

COLOSSIANS: STABILITY BY CHRIST'S ALL-SUFFICIENCY AND SUPREMACY

Part XV: Stability In Heeding God's Callings In The Workplace

(Colossians 3:22-4:1)

I. Introduction

- A. Today's unsettling, insecure world has led many believers to become unsettled and insecure, so in contrast to today's world, we believers need to focus on the stability and security we possess in our Lord.
- B. Colossians presents Christ's all-sufficiency and supremacy in ways that settle and provide security, and one way it does is teaching a believer's stability by heeding God's callings in the workplace in Colossians 3:18-4:1.
- C. Globalization and the rise in government regulations has greatly affected stability in today's job markets, exposing a great need for the instruction of this passage, so we view Colossians 3:18-4:1 for our insight:

II. Stability In Heeding God's Callings In The Workplace, Colossians 3:22-4:1.

- A. Paul's address to "slaves" and "masters" in Colossians 3:22-4:1 alludes to the institution of slavery, but since that institution involved an economic relationship, it has application to functions in today's workplaces.
- B. Thus, Paul told (slaves or) employees to heed God's calling in their role for workplace stability, Col. 3:22-25:
 1. Employees must obey their overseers in the workplace in all things related to the workplace, Col. 3:22a. Paul carefully qualified these overseers to be overseers "according to the flesh," for only Christ is the Master of one's *spirit*, Bible Know. Com. N. T., p. 683. Thus, the employee is required of God to submit to the orders of their overseers in the workplace as it relates to the workplace, not to his Christian faith!
 2. Employees must submit to their workplace overseers not only when their overseers are watching them so as to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart regardless if the overseers are watching or not watching, for employees are ultimately accountable to the Lord for their work in the workplace, Colossians 3:22b.
 3. In truth, an employee works for God, so God reimburses him according to his workmanship, Col. 3:23-25:
 - a. Paul charged employees to perform whatever their work assignment was with all their heart as to the Lord and not just to the overseer in the workplace, Colossians 3:23.
 - b. His reason is revealing: God rewards the employee for his workmanship, ultimately doing so at the judgment seat of Christ, Colossians 3:24 with 1 Corinthians 3:13-14.
 - c. However, Psalm 62:10-12 teaches God rewards a man in this life according to his workmanship, that one should not trust in oppression or robbery, but work as unto God for His temporal rewards in this life!
 - d. Conversely, God impartially punishes the employee who practices what is wrong in the workplace, working only to please his overseer when the overseer is looking versus working with all of his heart in a sense of accountability to the Lord, Colossians 3:25.
- C. Similarly, Paul told (masters or) overseers to heed God's calling for their role for workplace stability, Col. 4:1:
 1. Having addressed the employee in the subordinate role first, Paul then turned to the workplace overseer, directing him to "give deliberate care" for the employee with what is "right" (*dikaion*) and "equitable" (*isoteta*), Colossians 4:1; *Ibid.*, p. 684.
 2. The motivation for this directive is the overseer's awareness that he also is accountable to the Lord in heaven for how he functions in the workplace on the earth as an overseer, Colossians 4:1b.
 3. Since Paul had clarified how God is also the Master over believing employees in Colossians 3:23-25, we apply that same passage to workplace overseers to understand God's oversight of overseers (as follows):
 - a. Overseers in the workplace are to perform their duties with all their hearts as accountable unto the Lord and not to function toward subordinates as those who are subject just to themselves. (Colossians 3:23)
 - b. The reason for this directive is that God rewards the overseer for his workmanship, ultimately doing so at the end of this life at the judgment seat of Christ (1 Cor. 3:13-14) but also in this life. (Psa. 62:10-12)
 - c. Conversely, God impartially punishes the overseer who wrongly mistreats his subordinates instead of treating them righteously and equitably in accountability to the Lord, Colossians 3:24-25.

Lesson: For stability in the workplace, believing employees must submit to their overseers in matters related to the job with full motivation as unto the Lord, realizing they are ultimately accountable to God for their workmanship, and workplace overseers and employers must give deliberate care for their subordinates, doing what is right and equitable to them in accountability to the Lord, realizing they are ultimately accountable unto God in their role.

Application: May we as believing employees or as believing overseers or employers in the workplace recall that God is watching how we perform there and that He holds us accountable to Him for how we function on the job.