

Lake Cities Community Church  
Pastor Craig Schill  
Series: Take the Next Step. Book of Titus.  
February 10, 20008

**In Everything! (Paul's message to slaves)**  
**Titus 2:9-10**

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**Introduction: Children's Chores**

To introduce today's sermon, I want to invite the children to come forward. Hi kids! How many of you have chores that you do at home? Do you think there might be some new chores, now that we are meeting in this building? Yes! Now, I want to play a game called "Guess the Chore." I show you an object, and you tell me which chore it represents. OK?

- Dirty Dish – cleaning the dishes.
- Laundry Soap – doing laundry
- Toilet brush – cleaning the bathroom
- Misc. toys and books – Clean your room
- Garbage Can (with trash)
- Bag with dog poop – Walking the dog.

Now, I am wondering - About how many chores do you have each week? One? Two? Six? Ten? Wow – and if your Mom has given you ten things to do each week, how many do you have to do to make her happy? Two? Three? Oh – really? All 10? Yes, if your parents give you different jobs to do, they want you to obey in all of those things! And how often does God want us to obey Him? Yes that is right – all the time! Thanks for helping me to introduce our sermon today.

We all have chores – don't we? Kids have chore-charts on their bedrooms door. Adults have tasks at work and "to-do" lists at home. We all have responsibilities – some that we love, others that we don't mind so much, and a few that we dread. How are you doing with your chores? Do you get them done quickly, or do you put the distasteful ones off? Do you grumble, or have a good attitude? Does God even care about such things?

If you have your Bibles, please take them and turn to Titus chapter two. We are in our third week in this section of this book where Paul is instructing the church on how to be the church. He is not talking about church size, or methods for church growth. He does not give a workshop on how to handle the church finances or what types of songs they should sing. Rather, Paul is concerned that the church be *a place of godly behavior*: self-control, kindness, purity, full of good deeds. Paul has taught this to older men and women, younger men and women, and now he turns his attention to a category from which many people were turning to Christ – to slaves.

Titus 2:9 Slaves are to be subject to their own masters in everything, to do what is wanted and not talk back, Titus 2:10 not pilfering, but showing all good faith, in order to bring credit to the teaching of God our Savior in everything.

### **Big Picture: "In Everything"**

Let's begin, as we did last week, by noticing the big picture. Many of you know that when you study the Bible, you pay attention to what is repeated – because the author will repeat words he wishes to emphasize. In our passage this morning one Greek word is repeated three times - that word is *pas* which means "everything, all, with totality". Notice: Slaves, obey your master's *in everything (pas)* (9). Slaves, show *all (pas) good faith* – or be trustworthy, in

everything (10). Why? so that – here is our theological big picture again – in order to **bring credit** (that is to draw attention to – to adorn or make beautiful) **to the teaching of God our Savior – in everything (pas)!**

Why does *Paul emphasize everything*? Paul did not have to emphasize this did he? He could have just said, “Be subject to your masters,” “be trustworthy,” “bring credit to the teaching of God.” Why - in everything, in everything, in everything?

Paul is making this theological point – that applies not only to slaves of the first century, but to you and I today **“For God to get 100% of the glory, He must have 100% of our obedience.”** God is not satisfied to have your obedience some of the time – *he wants everything!*

To understand this from God’s viewpoint think about the bagging system at Walmart. The circular bags that spin – it is sometimes easy to miss a bag – do you know what I mean? Have you ever left a bag on that rack. You get home and you are like – “Where is the ground beef? Where is the chicken soup? I left it on the rack!” How many of you will drive back to Walmart to get that sack of food? Sometimes, I ask: “Is it worth it to go to all that trouble for a pound of beef?” But Tammy’s logic is infallible and it is theological. She says to me, “I paid for all of it and I will have all of it!” *Friends, God has paid for all of your life* – with the death of Christ – and he will not leave you spinning on the rack – He wants all of you!

Christ told the Rich Young Man to *sell it all* and follow him! Paul said – present your bodies as a living sacrifice – you put the whole animal on that altar! Jesus said to the church in Laodicea: Because you are neither hot nor cold – but lukewarm and so I will spit you out of my mouth.

You cannot be a Christian and be comfortable with half-hearted Christianity. Jesus, the Prophets, the Apostles all push us toward total commitment. “In everything,” Paul says – you are to live for Christ. No matter how hard, or how difficult - even if you are a slave.

Let’s pause here for some early application. Kids – if your parents give you 5 chores to do – do all five! Much of how you please the Lord, as a child, or youth, is in how you respond to your parents. Adults – if you have five things to do at work, and dislike two of them – do all five anyway! If God expected slaves to be obedient to all things – you and I have it relatively easy. And everyone – consider – God wants 100% of your life and devotion. Will you give that to Him? He will not force it from you – you have to surrender it to Him.

### **A Word About Slavery**

If there was a group of people who would have a good reason not to obey in everything it would be a slave, don’t you think? If I were a slave, I would think I would do as little as I had to, to get by, and even then, with a sour attitude. Paul has quite a different message to slaves.

