的名字並與我握手。我從來沒有在其他商店受到過同樣的待遇！任何顧客都會欣賞這種態度。在工作場所的表現也適用於教會事奉。你會不會因為沒有薪水而隨便事奉？你的內心是充滿喜樂還是充滿埋怨？你會否不斷改進你的技巧？求主幫助你保持一顆受教的心，而不是懷著「別告訴我該怎麼做」的態度。請記住，你是透過服事人來服事主的。耶穌配得你最好的表現。

B. 行動上殷勤 Diligent in Actions

僕人除了在態度上殷勤之外，在行動上也必須殷勤。積極的心態會反映在積極的行為上。在第 6 節中，保羅告訴奴隸：**不要只在眼前事奉，像是討人喜歡的，要像基督的僕人，從心裡遵行神的旨意。**我們有時候開玩笑說，有些人是老闆在場時便努力工作，老闆不在的時候就努力偷懶。奴隸的目標不應該是主人在觀察時取悅他們。主耶穌任何時候都知道他們的表現。最終，主會獎賞他們。請看第 8 節：**因為曉得各人所行的善事，不論是為奴的，是自主的，都必按所行的得主的賞賜。**每個工人都會得到報酬，首先來自世上的老闆，然後來自天上的老闆。神會獎賞我們這個事實有幾重含義。首先，如果有人偷了你的功勞，神是知道的。例如，你用自己的實驗結果發表文章，但老闆把他的名字放在最前面。你自然會生氣。要記住神最終會回報你的努力。第二，你偷懶的時候神也知道。對於那些在家工作的人來說，偷懶是一個強烈的試探。第三，神知道你做事的動機。什麼因素是你的推動力？是薪水、爬更高的野心、希望世界變得更美好的願望還是別人的讚賞？最終，真正重要的是神給的分數。第四，神對工作表現的評價是最準確的。你可能沒有幫助公司賺取數百萬元或貢獻偉大的發明。世界用結果來衡量你，但是神要求的是我們的忠心。第五，

神的獎賞比加薪、獎金或獎座更好。你在天堂所得到的賞賜是永恆的。如果你的心態正確，那麼你就會全心全意地工作。

2. 以尊嚴對待下屬 Treat Your Subordinates with Dignity

保羅告訴僕人如何與主人相處後，他向老闆們發出指示。他們必須以尊嚴對待下屬。保羅用一節經文提出他的教導：**你們作主人的，待僕人也是一理，不要威嚇他們。因為知道，他們和你們同有一位主在天上；他並不偏待人。**當保羅說「一理」時，他並不是要求主人要像奴隸服事他們那樣去服事自己的奴隸。我們可以根據耶穌教導我們的黃金法則來理解這一點。主人希望僕人怎樣對待他們，他們便應該用同樣的態度對待僕人。他們要記住奴隸也是人。奴隸向主人報告。但這兩批人最終都要向神交帳。

A. 顯出恩慈 Show Kindness

我們可以從這節經文得出兩個原則。首先，主人應該以尊嚴對待僕人，並表現出恩慈。保羅提醒他們不要威嚇奴隸。與今天不同，第一世紀的奴僕沒有勞工權利，甚至沒有人權。偉大的哲學家亞里斯多德曾說：「奴隸只是活的工具」。如果奴隸的表現不如人意，主人可以隨意向奴隸發洩不滿。主人可能會處罰奴隸或扣起他們的食物或工價。他們甚至可以處決奴隸。保羅是寫信給以弗所教會的成員。讀這封信的主人可能都是基督徒。他們不應該依循社會規範虐待他們的奴隸。那些僕人和主人一樣，有神創造的尊嚴。他們也有相同的需要。奴僕也會飢餓、疲倦和生病。他們也需要照顧家人。主人應該在工作場所表現出神的恩慈。這讓我想起一個職業球員的故事。他的球隊每年舉辦一次員工感謝日。行政人員會頒獎給表現優異的員工。球員無需出席那個活動。某一年，一名球員出現在典禮上。他甚至發表講話，感謝從打理草坪到清潔的 200 名員工。他代表隊友發言：「如果沒有你們的協助，我們根本無法比賽。」相信這對工人們來說是一個很大的鼓勵。不要低估下屬的貢獻。你的團隊之所以成功，是因為每個人都努力工作。找機會感謝他們。一起吃午餐慶祝。如果他們要加班，你可以幫他們買晚餐。如果可能，讓他們早一點下班，讓他們去看孩子打球或在表演音樂。他們肯定會感激你的恩慈。說不定他們會更加拼命地為你工作。

