

# THE PASTORAL EPISTLES: GOD'S DIRECTIVES FOR HIS UNDERSHEPHERDS

## I. 1 Timothy: Basic Local Church Ministry

### N. The Biblical Attitude Of Employees In The Workplace (1 Timothy 6:1-2)

#### I. Introduction

- A. In view of reports of great needs and problems in various churches, much of which has been produced by church leaders themselves, we view the Pastoral Epistles, handbooks on local pastoral ministry.
- B. One of the great needs in today's churches is to establish a godly attitude toward employment and employers, for we as a nation have shifted away from viewing labor as an honorable pursuit even to the point of demanding that employers grant more and more benefits to workers as if this were the employers' obligation.
- C. 1 Timothy 6:1-2 provides a very different view of employment, one we do well to heed (as follows):

#### II. The Biblical Attitude Of Employees In The Workplace, 1 Timothy 6:1-2.

- A. Though slavery has been outlawed in many nations today, in a general sense, the relationship between a master and his slave in the institution of slavery applies to the relationship of an employer and his employee.
- B. Thus, what Paul taught about the right attitude of slaves to their masters as applied of the attitude of employees toward their employers presents a contrasting view to what occurs in today's world, 1 Tim. 6:1-2:
  - 1. Paul directed that believer employees give complete respect to their unsaved employers, 1 Timothy 6:1:
    - a. Those *who* are employees in a business realm are responsible before the Lord to "think, consider, regard" (*hegeomai*, Arndt & Gingrich, *A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T.*, 1967, p. 344) their own employers as deserving (*haxios*, *Ibid.*, p. 77) of all honor, 1 Timothy 6:1a ESV.
    - b. The verb rendered "think, consider, regard" is in the present imperative tense (*hegeisthosan*, *U. B. S. Grk. N. T.*, 1966, p. 727; *The Analyt. Grk. Lex.*, 1972, p. 184), meaning the employee should always be regarding his employer as being worthy of all honor in the role of being the employer.
    - c. Paul's **reason** for this admonition is that the employee is obliged before God to do his part in not giving room for the unsaved employer to "revile" (*blasphemeno*, *Ibid.*, Arndt & Gingrich, p. 142) the name of God or Christian teachings, that the testimony of Biblical Christianity be supported, 1 Timothy 6:1b.
    - d. Accordingly, the unsaved employer may not be essentially honorable in his personal life or even in his actions as the employer or business owner, but regardless of that fact, the Christian employee has a higher calling than just his function as an employee, that of being a testimony of his faith by his workmanship and especially by his attitude toward his employer as his employer!
    - e. Incidentally, Psalm 62:11-12 promises a divine reward for functioning well in one's workmanship in a job, so the believer actually works for God as his Supreme Employer above the current human employer, further requiring the believer to treat his earthly, unsaved employer with respect in his employer role.
  - 2. Paul directed employees who are believers to give enhanced service to believing employers, 1 Tim. 6:2:
    - a. Having mentioned the arrangement where believers work for unsaved employers in 1 Timothy 6:1, Paul shifted his focus to address believers who were working for saved employers, 1 Timothy 6:2a.
    - b. Paul directed believing employees not to "look down on, despise, scorn, treat with contempt" (*kataphroneo*, *Ibid.*, p. 421) employers who were fellow believers in Christ, not to take advantage of the fact that because they were believers and were thus obliged by God to treat their employees respectfully (cf. Ephesians 6:9) so as to lessen their respect or service to the believing employer, 1 Timothy 6:2a.
    - c. Instead, employees must "to a greater degree" (*mallon*, *Ibid.*, p. 490; *Ibid.*, *U. B. S. Grk. N. T.*, p. 728) "perform the duties of a slave, serve, obey" (*douleuo*, *Ibid.*, Arndt & Gingrich, p. 204) to and for their believing employers, 1 Timothy 6:2b.
    - d. Paul clarified that the reasons for their extra work for a believing overseer is twofold: (i) first, one must realize that his employer is a beloved brother who deserves such extra work and (ii) second, his beloved brother as an overseer materially benefits from the employee's extra effort on the job, 1 Tim. 6:2c ESV.

***Lesson:*** *Believers in Christ who are employees in the workplace must protect the testimony of the Christian faith by always regarding their unsaved employers with respect, what God rewards, and they must work even harder for believing employers since they are beloved brothers and they are blessed as brothers by such extra work effort.*

***Application:*** *May we believing employees in the workplace always respect our unsaved employers, and may we work extra hard for believing employers as beloved brethren who materially benefit the more from our extra effort.*