But let’s back-up a minute. When you read about slavery in the Bible – does that disturb you? What in the world are we to make of this? People during the Civil War used passages like this to justify slavery. We need some careful thinking here. When Paul or other NT writers speak of slavery it *does not* mean that they endorse or condone it. Like Polygamy in the Old Testament, slavery in the New Testament was a reality of the culture that could not be ignored. However, neither Polygamy nor slavery are ever given a theological justification in Scripture. That is an important point. Contrast that, for example, with roles of men and women in the church and in the family that we looked at last week? Can those role be dismissed? No – because they are developed theologically – they are endorsed and established by God. No such theological justification is ever give to slavery.

Slavery is an offense to God – there is no Scriptural basis for one person enslaving another. While some have incorrectly used the *descriptions* of slavery in the Bible to justify its practices, many more used the broader theological teachings about the dignity of humanity to fight slavery. This quote is from a letter from John Wesley – the found of the Methodist church to William Wilberforce who fought for 40 years to end slavery in the UK, and eventually succeeded. This was written 6 days before Wesley’s death: “Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of God and devils. But if God be for you, who can be against you? Are all of them stronger than God? O be not weary of well doing! Go on, in the name of God in the power of His might, till even American slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish away before it. - John Wesley to William Wilberforce, February 24, 1791 six days before Wesley’s death.

### **Three Commands to Slaves**

Let’s turn our attention now to the three specific commands given to slaves in this passage. While slavery is itself a horrible institution – even there the gospel of Christ makes a difference.

1) First, Paul says, “**Be subject to your master’s in everything.**” We have stressed this point already, but here I would like to add one caveat. Does Paul really mean “in everything?” Not necessarily. There is a higher authority to whom we are accountable. And if a master, or in your case, a boss, or even a parent, asked you to do something immoral or sinful, only in that situation, can you refuse in order to obey a higher authority.

When I worked at Northern Arizona University I was asked twice to do something that was clearly wrong. I was responsible to track performance reviews of the employees – and to make sure they were done on time. Yearly, a report was generated as to appraisals that were

“late” – this list went to the Vice President in each area, so they could hold the department directors accountable. My boss was the department director and she was late with her evaluations. So she came to me and said, “Craig I want you to take our department off that list – don’t worry, I’ll catch up and we will get them turned in.” I knew it was wrong but I felt stuck and I did it - I took our name off the list so she would not get in trouble.

In retrospect I regret that – because it was displeasing to the Lord. That did not bring glory to God, but shame. The next year, my boss was even further behind and she came and asked for the same thing. But this time, I said “no”. I would not do it. I went to the Assistant Director and got help in responding to my boss with respect yet firm conviction. I learned an important lesson - obey my boss in everything – but not if it caused me to compromise my values or morals. Sometimes, you, as a Christian, must make difficult choices in the workplace – and those can have significant consequences.

The second command to slaves is: **“Don’t talk Back”** That means don’t speak against your boss or your parents, or your pastor. Don’t contradict them. Don’t verbally oppose the authority figure. Practice self-control over your tongue – and Paul is not saying silently steam and simmer – not just bite your tongue; but rather, learn to do your work with a good attitude.

In the workplace, or in the family, or in the church there is a place for discussion and healthy debate, but once the decision is made and the course is set – get one board – get behind it – don’t be one who drags their feet.

The third command is to **“not Steal.”** Don’t take things that don’t belong to you. It was a major issue with slaves that they would steal incidental items – usually not big things – but little things, here and there, because they had the opportunity to do so. This practice continues

today in businesses all over the country. One article I read suggested there are five common ways that people steal at the workplace:

- 1) Making personal copies
- 2) Personal use of fax / phone
- 3) Long breaks / lunches
- 4) Taking office supplies
- 5) Surfing the web / personal errands.

Now, I do not want to be legalistic, there is flexibility in the many workplaces concerning some of these things. The retail industry estimates that employees steal 1 Billion dollars from them each week, and that is the cause of 1/3 of all bankruptcies. It is estimated that employees, for example, steal \$50 Billion a year in stolen office supplies.

The point is that it is easy to justify stealing, to where we don't even think about it. Chuck Swindoll in his last year as seminary president addressed the student body at DTS and said, "We have installed new security camera in the bookstore. Do you know why? Because we are learned that seminary students steal." Paul says "no - be trustworthy in everything!" What a testimony to God that the Spirit has so transformed a person, so that a secular boss can say, "I can trust her or him with anything."

### **Conclusion:**

What I hope you will remember from our passage today is the big picture. **For God to get 100% of the glory, he must have 100% of our obedience.** In everything, men and women, boys and girls. Be faithful to God. Obey His commands. There are things you love to do for the Lord, that is great – what a blessing to do those things. There are things you are OK with – get

them done. There are things you know that you are called to do – but you don't want to do them – remember this week. In everything. In everything. In everything obey the Lord, so that all the glory will go to Him. Let's pray.