

FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP

BIBLE TEXT : **I Timothy 6:1, 2; Ephesians 6:5-9; Romans 13:1-8.**

LESSON 358 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Colossians 3:23)..

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

1 Timothy 6:1-2

¹ Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and *his* doctrine be not blasphemed.

² And they that have believing masters, let them not despise *them*, because they are brethren; but rather do *them* service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

Ephesians 6:5-9

⁵ Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

⁶ Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

⁷ With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

⁸ Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.

⁹ And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Romans 13:1-8

¹ Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

² Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

³ For rulers are not a terror to

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

Loving God

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Matthew 22:37, 38).

There are many people in the world who are not Christians yet feel that they should love God. They say that they do. Every man is born with a desire in himself to worship something, to love someone greater than himself. Those who do not know about the true God often worship idols.

But many times the people who go through much form and ceremony to worship God, do not connect their worship with their everyday living among other people. Jesus did say that we must love the Lord God with all our heart, and that that was the first and great commandment. But that was not the only commandment.

Loving Your Neighbour

Jesus added to that first commandment: "And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:39). People may say that they love the Lord, and we might not be able to prove that they do not. But we can tell very quickly whether a person loves his neighbour or not. A neighbour can mean anyone with whom we might become associated. A lawyer asked Jesus one time, "Who is my neighbour?" Jesus told him the story of the Good Samaritan. A man had fallen among thieves and had been badly mistreated. As he lay beside the road, a priest passed by. He was supposed to be God's representative on earth. He should have shown love for the injured man as Jesus would have. But the priest was too important in his own eyes to help the helpless man. The Levite who passed by next was also connected with the Temple worship. Among his duties should have been the care of the sick and afflicted. So he should have helped the man even if he had no love for him. But he also passed by "on the other side."

Later a Samaritan came by who did not claim to have religion such as the priest and Levite had, but he had love in his heart for the man in trouble, and he helped him.

After Jesus had told the story, He asked the lawyer: "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?" (Luke 10:36). Anyone could answer that question. Just so, any one who needs our help becomes our neighbour.

We might even call those of our own family our neighbours. Almost all mothers hear that their children are better behaved in the homes of friends than they are in their own home. Children are likely to think that they do not have to be kind and thoughtful of their own brothers and sisters. But if we have the love of Jesus in our heart, we will love everybody.

The Spirit told the Apostle John to write: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (John 4:20). If we learn in the home to have

good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

⁴ For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil.

⁵ Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

⁶ For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

⁷ Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

⁸ Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

respect for one another it will not be hard to have respect for others outside the home; and we will obey the just laws of the land, too. We are told: "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" (Romans 13:7). Our nation, states, and cities have laws which are made for the benefit of the citizens; and in order for so many people to live together happily, those laws must be obeyed. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Romans 13:1).

Duties of Employees

The people among whom we work become our neighbours, too. We must treat them in such a way that they will know that we are the children of God. The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy: "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit" (I Timothy 6:1, 2).

We may not consider ourselves servants, but if we are working for someone, we must give him the full service for which he is paying us. Sometimes an employer may be unreasonable and hard to work for. Even that is no excuse for not giving him a full day's labour for a day's pay. Peter wrote: "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully" (I Peter 2:18, 19). We will receive a much greater reward in Heaven for things for which we have suffered here, seemingly receiving no reward — not even a "Thank you" — than we will for the things that have brought us rewards on earth.

Jesus said: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 6:1). For anything we do, if we do it for man's applause, we have our reward here. Let us work for Jesus, quietly, perhaps unseen, so that we may have treasures in Heaven.

As unto the Lord

Many times it is hard for a person who is working for someone else to feel that he is doing it as unto the Lord. When Paul wrote to the Ephesians, he said: "Be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; . . . with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" (Ephesians 6:5-7). God is watching everything we do. He sees the hard places we have to go through, and has promised never to leave us nor forsake us; and He will reward our good works if they are done as unto Him.

When Paul wrote to the Galatians, he said: "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." He added also: "Let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:9, 10).

Some think that because they work for someone in the church, they do not have to work so hard as they would for a stranger. But we are always to conduct ourselves in an honest, businesslike way. The Apostle Paul beseeches the Christians to be "not slothful in business" (Romans 12:11). We will keep our friends much longer if we respect their rights, and we will also have the blessing of God upon us.

God also has a word for the employers. "Masters, give unto

your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven" (Colossians 4:1). The unjust employer will suffer for his wrongdoing in the time of judgment (James 5:1-6).

The Golden Rule

When Jesus gave us what we call the Golden Rule, He said: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matthew 7:12). He said "men," which includes all people -- men, women, and children -- all nationalities, saints and sinners.

It has been said that all the trouble in the world would be cleared up in one day if everybody started out some morning to live by the Golden Rule. There would be no more greed for power, no more mistreating others in order to get favour for oneself. The rich would not oppress the poor; the employer would not overwork the employee; the employee would give his employer all that is due to him, and more if he could. Brothers and sisters would not fight; husbands and wives would treat each other with love and respect. There would be no more separation and divorce, no unloved children. Would it not be a happy world? That is the kind of world Jesus would like us to live in. That is why He has given us these rules for living.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the first and great commandment?
2. What is the second, which is like unto it?
3. Tell the story of the Good Samaritan.
4. Why was the Samaritan a good neighbour?
5. What did God call the person who says he loves God but does not love his neighbour or brother?
6. How are we to treat the people for whom we work?
7. Repeat the Golden Rule.
8. Describe conditions in the world if every one lived by the Golden Rule.