B. 保持公平 Show Fairness

主人除了要對僕人顯出恩慈之外，還要對他們保持公平。他們必須這樣做，因為主「不偏待人」。「偏待人」這個字的意思是「看人臉色」。雅各書中也使用了

同樣的字。作者提醒教會成員不可以偏心。他們讓有錢人坐在前排，但他們要求窮人坐在地上。就像如果你穿著睡衣還是穿著禮服走進珠寶店，肯定會受到不同的待遇。神不會有偏見，因為祂知道我們的心。祂對我們的評價總是公平的。在舊約中，神責備一些法官偏私。當有些有錢人賄賂法官時，無辜的窮人們便會被欺負。這會影響法庭判決的結果。法官必須保持中立。嫌疑犯在被證明有罪之前應該是無辜的。因此大多數法院外面都有一座拿著天平、眼睛被蒙住的雕像。無論社會地位如何，每個人都會受到相同的對待。同樣，主人也應該公平地對待僕人。他們不應該對那些比較聰明、有辦事能力的奴隸更好，而對年長和體弱的工人嚴厲。在你的工作場所，有不同職位的員工。受過高等教育、經驗豐富的同事可能是主管。其他同事則執行較簡單的職務。公平當然並不等於每個人得到相同的工資。這其實是不公平！公平的意思是他們應該獲得與其工作相符的報酬。不應該對不同種族或性別的人有任何歧視。另外，所有員工的努力都應該得到認可。我以前工作過的一家公司頒發獎勵給每工作五年的員工。例如，無論是經理還是清潔工，工作十年的人都會得到同樣的禮物。這就是公平。

結論 CONCLUSION

雇員和雇主都是事奉同一位主。當我們在榮耀裡見主面時，祂會給我們每個人評價。當我們還在這個世界工作的時候，我們就應該全力以赴。工人應該像事奉主耶穌一樣事奉老闆。主管應該按照主對待他們的方式來對待自己的下屬。大多數人在工作上付出大量的心力。畢竟，我們的生活素質取決於我們的收入。除了睡覺之外，我們將大部分時間投入工作。也許這就是工作也被稱為「佔據」(occupation)的原因。我們的工作不僅佔據了我們的時間，也佔據了我們的心思。但真正佔據我們時間表的不應該只是任務、項目和報告。神應該完全佔據我們的心。你工作的公司聘請你，但其實是神放你在那個崗位作祂的代表。有趣的是，工作也被稱為「宣告」(profession)。無論你是在實驗室、辦公室或廚房工作，你都是向人們宣告你是耶穌的跟隨者。你透過對公司的忠誠來表現出你對主的忠誠。如果你只專注在薪水，你就會跳槽到一個薪水更高的職位。如果你只注重所謂的滿足感，當你獲得足夠的成就之後便會停止工作。然而，如果你將工作視為見證耶穌作的方式，那麼無論你擔任什麼職位，你都能找到喜樂。有一次，一個人經過一個建築工地，他看到一些工人在鑿石頭。他問第一個人：「先生，你在做什麼？」那個人回答：「我正在切割石頭，每小時賺 15 美元。」他向第二個工人提出同樣的問題。他回答說：「我每天工作八小時來養家糊口。」但第三個人說：「我正在為主建造一座美麗的教堂。」你把重心放在做什麼、為何那樣做，和為誰而做，你的心態便會不一樣。不要讓你的頭銜定義你是誰，讓耶穌來定義你是誰。